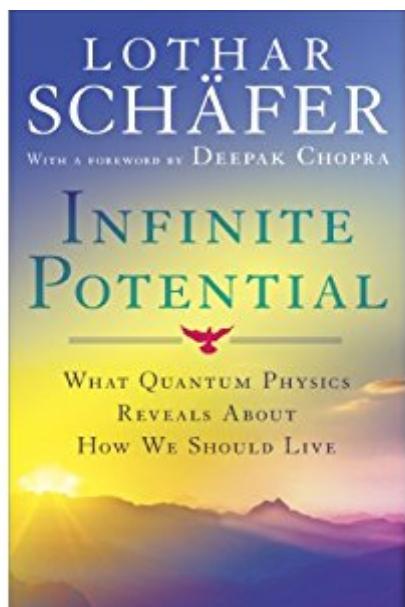


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Infinite Potential: What Quantum Physics Reveals About How We Should Live



Synopsis

A hopeful and controversial view of the universe and ourselves based on the principles of quantum physics, offering a way of making our lives and the world better, with a foreword by Deepak Chopra. In Infinite Potential, physical chemist Lothar Schäfer presents a stunning view of the universe as interconnected, nonmaterial, composed of a field of infinite potential, and conscious. With his own research as well as that of some of the most distinguished scientists of our time, Schäfer moves us from a reality of Darwinian competition to cooperation, a meaningless universe to a meaningful one, and a disconnected, isolated existence to an interconnected one. In so doing, he shows us that our potential is infinite and calls us to live in accordance with the order of the universe, creating a society based on the cosmic principle of connection, emphasizing cooperation and community.

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Customer Reviews

The author stays faithful to the science, which is not always the case with books of this genre. His theories are interesting, to be sure, but I found some of his ideas verging on the implausible and at times supported by demonstrably inaccurate interpretations of the underlying science. Undoubtedly, however, a fundamental understanding of quantum theory bears in it profound implications for the ultimate in philosophical questions: how to best live your life. I gave this book 4 stars not necessarily because I agree with its conclusions, but because it does a good job describing the premises from which anyone may derive important notions about the nature of existence and its implications in approaching life.

It would be easy to think that any book which strives to capture the link between quantum physics and how we should live would have to be highly intellectual, difficult to comprehend and perhaps even heretical. Not so with Dr. Lothar Schäfer's enlightening new book, *Infinite Potential*. As only a dedicated scientist with exceptional spiritual sensitivity can, Schäfer masterfully weaves a strong scientific foundation with wisdom of the ancient spiritual teachers, creating a tapestry of unparalleled beauty. His keen wit and easily accessible style, deftly complemented by pertinent stories and helpful examples, leads readers through a purposeful, clear and inspirational journey into deeper meaning---one that molds science and spirituality into a unified whole. *Infinite Potential* is a "must read" for novice and expert alike. It will surely inspire readers to a new found understanding of life and how one might better live it. By all means, add this gem to your personal library! Dr. Jim Young, university president and chancellor Emeritus, author of *Aware in a World Asleep* and other spiritual books. [...]

I am eternally grateful for this scientific documentation of what I have believed from a Spiritual perspective for sometime. If you are concerned about the direction national and global events are moving this is a "must read." Dr. Schafer lays out a clear and concise explanation with excellent diagrams how the Cosmos is inviting all of us to use our inner infinite potential to live productively as we discover our purpose in life.

I applaud Lothar Schäfer's exploration of what Jacob Needleman refers to as the invisible mountain. In his book *What Is God?* Needleman explains how we may awaken to the presence of ". . . the invisible mountain around which light curves so that the mountain is invisible and untouchable . . . until . . . the mountain chooses to touch us, to draw us toward itself only because we wish to find it . . ." Schäfer's *Infinite Potential* is a profound account of that kind of awakening. Schäfer has seemingly ascended the mountain and from its summit's vantage has viewed a transcendent panorama and magnificent integrity. In the preface to *Infinite Potential*, Lothar Schäfer asserts that ". . . quantum phenomena tell us that all things and people are interconnected in a holistic background of the universe whose nature is mindlike." *Infinite Potential* is dedicated to the examination of the human consequences of that assertion. Schäfer's assertion recalls Sir James Jeans' deeply considered remark in *The Mysterious Universe*: ". . . the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine." In Chapter 7 Schäfer concludes: "the nature of the universe is spiritual." Before critiquing Schäfer's thesis and arguments, it is worth

noting his frank admission regarding the legerdemain of language. Schäffer writes, "In this book we will often consider the hidden meaning of words and how language can make you think in a certain way." This is reminiscent of an observation by Douglas Hofstadter in *Gödel, Escher, Bach* that words and symbols may carry more than their ordinary meaning: They act as excitors, indeed as stimuli, that affect and modify nearby words and phrases. Examples of exciter words and stimulating phrases are: synchronicity, nonlocality, spirit, mysticism, infinite potential, quantum potentiality, quantum entanglement, virtual states, and so on, all of which carry old baggage that must be disposed of while Schäffer puts them in new and rational contexts. Schäffer writes, "Words mean more than they say. We have seen it again and again: Words can brainwash. There is no such thing as objectivity in thinking and discussing. You can be objective only to the extent that your language allows you to. Words activate inner images that affect you in ways you aren't even aware of." This note by Schäffer is essential to understanding the challenges he faced marshaling the conventions of language and vocabulary that he needed to describe transcendent consciousness - his central theme. As Douglas Hofstadter suggests, and as Schäffer admits, words must be recast, redefined in a context such that they modify nearby words and phrases in ways that somehow encompass and cage a central idea. Schäffer's central idea is perhaps caged by a phrase such as: human consciousness transcends its material integument. In Chapter 4 Schäffer embellishes the central idea by calling consciousness a cosmic property, implying that human consciousness enjoys coincidence with the cosmos infinitely far beyond the constraints of any proximate locality. It is this infinite non-local aspect of consciousness that Schäffer seizes upon to reinterpret the teachings of quantum physics regarding virtual states and entanglement. Schäffer's measured anti-materialist, anti-reductionist reinterpretation is directed toward describing and prescribing an augmented evolutionary process toward perfection in which some humans are and most should be engaged. Schäffer misses the point that we (our transcendent conscious selves) are but occupants of biological survival machines, earth-adapted vehicles . . . that, although we can and do pilot them through life, we often loose control or are overcome by the program that drives the machine. That machine, tantamount to an intelligent automaton, may proclaim "I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul." (lines from William Ernest Henley's poem *Invictus*). While the consciousness occupying our survival machine has free will, I prefer to think that the bio-machine has not, that it is driven by constituent selfish genetics. Schäffer does suggest that the occupant's free will can and should exercise self-reconception and self-redefinition to better pilot and improve the survival machine. Schäffer, like the empiricist scientists he disdains, occasionally reverts back to, analyzing the machine, while ignoring the

separateness of its occupant: the infinite consciousness that directs the machine. He presumes that the occupant and machine blend seamlessly and perform purposeful cosmic mandates as a whole. The author of *My Universe - A Transcendent Reality*, predicates and explains that our mortal integument, our survival mechanism, is but a convenient tool, a device designed to serve our transcendent consciousness in carrying out a purposeful mission. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's mortal embodiment, while carrying out a magnificent musical mission, still had to live a life and pay the butcher, baker, and candlestick maker. *My Universe - A Transcendent Reality* argues that, as occupants and pilots of biological survival machines, our transcendent selves can guide their evolution, perhaps create new species. Bertrand Russell suggested in *The Impact of Science on Society* how a new species may be created through the practice of dysgenics for commoners and eugenics for an aristocracy. What Russell foresaw was: "Commoners will be bred to create a submissive and docile disposition while the aristocracy will be bred for much different qualities. Gradually, by selective breeding the congenital differences between rulers and ruled will increase until they become almost different species." Bertrand Russell's high-handed genetic engineering, not mentioned in *Infinite Potential*, is surely abhorrent to Schäffer who prefers that each individual voluntarily participate in the evolution of the human mind. He envisions a "fundamental change of the structure of our individual consciousness: like a rewiring of our brain." This would involve "the congruence of the physical, the spiritual, and the mental that we find in the quantum phenomena." Schäffer suggests that this is possible because quantum phenomena and underlying virtual states promise and potentiate ". . . an evolutionary metamorphosis of the human consciousness, a leap of the evolution of life into a new human species." Schäffer assures us that "the structure of your mind evolves, if you allow it to evolve." This involves more than the recently acclaimed and studied plasticity of the brain. It surpasses even the opportunistic survival and adjustment antics Richard Dawkins' selfish gene. As the method and means for restructuring the mind and reinventing the human species, Schäffer offers the hidden "virtual world of quantum theory [that] has the nature of a potentiality [able to change] aspects of consciousness - and wholeness." He admits that: "Many scientists will react with outrage against any attempt to bring their art into the context of a natural theology. But the fact is undeniable that, by the manner in which it describes the external world, contemporary physics has taken science into questionable company: The wholeness of quantum reality, the virtual states, reality as potentiality and actuality, the nonempirical realm of reality, the transpersonal images in our mind, and the potential in us - all these [are] a sign that progress in science isn't driven by new types of experiments, but by the images in our soul." Schäffer is content with attributing infinite potential to the human spirit purely by inferences

based on virtual states and potentialities of quantum phenomena that underlie and support the tangible empirical world and living thinking matter in it. He asserts that "the realm of potentiality isn't an energy field. Its forms aren't energy. Like ideas, they are potentiality. Their power over the world of matter is like the power of the ideas that you feel in you." The author of *My Universe* takes the next step by describing a framework that helps explain the potentiality-realization process: a systematic means by which Schrödinger's transcendent domain of virtual states might originate, sustain, and modulate the empirical domain: the tangible world and life. Schrödinger suggests a dialog between survival machine and the transcendent soul: When the machine asks where could be found "That in which God could be heard and seen," and whether it is near or far away, the transcendent soul answers, "It is in you . . . If you can for a while but cease from all your own thinking and willing, you shall hear the unspeakable words of God." [...]

I love this book. Anyone who has struggled to reconcile spirituality with the empirical world, the world of form, will gain fresh and mind-expanding perspective. The style of writing is lovely and the insights are brilliant. I think many potential readers are put off by the term "quantum physics" in the subtitle, but the concepts here can be grasped by any layman, like myself, due to the clarity of the authors words.

I've read quite a few books on quantum physics and this one was the best. I finally feel I understand quantum science. The appendix which spelled out the experiments that led to quantum science theory was easy to comprehend. I applaud the author for writing a book for the layperson who wants to know more about this exciting field and its implications for life on this planet.

Well done as it expresses the nature of God both through the eyes of a scientist and through the eyes of the spirit. It lines up perfectly with my *Studies of A Course in Miracles*, the author would be well served to read it. David Lewis

Terrific book.. Its intense and hard to read.. because dahn.. it's Quantum physics.. But keep it up-- it soaks in somehow I could actually watch the *NoVA* special on the *Cosmos* with Brian Greene- and understand it! Its fantastic and inspiring how learning about the natural World thru science like this can draw you closer to spirituality, and our mysterious and mystical world within and around us. It's Beautifully written- I feel a little window has opened and I made a little quantum leap !

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