

I'm sure being unsure works for me

Ray 11/2/2020

Introductory points regarding being unsure.

1. **Agnosticism** allows **both** faith and reason.

2: Molecular biology dogma that had to change

In the Early 1970s, DNA made RNA and reverse transcriptase didn't exist, mRNA splicing which is incredibly wasteful had not even been conceived of, and junk DNA was unthinkable. Yet by the mid 1980s these were universally accepted because every advanced lab in the world could confirm it for themselves. If such tremendous reversals in a hard science were required then, we have to be aware and open that more **surprises likely await**.

3. The Japanese are often religiously unsure and that's OK

It's my understanding that one can be Shinto at birth and Buddhist at death, or vice versa, with no moralistic condemnation.

4. The best events such as birth, and the worst events such as death, require different coping mechanisms than do everyday events

My own personal sadness with deaths was most comforted by books by the Dalai Lama, a Buddhist, and Harold Kushner, a former rabbi.

5. Evolution the last 5 million years has produced great apes with greatly diverse primary cultural norms

Gorillas, orangutans, common chimpanzees, and pygmy chimpanzees also called bonobos, and humans all branched out approximately 5 million years ago. The common chimpanzees are patriarchal and physical power-based, bonobos are matriarchal and trade sex for power, etc. **No one system has proven unequivocally better** after being selected over 5 million years

6. As opposed to personal spirituality and faith, organized fanatical religion has produced some terrible abominations when overzealous belief gets enforced

Merely invoking the term the Spanish Inquisition, or contemplating what European settlers did to the indigenous people of both south and north America, and many other examples, share in common that fanatical religious belief was then operationalized in violence. The religious and military powers should have been less sure of their faith so they themselves would have seen the hypocrisy and irony of their actions in 'saving souls.' In America today, the irony of socialistic benefits for the already rich people and corporations, via acts like the recent tax act, and the rejection of increased socialism to benefit many striving poor bother me, and presumably would have motivated Jesus.

Additional points regarding faith:

Cosmology and modern physics maintain that so many solar systems exist that extra-earth life exists, existed, or will come to exist. However they are so far away we or they can't visit, and likely we will never communicate with them. Many such planets may believe in religion or spiritual dogma. Many I'm sure will be like the Vulcan Mr. Spock from Star Trek who abhorred being illogical.

Yuval Harari in his 3 books has outlined the societal progression from 1800 religion to secular humanism to dataism on Facebook etc in the coming years. Whether this is Progress or Regress depends on one's own opinion. However, diversity and resilience and being unsure of pace and desired extent for all 3 value systems are obvious.

Lastly, most humans desire affiliation with larger groups. The sense of belonging and comradeship has evolutionary value. One can obtain these goals through membership in

organized religion, as well as groups such as Lewes Seminar. If unsure, Moderation in all things, especially religion and aggressive nationalism, is the appropriate course.

References in addition to those mentioned by Mercedes are:
Francis Collins's language of God and evidence for belief.
The art of happiness by the Dalai Lama and Howard Cutler.
When bad things happen to good people by Harold Kushner.
Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom

Thanks Mercedes for your thoughts and efforts