

## **Anatomy of the Noosphere: Segment 2**

**David Sloan Wilson:** Metaman, of course, is very pro technology, and I'm sure that that was alienating for about as many people as it was alluring. So your stance on technology is interesting, especially given what you just said, because what you just said is that this high tech approach to the quantified self, that we just measure everything about us. And then we've learned something that we didn't know before. That particular form of technology was maybe not so much. So it seems as if you discovered for yourself that at least certain forms of technology are not the solution to this. Speak a little bit about your stance towards technology in the formation of Metaman or the noosphere, or basically a global superorganism. What's the downside, the two-edged sword of technology?

**Gregory Stock:** Well, the formation of a superorganism doesn't speak very loudly about what the impact on our lives and our experience of life is going to be. It's like, if you look at the human body and you can, say, you look at a red blood cell or some other cellular construct. Is it happy? Is it pleased with what it's doing in the body? Does it even have a sense of its larger role within the superorganism? It's certainly protected in a way. And your homeostatic guardrails are established so that, by and large, a red blood cell is doing what it should be doing in terms of the larger functioning. But I think we're kind of the same way, in that there are aspects of technology that don't really contribute to our sense of wellbeing, other ones that really do. But certainly, technology's absolutely central to the formation of this global superorganism. Couldn't exist without it.

**DSW:** Absolutely. 100% true. I don't think anyone can disagree with that. I mean, it cannot happen without technology. And of course, it needs just the right kind of technology. As with all adaptations, there's a few things that work and millions of things that don't work. So we need the right kind of technology, but it does require technology. Teilhard appreciated that, and I don't see how anyone could argue against it. So there's something we could all agree upon. This cannot happen without technology, without some kind of technology.

**GS:** Right. And I don't think anybody would argue with that. What they would probably argue with, is it good or bad? Is it good for us? Is it something desirable? And to me, I looked at it as a field biologist would, when looking at an organism. I mean, we're not making judgment of whether, oh, is the termite a good organism or not? You're fascinated by its workings in a sense. So to me, in looking at Metaman, as I called it then, there have been other nomenclatures and references to it in terms of what Teilhard de Chardin had referred to it, and the noosphere or the global brain, the global mind. All of these sorts of things. But to me, it's deeper because it's not just the mentality and the information process that's going on, but there are all sorts of deeper things that are happening.

I have this vision of, it's extracting resources from the soil and devouring them, and distributing them. And there are all sorts of redundancies in its systems that are evolving and being created. It's very much an emergent phenomenon, and very much one that is refining and amplifying on its growth as it continues. And we can get into some of the mechanisms around that, which were developed in Metaman, and were fascinating to me because as you begin to look at it in that context, you see how it has solved and transcended some of the limitations that have been encountered by lower level entities. Meaning multicellular organisms, which have to have a membrane to protect their homeostasis and things of that sort.

So to me, it was a change of, not a doubting that this thing is occurring, that it's very robust, that it's very powerful. And in fact, I think it is something that is not fragile in any way. It is a transition that is setting the foundation for life, millions and millions of years, or tens of millions of years into the future. This is one of the fundamental transitions in the history of life.