

Day 14: Get involved in mankind...

The priest and poet, John Donne (1573-1631) wrote:

“...No man is an island, entire of itself;
every man is a piece of the continent,
a part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less,
as well as if a promontory were,
as well as if a manor of thy friend's
or of thine own were.
Any man's death diminishes me,
because I am involved in mankind;
and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
it tolls for thee...”

It's so easy to think that we're in this by ourselves. The earth is now populated by 6.5 BILLION people, but most of us live lives of lonely isolation. We drive to our homes (by ourselves) and as we approach the house we push the remote button that opens our garage door. Driving into the garage we turn off the engine and push the remote button closing the garage door before we ever exit our car. Safe and secure inside our houses, locked away from our neighbors (who are just as lonely as we are), hidden from and hiding from view, we begin to think that we are alone.

Man is a social animal. I've read studies of what happens to people who are held captive in isolation: they slowly go mad. Perhaps that's the reason behind “road-rage” and “queue-rage” and “rage-rage” that permeates our news: we're not meant to live alone.

Consider meeting your neighbors. Go and introduce yourself. Take a cobbler made from the peaches from those trees you've planted. Talk about ways that you can work together to change your neighborhood. If we change neighborhoods, we'll change cities; nations and the world!

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