

# HELLO HUMAN

## Precision Landing

I made it, I'm here with you. I hurried! Seven minutes ago, I was still at home, and now I'm touching your hand, warming you. I am a ray of sunshine, made up of many photons, born in the core of the sun. After a long journey through different zones, I reached the photosphere, the outermost layer of the sun. From there, I was hurled into space and raced 149 million kilometres to you. On my way, I encountered clouds and weather phenomena in your troposphere. I didn't let myself get discouraged and fought my way through the stratosphere with its protective ozone layer and through a few more spheres whose names I couldn't remember. And now I'm here! Hello, human! How are you?

*I can feel you on my skin. Oh, how wonderfully warm you are, how marvellous!! You're not angry with me for stopping you so abruptly with my hand? You've travelled so far, yet you're still so incredibly bright! Did you really travel a staggering 149 million kilometres to warm me up? I feel a connection with you, I feel free and vibrant, somehow at one with you, with something deeply alive. Is it just my imagination? Something inside me senses - no, knows - that there is more for me to feel and perceive between myself and the sky above. Stay with me a little longer, ray of sunshine, and tell the clouds to take their time before they cover you up again. Let this precious moment last a little longer, you've come such a long way, you've crossed the universe. Through you, I feel something of the universe that is so much bigger than I can ever comprehend, and yet here I am - with you, in this tiny moment of infinity. For the time you linger and share with me, thank you.*

*Thank you for the warmth, the strength and the light. It warms me, it illuminates and touches me.*



*The sun is 109 times larger than Earth and emits more energy in one second than humanity will consume in two million years. The Earth's rotation has remained remarkably constant for billions of years, but is slowing down by 17 milliseconds per million years, or about 0.0017 milliseconds in 100 years, due to tidal friction between the Earth and the moon. Isn't that a real miracle?*

# MAGIC OF THE MOMENT

## MY NAME IS AWE

Would you like me to tell you my secret? There are times when the ordinary reveals its hidden layers and we are conscious, attentive and utterly present in that moment; then, lifted out of time for a brief instant, the seemingly mundane can transform into pure magic. I am such a moment.

Why are some of us fascinating, while others seem boring or mundane, with nothing about them that is fresh or new?

I often arise from the interplay of feelings, instincts and intuitions as they move freely and often unconsciously through your mind, your brain and your spirit.

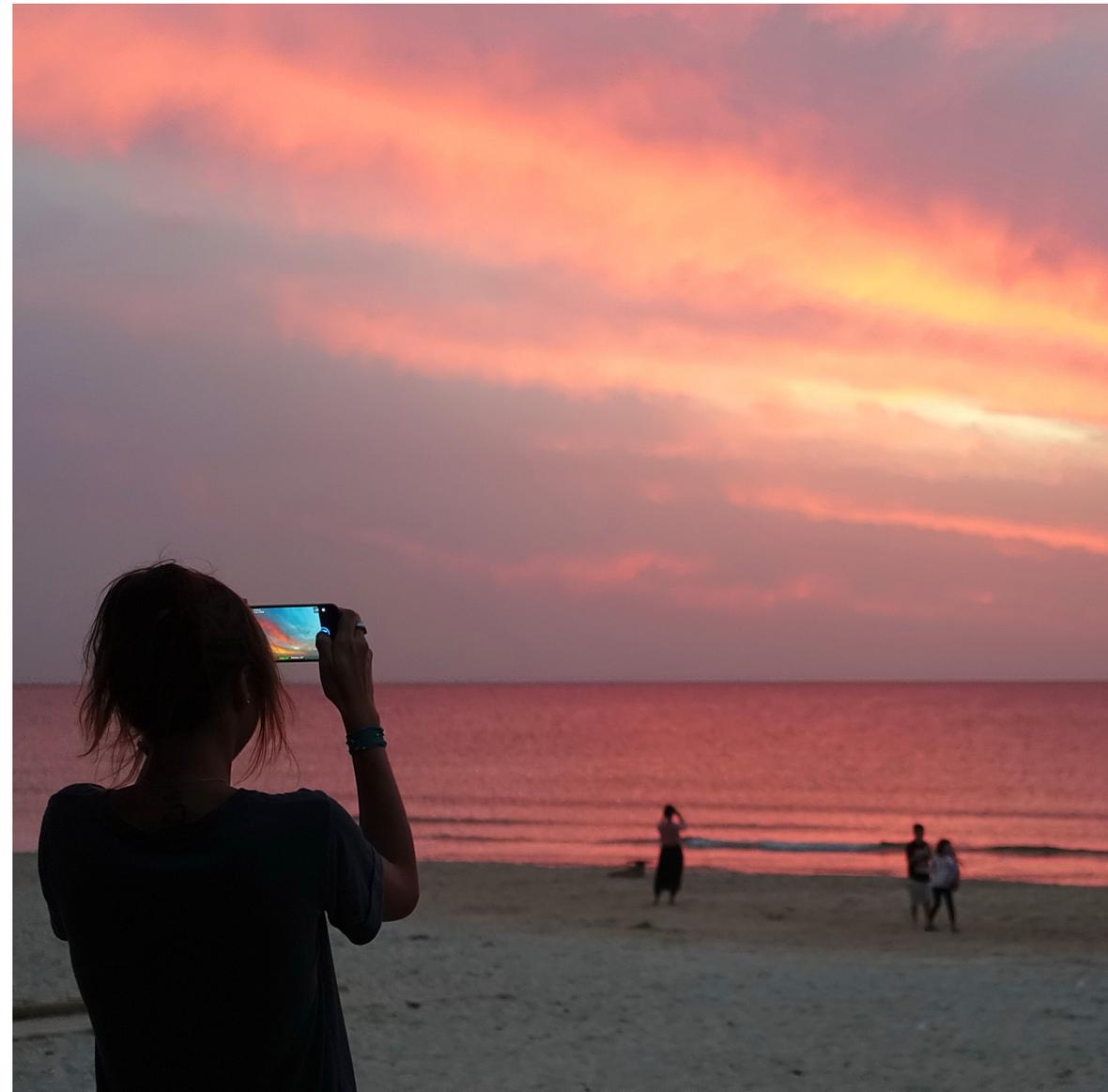
I manifest from a combination of experience, emotion, environment and timing. When I appear you may recognise me by the fact that everything fits together harmoniously and triggers a feeling of wonder, clarity or enlightenment.

My magic lies in my ability to touch and transform you and others deeply. That is my job, and I love my job for what it says about my life and what it says about your lives. My ways may seem unfathomable to you, or incomprehensible to your rational mind, and yet I open up the inner spaces in you, enabling the interplay of different thoughts or emotions in your conscious and unconscious mind; all just waiting for the right trigger to bring about a sudden moment of special perception and rare insight.

I have the power to strengthen you, to delight you and to make you want to be fully alive and keep going. I offer you an escape from the mundanity of life and allow you to see the world with new eyes. Best not to take me for granted, because I am a precious gift of life. Fate spreads me across the universe, seemingly at random, sometimes more, sometimes less. But my true value lies in my rarity. Sometimes I am just a small spark, sometimes you breath me so deeply that I become a beacon that lights up your journey through life.

I make the important, important. So let me guide you a little.

Perhaps you will recognise in me the silent wonder that I am - and rediscover the world as if it was the first time you ever saw it.



*Every day, around four billion photos are taken, according to conservative estimates. It is therefore not easy to resist the urge to constantly hold your mobile phone between yourself and your immediate experience. Take a deep breath, let the moment touch you first - and only then take your picture, before habit takes over.*

## THE COURAGE TO MOVE ON

### When triumphs whisper

Imagine that the successes you were once so proud of, that carried you and strengthened you, are beginning to turn into a burden. Like old friends who don't want to leave, they raise their voices - gently, seductively, yet insistently. Although you sense that it is time to let go, they whisper to you, 'don't forget us, beloved! Were we not once your loyal companions, your proud collection of triumphs and achievements? Cling to us, to the glorious days we experienced together. Give us a reason to exist, let us continue to be by your side.

Do you remember the special moments of our success, of overwhelming happiness and mastery? It was we who gave you these feelings, who strengthened you and carried you through difficult times. Without us, you may lose the many memories of your life. You don't want to risk that, do you?'

But people, matured by experience and insight, sense that the time for change has come. With courage and determination, they look ahead, firm and unshakeable in their resolve.

*You once served me, you, my successes of the past, and I thank you for the precious memories and the good you have brought me.*

*But now I am in a different phase of life, at a point where I no longer want to be fixed by the same role expectations, the same mindsets or belief systems about how I should behave, contribute, or be perceived in certain roles I had set for myself. I want to broaden my horizons to see what else is possible. Now you are holding me back and preventing me from growing further. That is why our paths will separate. I must now move on, free from your burden. I am letting you go as best I can to make room for new experiences and developments. With a heavy heart, somewhat uncertain but also quite determined, I am moving forward with a basic trust in the future and in the unknown.*

*No one can take away what I have achieved, but it will no longer define me.*

*Thank you for everything.*

*And now, please step aside!*



*Our brain can deliberately weaken unwanted memories. This process, known as 'directed forgetting', is controlled by the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex. The hippocampus stores memories, while the prefrontal cortex regulates decisions, planning and impulse control. This makes letting go an active action that directs our focus to what is important now.*

## SCIENTIFIC STUDIES AND DISCOVERIES

Amazement is a fascinating phenomenon, and more and more scientific studies are investigating its positive effects. Researchers have found that amazement can not only reduce stress hormone levels, but also promote positive aspects of our social behaviour and mental health. The effects can last from several hours to days, and can cause us to feel more emotionally stable.

Early studies by psychologist Paul Ekman in the 1970s contributed significantly to deepening our understanding of amazement and how it reveals itself.

His research on emotions and their universal facial expressions shows how deeply rooted and widespread the feeling of amazement is.

Dr. Dacher Keltner, a student of Ekman, wrote retrospectively in his book 'AWE': *'... at that time, in 1988, we knew very little scientifically about emotions: what they are, how they influence our minds and bodies, and why we experience them in the first place...'*

Further research highlights that wonder also promotes cognitive flexibility, enabling us to approach problems more creatively.

### Wonder and stress reduction

A study by Dr. Dacher Keltner, professor of psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, together with his colleagues, shows that moments of wonder can reduce stress hormones and calm the nervous system.

Test subjects who paused to marvel at nature under scientific supervision showed lower levels of stress hormones and inflammation markers such as interleukin-6 (IL-6) afterwards. Interestingly, the study shows that people who felt a deep sense of wonder in nature perceived the experience differently than people who were similarly amazed but in a harbour district in San Francisco. In nature, participants felt a greater sense of awe and connection to the ecology around them. This was also reflected in the results of the task in which participants were asked to draw themselves. Those who were fascinated by nature often drew themselves as smaller figures in an impressive environment, indicating a stronger sense of their own insignificance in the face of the grandeur of nature, as illustrated by the photo on page 47. In contrast, participants from the urban harbour district often drew themselves larger and more centrally in the picture. These differences illustrate how strongly the environment can influence our perception of wonder.

### Vitality and well-being

Dr. Jennifer Stellar, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Toronto, has found that wonder promotes anti-inflammatory cytokines that protect the body and increase overall well-being.

Wonder can also improve self-perception.

### Effect on our perception of time

Melanie Rudd, assistant professor at the University of Houston, found that moments of wonder can alter our perception of time.

Her study confirmed that, unlike other emotions, this experience reduces impatience and gives us the feeling that we have more time. Her team also discovered that wonder increases the willingness to volunteer and increases overall life satisfaction.

### Amazement at art - Why originals evoke deeper responses

A Dutch study investigated the effect of the famous painting 'Girl with a Pearl Earring' on the human brain. Participants viewed both the original painting and reproductions while their eye movements and brain activity were measured.

The original triggered a ten times stronger emotional response and activated happiness hormones such as oxytocin and dopamine.

Viewers felt a deeper connection to the originals but not to the reproductions.

This research confirms that true art evokes wonder and has a direct physical and emotional effect.

An original image can trigger awe, fascination and a feeling of personal closeness - an experience that a mere copy cannot convey.

## EMOTION BETWEEN ENTERTAINMENT AND MANIPULATION

It is important to be aware of the power of wonder and its sometimes unfortunate and deliberate use, for example to better exploit us. This emotion can be consciously used for manipulation.

Many media outlets use wonder to attract attention and entertain, but sometimes also to draw us into virtual worlds and alienate us from fundamental reality.

## FINE ANTENNAE

### DISCOVER THE DIVERSITY OF YOUR PERCEPTIONS

Some people just tick differently! They may be particularly sensitive to light and its many nuances and moods. They may intuitively sense whether someone is trustworthy or whether there is conflict or harmony in a group. They register the atmosphere of a room as soon as they walk through the door. Some believe they have a sixth sense because their premonitions often come true.

Others have a keen sense of smell, which can cause stress when someone wearing strong perfume enters an elevator, for example.

How about you?

Do you sometimes sense the vibes, the vibrations of the person opposite you? Our perceptions and sensations are diverse and complex, and they can become dulled over time, but they can also change and become more refined.

Here are a few examples:

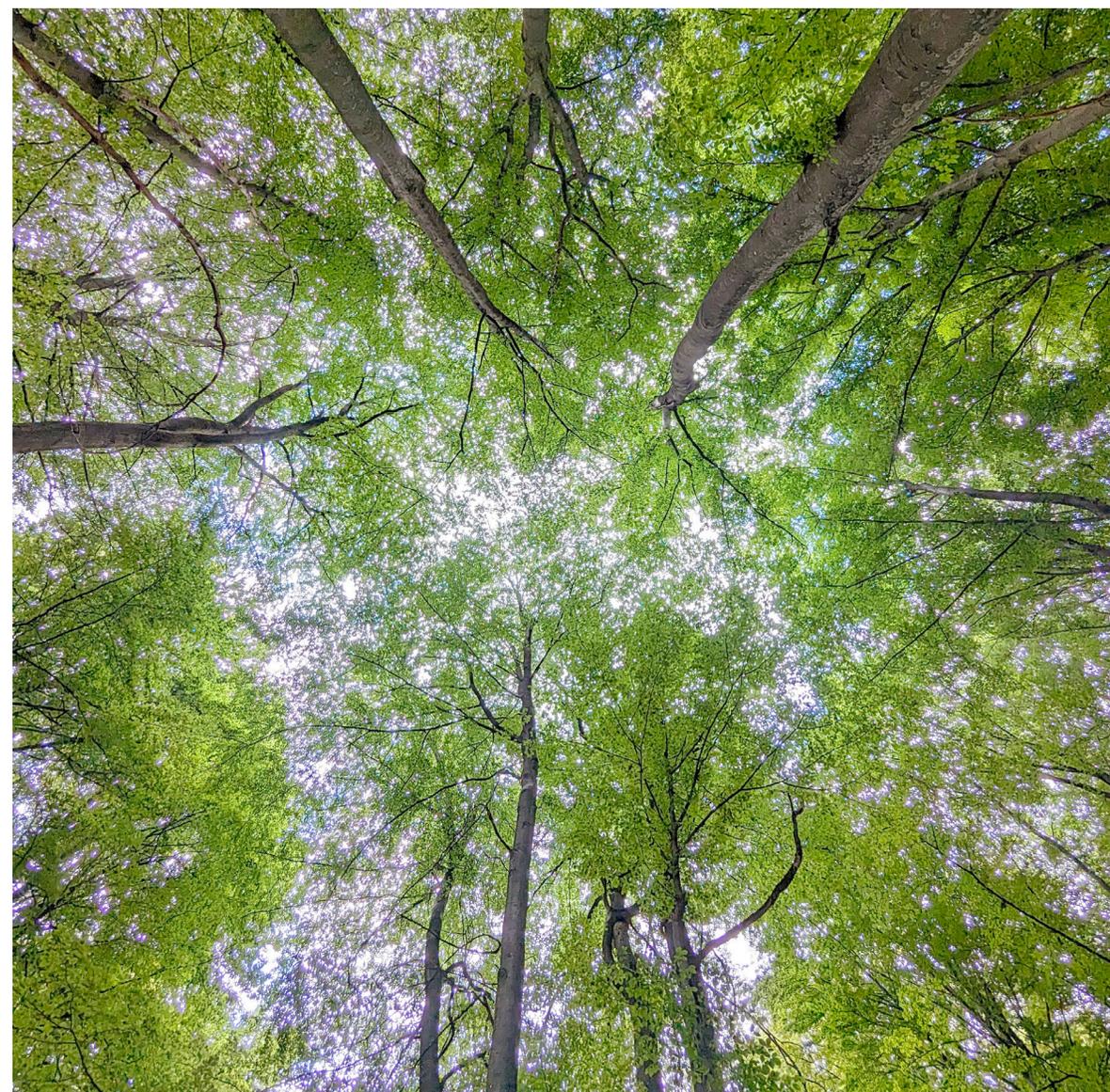
In the past, the measured temperature was decisive in weather forecasting. Today, the perceived temperature complements these measurements by taking into account how the weather actually affects our bodies.

When we ask ourselves how a country is doing, we now consider not only economic data, but also the quality of life, the sense of happiness and the general mood of the population. Much of this is not always scientifically measurable, but it is part of life, our understanding of ourselves and our relationship to the world. Can you think of any other examples similar to those mentioned?

### Two worlds - one life

Let's take this a step further and open ourselves up to the idea that our existence takes place not in one, but in two worlds - the visible, measurable world and the less visible, bio-electrical world.

The measurable world encompasses everything that can be quantified and measured. This includes physical laws, such as an apple falling from a tree,



*Nature calms our nervous system and grounds us through several mechanisms:  
 Spending time in green spaces reduces stress hormones.  
 Phytoncides released by trees strengthen our immune system.  
 In addition, the natural environment improves our eye function.  
 Regularly looking at greenery can help prevent myopia.*

## TOUCHED TO THE SOUL

He was neither fisherman nor tourist. Something in his stillness defied the ordinary. He sat upon the boulder seeming not to belong in this world, as though transported to another sphere, lost in thought.

Perhaps he was not altogether present, but perhaps he was also touched by a spiritual force...

Shortly after sunrise, when a veil of mist still hung over the water, a sadhu sat on the banks of the Ganges, near Rishikesh in northern India. They are called 'holy men' and often seem detached from Earthly life. It was an intriguing sight, and the camera shutter was pressed only once, carefully, so as not to disturb the morning moment on the riverbank. What could his secret be?

Back at the hotel the shower beckoned, yet the image of the holy man lingered. The unusually low placement of the shower head required kneeling on the cool stone floor. Then it happened... as water trickled gently down, an incomparable sensation unfolded. Total silence enveloped the space, accompanied by a feeling of infinite happiness. A deep harmony settled into the present moment. But something more stirred - an essence of peace, subtle and profound, as if establishing an invisible connection to a transcendent dimension. Pure emotion at the highest level?

Something similar may have happened to the man on the banks of the Ganges, which may have prompted him to choose this path. The secret of the sadhu may have been revealed, not rationally, but as an experience from within. However, in order to understand what happened, one may also need the intellect so as not to be overwhelmed by highly charged connections such as these.

Many people who have experienced something like this are so emotionally moved that they have completely changed their lives afterwards. This kind of mystical touch reminds us of our true inner spiritual possibility, which may, for the human race, still lie in the future and be the reason why we are here.

Such experiences seek out the quiet call, not responding to demand, but arriving through deep longing, when the soul listens and receives.



*Deeply immersed and touched in his soul, he appears detached from the world, at one with space and time. Staying in a place with a deep spiritual history can help you experience inner peace and tranquillity. Perhaps it is even more significant to create such a place within oneself - an inner retreat that remains always accessible.*