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OUR INTERCONNECTED WORLD

To observe that our world has become smaller is as unremarkable as it is undeniable. We've all experienced it in so many ways: a devastating tsunami galvanizes instant aid from countries thousands of miles away; a falling U.S. dollar influences the monetary policies of central bankers in Europe and Brazil; the unexpected death of pop star Michael Jackson shocks millions of fans the world over. A few centuries ago, a person living in North America had little reason to worry about events in Europe; the average European gave little thought to China; and China remained an insular nation, largely unconcerned with the scientific and social advances made in the West. All this has changed. No longer can any nation afford to adopt an isolationist posture in an age of global communications.

So the world is becoming smaller and more connected. The principle of interconnectedness is a basic Theosophical principle, as this excerpt from *The Theosophical World View* shows:

The universe and all that exists within it are one interrelated and interdependent whole. Every existent being—from atom to galaxy—is rooted in the same universal, life-creating Reality.

The full implications of this statement are profound, going much deeper than the obvious examples given above. It's easy to find examples of cause and effect operating in the outer world, but we have yet to fully understand how interconnected we are in the inner realms.

By virtue of our common humanity, we are deeply connected, not only at the material level, but also at the level of thought. Whether we live in Brazil, China, Europe, or the United States, we are connected at those deeper levels where thought and feeling operate. When our ideas are published in books or periodicals, they can influence the reader, but even our private and unspoken thoughts radiate energy outwardly, having their proportionate effect upon the surrounding mental atmosphere. Annie Besant summed this up at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago: "Even as you think, the thought burning in your brain becomes a living force for good or for evil in the mental atmosphere. As a man thinks, thoughts from him go out to mould the thoughts and lives of other men. Your thought power makes you creative gods in the world."

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