

Exploring Resonance

Understanding what it means, why it is important for us and exploring how we can cultivate a more resonant life experience



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What do we mean by resonance?

All humans are resonant beings (Rosa, 2021), with a fundamental need for resonance. Often, we may dream about slowing down, but in fact, we may be intuitively seeking a different relationship with the world; one more resonant with people, things and places.

Science can help us further by confirming that as beings, we are essentially energy in vibration, each with our unique energy signature (Wise, 2020).

"Within our energetic field lies an elaborate, vibrational musical composition of our lives."

Kathryn Wise, 2020, page 1

Moreover, this sense of vibration is reflected linguistically in the Latin derivative 'resonare', which literally means to return to sound, or to sound and resound, almost like an echo (Algar, 2015).

Exploring further what this means, Rosa helps us to understand this resonant world relationship. He describes four, inherent qualities:

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Affection – something speaks to us, leaving us feeling moved

Self-efficacy – when on being emotionally touched, we respond and take action

Transformative – when in the moment of resonance, something shifts

Elusive – with such circumstances being uncontrollable and emergent

Why is this relevant now?

Within modern capitalist society, we have a desire to progress, which requires growth, acceleration and innovation to stand still (Rosa, 2021). This can impact us individually in different ways. We may have a fear of being left behind, needing to climb so as to keep up and not lose our place within society. Also, we may have a desire to expand our horizons of what can be: available, attainable and accessible (Rosa, 2021).

Through such shifts, we can often become disconnected from the world. Our relationship with the world can lose its significance, with it being cold and indifferent (Rosa, 2021).

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These circumstances can be compounded by the desynchronisation of different systems. With this desire for acceleration, pressures are put on different societal systems to move faster. This accelerated pace can jar against slower systems, and be too fast for nature's organic rhythms.

"We can be in a world that is moving too quickly, for us to sit with anything."

Brittany Chaffee, 2022

Many of us are wanting to have a good life, and are seeking a more connected, balanced world relationship. With many feeling out of kilter, this longing for resonance is increasing (Zalec, 2021).

What happens if we lose resonance?

With these increasing demands for acceleration, our psyche may not be able to keep up with this speed of change. Consequently, we may burn out psychologically. Our connections may become non-resonant, and we may become mute in our relationship with the world.

Such a shift can lead to

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depression, dissatisfaction and a sense of meaninglessness.

"Meaninglessness [...] can be interpreted as the absence of resonance, as meaning is born when the wire of resonance begins to vibrate."

Rosa, 2019 page 199

A sense of alienation within the world can often emerge from this drive towards growth, time-saving and efficiency (Buhl, 2023).

What is it like being in resonance?

We may experience resonance in different ways. We may find resonance with objects or artefacts, and with people and communities. Also, this may be more broadly with how we experience life, through our connection with nature, art, religion or history (Zalec, 2021).

We are in resonance if we are touched, where energy moves back and forth. If we are impacted emotionally, and if we are left altered or shifted in some way. In itself, e-motion means energy in motion.

Subconsciously, we may attract energetic connections into our life for the purposes of healing, and growth. Often, we can be drawn to someone or something, that has a quality that we need to draw out from ourselves, allowing us to access more of ourselves; as they say, opposites attract. Over time, we can begin to rely on our own intuition to find connections for the expression of our own essence or purpose.

When being in resonance, we can experience joy, meaning and existential hope that in the end everything will be okay.

"A resonant relationship with the world [...] allows a person to feel supported and safe."

Zalec, 2021 page 6

How can I become more resonant?

We are born as a resonant being, but it is easy to unlearn it within our fast-paced world. How can we cultivate resonance when we have dis-connected?

As Rosa says, resonance is elusive and is not something we can force. However, it is always available to us and there are habits that can help us to live more freely with resonance:

Slowing down

Finding ways of pausing and being still. Becoming mindful of our choices and creating moments of stillness within our day

Listening to ourself

Connecting into our self, and noticing our inner voice.

"A better world is possible and this can be recognised by the fact that its central yardstick is no longer to control and dominate but to listen and respond."

Rosa, 2021, page 524

We may need to clear away distractions and blocks. These may be physical, energetic, mental or emotional. Meditation,

journalling and energy work with trained practitioners can help us to free ourselves

Noticing what replenishes us

When we have a stronger connection with ourselves, we can hear ourselves more freely. What is drawing us? What touches us, creating unexpected tears?

Connecting in to ourselves can help us to notice our energy, and what drains and lifts us. Being open and connected helps us to find resonance within our life.

Top tip



If you'd like to deepen your understanding of resonance I would recommend exploring the works of Harmut Rosa, a professor of sociology and a German political scientist

His formative text, *Resonanz* (2016), is widely translated and available in articles, interviews and podcasts



About the writer

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Cathy Brown is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist, consultant and writer. She runs Evolve Consulting Services Limited which works with individuals, teams and businesses to manage transition and change.

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