This passage from Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway inspired me to investigate the concept of connection throughout the novel. My research focused on three forms of connection in Mrs. Dalloway:

- **Memory**
- **Spirit**
- **Spoken Words**

My paper “The Unknown Garden of Connection in Virginia Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway” argues that the characters’ memories and spirits, not their words, create a transcendent, eternal, and universal realm of connection.

**Connection Through Memory**

- **Wordless sense memories**
  
  “What a leaf! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to [Clarissa], when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air […] standing and looking until Peter Walsh said, ‘Musing among the vegetables?’ – was that it? – ‘I prefer men to cauliflowers’ – was that it? He must have said it at breakfast one morning when she had gone out on to the terrace – Peter Walsh.”

  “No, the words meant absolutely nothing to [Clarissa] now. She could not even get an echo of her old emotion. But she could remember going cold with excitement, and doing her hair in a kind of ecstasy (now the old feeling began to come back to her, as she took out her hairpins, laid them on the dressing table, began to do her hair […]”

- **Transcendence of time and space**
  
  “There was a mystery about it. You were given a sharp, acute, uncomfortable grain – the actual meeting; horribly painful as often as not; yet in absence, in the most unlikely places, it would flower out, open, shed its scent, let you touch, taste, look about you, get the whole feel of it and understanding, after years of lying lost.”

  “For they might be parted for hundreds of years, [Clarissa] and Peter: she never wrote a letter, she was dry sticks; but suddenly it would come over her. If he were with me now what would he say? – some days, some sights bringing him back to her calmly, without the old bitterness; which perhaps was the reward of having cared for people; they came back in the middle of St. James’s Park on a fine morning – indeed they did.”

**Connection Through Spirit**

- **Eternal, universal connection**
  
  “[Clarissa] remembered once throwing a shilling into the Serpentine. But every one remembered; what she loved was this, here; now, in front of her: the fat lady in the cab. Did it matter that she must inevitably cease completely; all this must go on without her; did she resist it, or did it become consoling to believe that death ended absolutely? but that somehow in the streets of London, on the ebb and flow of things, here, there, she survived, Peter survived, lived in each other, she being part, she was positive, of the trees at home; of the house there, ugly, rambling all to bits and pieces as it was; part of people she had never met; being laid out like a mist between the people she knew best, who lifted her on their branches as she had seen the trees lift the mist, but it spread ever so far, her life, herself.”

  “But they beckoned; leaves were alive; trees were alive. And the leaves being connected by millions of fibres with [Septimus]’ own body; there on the seat, fanned it up and down; when the branch stretched he, too, made that statement.”

  “The car had gone, but it had left a slight ripple which flowed through glove shops and hat shops and tailors’ shops on both sides of Bond Street. For thirty seconds all heads were inclined the same way […] Something so trifling in single instances that no mathematical instrument, though capable of transmitting shocks in China, could register the vibration; yet in its fulness rather formidable and in its common appeal emotional […]”

**Disconnection Through Spoken Words**

“Human beings cannot even take down the dictation of their own thought, so rapidly and completely does it move. How much more difficult, then, is it to communicate this thought to another.”

- Martha C. Nussbaum, from her essay “The Window: Knowledge of Other Minds in Virginia Woolf’s To the Lighthouse”

- **Vapid dialogue in Mrs. Dalloway**
  
  “- Good morning to you, Clarissa!
  - Where are you off to?
  - I love walking in London.
  - Really, it’s better than walking in the country.
  - That is all.
  - That is all.
  - Dear, those motor cars.
  - The Prime Minster’s kyar.
  - Let us go on, Septimus.
  - Come on.
  - All right!
  - Now we will cross.
  - Gloxo.
  - Kreamo.
  - That’s an E.
  - It’s toffee.”

**Conclusion**

“[Clarissa] heard the click of the typewriter. It was her life, and, bending her head over the hall table, she bowed beneath the influence, felt blessed and purified, saying to herself, as she took the pad with the telephone message on it, how moments like this are buds on the tree of life […]”

**Image of the Unknown Garden**

“[He] had found life like an unknown garden, full of turns and corners, surprising, yes; really it took one’s breath away, these moments […] in which things came together […]”

- from Mrs. Dalloway

“I had a vision that, in Woolf’s novel, such “an unknown garden” existed within each character and everything around them. In my imagination, the novel’s connections lived within these beautiful, vast gardens.

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