Nanotechnology: Taking Action



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Happiness is a goal that never seems attainable. Philosophers have struggled with the idea of happiness and the implications of what it means to want. Perfection seems as a sickness to our very nature. We as humans strive for achieving the unachievable. Yet, the irony of this pursuit of happiness is that, once that want is achieved, new wants form, and then happiness is again hidden. But, what if perfection could happen? What if society and its environment could once again live in the Garden of Eden? What if a dream utopia could become a reality?

The possibilities seem endless, as nanotechnology evolves into our civilization ever so swiftly. Nanotechnology combines science and technology in an overall effort to create robots so small that they have the <u>capabilities</u> of rearranging all atomic structures into any form. Basically, nanotechnology is the "total control [over] the structure of matter."[1] It seems impossible to imagine that such technology could ever exist. That we as the <u>human</u> race can create machines that could be designed to cure the common cold, rid the body of cancer cells, or reestablish endangered species. Yet, as science progresses these ideas are becoming real.

The way nanotechnology works is very simple, but on a very, very small scale. The general idea is to create diminutive robots called nanobots out of carbon elements. These nanobots will be "equipped with arms able to grasp, manipulate, and lock in place individual atoms...in effect, [they would] resemble extremely small unmanned submarines."[1] Other attributes that would be included on these nanobots include a basic structure frame, engines for propulsion, computers to process information, and communication links to other nanobots. The two different types of nanobots are assemblers and disassemblers. The first being a bot that creates and builds, and the latter being one that destroys and tears down. How small are one of these bots one might ask? Well, a nanometer is one-billionth the size of a meter, and the estimated size of a nanobot is 500-2000 nanometers.[1]

The positive attributes of nanotechnology vary widely. As mentioned above, advancements in medicine could eliminate all disease and even strengthen the common human immune system. Energy efficiency could be greatly improved as described by Dr. Stephen L. Gillett, Department of Geosciences at the University of Nevada, "fuel cells...focused processing...distributed fabrication...information-intensive energy extraction sensing...efficient energy management...and super strength materials" all can be achieved almost immediately through nanotechnology.

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