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July, 26. 2006.

Dear David Gould,

Thank you for your letter of, I'm
afraid, June 15th.

As far as 'what really matters' in life - gosh! I really
think there is no greater wisdom on this dense and complex
issue than that of the Buddhist teachings. Start with the
Dalai Lama's book on Happiness and go on from there.
To Thich Nhat Hanh perhaps, the great Vietnamese teacher,
who emphasizes the need to be always attentive. He also
recommends rejecting those seductive artefacts which are
constructed in order to prevent attention - celebrity magazines,
reality TV shows etc., all those diversionary ploys - computer
games, unrestricted mobile use - which are designed to blind us
~~from~~ ^{to} reality. It's profound attention to reality that can help us
develop the wisdom to make the very best of this short
time we have on earth. It's only with wisdom that we can
learn how to handle the huge floods of information that are
constantly swamping and diverting our minds, only with wisdom
can we choose what to accept and what to reject. But
aspiring to wisdom and embarking on that path involves hard
work. As does anything lasting and worthwhile. The books I've
mentioned may point the way.

With all good wishes,

John Christie