

Mars Podcast

THE DREAM OF MANY CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES IS TO ONE DAY FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE GREAT ASTRONAUTS BUZZ ALDRIN, NEIL ARMSTRONG, CHRIS HADFIELD, AND MANY OTHERS WHO HAVE STEPPED OUT INTO THE VACUUM OF SPACE. SINCE YURI GAGARIN AND ALAN SHEPHERD MADE THE FIRST TRIPS TO SPACE IN 1961, WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY WITH SPACE TRAVEL. AND NOW ALL THOSE CHILDREN OUT THERE HAVE BIGGER AND BETTER DREAMS FOR US TO KEEP UP WITH. SO SPACE AGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD ARE DOING THEIR BEST TO RESPOND TO THESE HEIGHTENED EXPECTATIONS, AND THE CURRENT SPECKLE IN THE SKY WE ARE LOOKING TOWARDS, IS THE RED PLANET OF MARS.

BUT FIRST NASA AND OTHER SPACE ORGANIZATIONS NEED VOLUNTEERS, BUT THERE ARE CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS FOR PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER, PHYSICAL HEALTH, EDUCATION, EVEN HEIGHT. BUT ONE THING THAT THESE PEOPLE WILL NEED MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, IS TIME. DUE TO THE VASTNESS OF SPACE AND OUR RELATIVELY SLOW ROCKETS IN COMPARISON TO OTHER OBJECTS FLYING THROUGH THE GALAXY, THE JOURNEY ALONE WILL TAKE 6 TO 8 MONTHS, DEPENDING ON WHERE WE ARE IN OUR ORBITS WHEN WE DECIDE TO TAKE OFF. THEN NASA PLANS ON KEEPING THESE SPACE PILGRIMS ON THE RED PLANET FOR 300 DAYS TO EXPERIMENT AND COLLECT DATA ABOUT THE PLANET. THEN YOU HAVE THE TRIP BACK HOME, SITTING IN A SHUTTLE FOR ANOTHER 6-8 MONTHS. POTENTIALLY, THAT MEANS YOU COULD BE TRAVELLING INTERSTELLARLY FOR AROUND 26 MONTHS. OVER TWO YEARS OF TIME.

AS WELL AS THE FACT THAT WE'RE LEAVING OUT ANY OTHER VARIABLES OR MISSION DETAILS DUE TO HOW EARLY WE ARE IN THE PLANNING PROCESS. NASA PLANS TO HAVE PEOPLE ON THE SURFACE BY THE END OF THE 2030S, THEIR CURRENT ESTIMATE IS AROUND 2039. IF THIS IS TOO LONG FOR YOU THEN MAYBE ANOTHER MARS MISSION WOULD BE THE BETTER FIT, A MISSION CALLED MARS ONE. THE

MARS ONE HAS A DIFFERENT SET OF PARAMETERS FOR THEIR APPLICANTS THOUGH, YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO GO TO MARS, AND STAY THERE FOREVER. THEY ARE PLANNING A MISSION OF PERMANENT SETTLEMENT TO START A COLONY ON MARS THAT HOPEFULLY WILL KEEP HUMANS THERE FOR YEARS TO COME. THOUGH THIS GROUP ALREADY HAS OVER 200 THOUSAND APPLICANTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD. THEIR FINAL GOAL IS TO BRING TEN ASTRONAUTS TO THE PLANET. THE PROJECT IS LED BY DUTCH ENTREPRENEUR BAS LANDORP WHO HOPES TO BE ABLE TO SET DOWN A SHIP ON MARS BY 2027. 12 YEARS BEFORE NASA WOULD HAVE ANYBODY EVEN CLOSE.

THOUGH THE ORGANIZATION ISN'T AS WELL FUNDED AS OTHER GROUPS AND MANY PEOPLE ARE SKEPTICAL THAT THEIR MISSION WILL EVER BE ACHIEVED. IN FACT THIS TRIP WILL BE SO EXPENSIVE THAT MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE IT'S UNREALISTIC FOR EVEN THE SPACE GIANTS LIKE NASA TO ACHIEVE. WITH THE CURRENT ESTIMATE SITTING AT 100 BILLION DOLLARS OVER 30 TO 40 YEARS, THIS IS A MISSION THAT WOULD TRULY BREAK THE BANK.

SO THERE WAS ANOTHER IDEA, AN IDEA TO GO SOMEWHERE THAT NO HUMANS HAD GONE BEFORE BUT A PLACE WHERE LIFE COULD LIVE WITH THE HELP OF MACHINES. NO OTHER PLANET IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM COULD SUPPORT HUMAN LIFE, EVEN FOR A MINUTE. MERCURY AND VENUS ARE THE ONLY OTHER PLANETS THAT HAVE SURFACE FOR US TO WALK ON, BUT MERCURY REACHES TEMPERATURES UPWARDS OF 800 DEGREES DURING THE DAY, AND GETS INTO THE NEGATIVE HUNDREDS DURING THE NIGHT. WHILE VENUS'S ATMOSPHERE GIVES OFF SO MUCH PRESSURE THAT WE WOULD BE CRUSHED JUST STANDING ON THE SURFACE. AND THE OTHER FOUR PLANETS ARE ALL MADE MOSTLY OF GAS OR ICE, SO VISITING THEM IN ANYTHING OTHER THAN A SHUTTLE WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE.

SO THE ONLY RELATIVELY POSSIBLE THING TO WALK ON, WOULD BE SOMETHING ONLY VISITING OUR SOLAR SYSTEM, AN ASTEROID.. WHILE IT WOULDN'T BE AN EASY FEAT, NASA IS ALREADY DEVELOPING PLANS TO PULL ONE INTO THE MOON'S ORBIT USING A SERIES OF TUG BOAT TYPE SPACE CRAFTS, AND

HAVING ASTROUNAUTS COLLECT SAMPLES FROM THE NATRUALLY FORMED STAR SHIP. AND THIS MISSION HITS A LITTLE BIT CLOSER TO HOME, WITH STUDENTS FROM THE PURDUE SCHOOL OF ASTRONAUTICAL AND AERONAUTICAL ENGINEERING RESEARCHING THE PROJECT. WHILE THIS WOULD NOT BE CHEAP, IT CERTAINLY WOULD BE CHEAPER THAN THE MARS MISSION AND WOULD BE A LESS TIMELY TRIP FOR THE ASTROUNAUTS. AS WELL AS IT WOULD BE A GREAT STEPPING STONE TO HELP WITH THE ONE DAY INEVITABLE HUMAN LANDING ON MARS. BUT FOR NOW WE ARE STILL LOOKING TO THE STARS, HOPING TO ONE DAY SEE THEM AS MORE THAN JUST A SPECKLE IN THE NIGHT SKY. WITH HOPE IT WILL HAPPEN, AND WE WILL BE ABLE TO SAY ONCE AGAIN {EAGLE HAS LANDED CLIP PLAYS}. FOR WHJE RADIO I AM JACK MICHAL, AND THIS HAS BEEN THE FIRST EPISODE OF SIGNIFICANT SCIENCE. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE MISSIONS NASA.GOV HAS A FULL LISTING OF ALL OF THEIR CURRENT PROJECTS, AS WELL AS MARSONE.COM HAS A FULL DESCRIPTION OF WHAT THEY ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE.