

TO THINK

BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	IV
A thought	1
Pandora's box	5
The mind	10
Consciousness	15
Mind-net	20
Memory	25
Thought society	30
Thought conditioning	34
Logic and irrationality	38
Hope or faith	43
Broken consciousness and creativity	47

INTRODUCTION

A thought, a thought... There's one! There's another! And another! They seem unending. One thought appears, followed by a new thought. (Do they ever stop?) If you are unfortunate enough to own a brain, then you understand what incessant problem thoughts can be. They never stop. Wouldn't each of us love to be able to turn off these psychic bombardments on command, just for a few minutes? Give the mind a mini-vacation, however brief?

What controls thoughts? What creates them? Right now, what created that thought, and that one? Is the continual barrage of thoughts thinking? Is thinking a conscious process? If so, is it possible to control? That depends on who is asking to control them – your mind, your brain, your consciousness? Each has its own spectrum of thoughts, both separate and interconnected in their creation and appearance. Which thoughts are you asking to control? Are those happy thoughts or sad thoughts, work thoughts or creative thoughts, thoughts of the future or obsessive ones? Is it brain chatter? The types and qualities of thoughts are as unending as the sheer number of them.

When we sleep, the conscious mind gets a break from some of the overt psychic noise, but the thoughts do not stop. They are playing in the dreamscape of the unconscious. These are freer thoughts, unconstrained by the conditioning of the conscious mind.

When people meditate, they try to still the thoughts, to give the mind a rest from the constant onslaught. But the thoughts keep coming.

There are thousands upon thousands of books on thinking, alternative thinking, brain chemistry, brain science, cognition, consciousness, cosmic consciousness, psychology, quantum psychology, behavioral psychology - every kind of theory that one can imagine on the processes of the mind. All explore and try to define the elusive electricity of thought. Where does it come from? Who controls it? Does it emerge from the brain, the mind, the consciousness, the soul, the air?

There are three main components in the thinking process: the brain, the mind, and the consciousness. Each area separate and at the same time overlapping and interwoven with the complex processes that put forth a thought. Brain, mind, and consciousness are not mutually exclusive functions. They are separate forces that work both independently and interdependently.

This book will explore these main components (and countless minor components) responsible for the process we call thinking.

Everybody is willing to tell you how to think. There is no shortage of advice. Nobody should tell you how to think. And this book will not do that. It simply invites you to look at thinking. It will give no singular, definitive answer to these mysteries because there is no single, unifying answer to processes of infinite complexity.

More than a manual for thinking, this is an exploration of the infinite possibilities of thought - a way to look at the process called thinking, and a way to develop that process which will open up possibilities for evolutionary steps in cognition and consciousness. Incremental steps, to be sure, but also subtle ones, which may seem small at first but can very well develop into great leaps.

A THOUGHT

What is a thought? Is it a sudden appearance of data in the mind? Is it an emanation from the deeper brain, or a flash of neurons? Is it an eruption of consciousness, or a cognitive reflex? Is it all of the above?

Nobody can actually prove where thoughts come from. Scientists can pinpoint regions of the brain that seem to be responsible for specific functions. They can identify which of these zones controls these functions. More to the point, they've identified these regions and attributed the creation and control of certain processes to each of these areas. With more advanced machinery, they are tracking signals to specific brain locations. For example, fear appears to be connected to the amygdala. It is assumed then that the amygdala generates fear. But does it? Or does it respond to fear stimuli and serve other purposes that we have not yet understood? Scientists seem to understand these brain functions... until a particular brain activity reveals an entirely new dimension and then the premise of their understanding dissolves. How does that happen? Is there something about the brain that makes it change its behavior according to the observer, a bit like the wave/particle duality of quantum mechanics?

Sometimes areas of the brain become damaged, and the functions performed by that part of the brain are taken over by other parts of the brain. How did it think to do that? Scientists cannot adequately explain this, but they have multitudes of concomitant and conflicting theories.

If you think of your brain running as a continuous machine, millions of little pistons firing constantly and emitting little bursts of spark that erupt into your consciousness as a thought, you would be making an analogy a bit like comparing the complexities of a super computer to a spoon. Yes, a thought is a kind of spark, more accurately, sequences and multiple combinations of sparks. But it is important to understand that each thought we access is not the totality of that thought.

You may get a sudden flash of understanding. Aha! You think you've completely grasped what it is and why you are thinking it, but you can't. Not in its totality.

To get a more expansive picture, dive into the depths of a thought. Our thoughts are not just one pinpoint eruption into our consciousness. A thought is more than a spark or series of sparks which we recognize and identify. What we call sparks are neurons firing and branching out across the brain. Every second, billions of neurons flash across this interior universe. At the point where these neurons intersect, they can form a synapse, which is a chemical location where the neurons can communicate with each other. Each of these billions of communications happening every second is a thought, a micro-thought. And while our system is detecting and processing these billions of micro-thoughts, our consciousness can only grab on to a thought once it has been made ready for presentation by the system. So, what we call a thought is a conscious recognition of a signal from the mind.

Each thought is the crest of a massive wave that is being fed and built from the depths within. What our consciousness grabs and identifies is simply the very peak of that wave. Beneath that thought is a swelling ocean of firing neurons intersecting at synapses, energies, frequencies- inner and outer forces that push the tip of that thought just above the surface where our conscious minds can catch them.

And one element that needs to be added to crest this wave - emotion. Before our consciousness can identify the amalgam of micro-thoughts, an emotional component must be added. Emotion is the force that bursts the wave into the consciousness. This triggers the consciousness to recognize the thought. We believe there are thoughts that are devoid of emotion, purely mechanical functions that take us through our day. There are -billions. But the thoughts that we consciously recognize are stimulated by an emotional process.

We may think we know where a particular thought came from, but right now consciousness is too limited to access the deeper dimensions of the mind or comprehend how it functions in its multi-

dimensional universe. It is like trying to see what's at the bottom of the ocean when you are sitting in a rowboat.

Your conscious thoughts are the ones you can recognize from your little rowboat. They're your babies, and they feel incredibly personal, made and generated by you. The consciousness has such limited access to the inner thought process that it is these outer bursts of wonderfulness that we consider our truest expressions of our unique personalities and our unique creations. They are in reality our least individual thoughts with all the influence of the outer world continually shaping and refining them.

The collective will of the group you live among is your society. This environment, which powerfully influences your consciousness, makes it very difficult to survive without fitting in. Furthermore, they reward you for fitting in, and they make you believe that you are a good person if you follow their protocols.

There is no creativity in conforming to, producing and eating the same macaroni as every person around you. A life devoid of any true creativity is rewarded a societal stamp of approval. The dull macaroni earns you the label of being a "good" person. Good for you, if you want a dull life with the illusion of safety. Eat more soft macaroni.

But society knows that every human needs to be creative and so we are given prescribed outlets for our creativity, safe creativity. Nice creativity. No creativity at all. That is because true creativity puts you in conflict with society's wishes. Unique creativity can stamp negative labels on you, and you will be punished for this. So, how can the consciousness create its own thoughts when the entire environment is working against it? How can you regain your own consciousness and rescue it from drone like processes that keep it trapped in base functionality?

The decision to change your priorities begins with a thought to do so. Shed your conditioning. Work with your consciousness. Now you say, "But if society creates my consciousness, my conscious thoughts are all simply society's thoughts, and I'm just following society's wishes, once again."

Your environment doesn't create your thoughts, it molds your consciousness. Your mind generates the thoughts that your

consciousness asks for. However, your mind generates infinitely more thoughts than your preconditioned consciousness, and these thoughts are continually working for the benefit of the system.

Maybe you want to expand your consciousness so you can show your friends how enlightened you are and watch them admire you. Or maybe, deep down in your system, your mind understands that it is time to make changes to the consciousness, as a matter of survival. Does it matter which? No.

The important part is taking the steps. It doesn't matter if your reason for expanding your consciousness is egocentric or generated by depths within as long as you move forward and take those first steps. When you forge new priorities and change your conditions, consciousness will begin to grow, and the quality of your thoughts will improve. Your little rowboat now has a big sail on it. You can even climb that mast and see further into the horizon.

PANDORA'S BOX

Sitting like a crown on the very top of the body, above the torso and all the limbs and organs, is the home of our command center. Location of four of the main sensory receptors, eyes, ears, mouth, nose, and the grandest organ called the brain.

Why is the brain perched atop the body, like a deity on its throne? Is the brain a living god? For scientists, the human brain is a mystery as complex and far reaching as the depths of space, and each new discovery opening countless vistas of uncharted territory.

There are approximately 100 billion neurons in the human brain. Did you know that the number of possible connections between these hundred billions neurons is greater than the number of atoms in the universe? Think about that for a moment. Consider the vastness of our universe. Now, consider the microscopic atom and the number of atoms contained in just a tiny pebble. There are billions. Now, imagine how many of those pebbles, each containing billions of atoms, could fill the universe. It is an unimaginable amount. And yet, it is smaller than the number of possible neural connections in one human brain.

We believe our brainpower is an accident of genetic fate. Luck of the draw. If we are born from a family of strong brains, we are convinced we have more potential than if we come from a gene pool of weaker brain matter. This is true in the most limiting and myopic of ways. The circumstances of one's birth will be far more limiting than the genetic material of one's brain. Why is that? Because everything a human attempts to do or would like to do, his or her brain, if basically healthy and undamaged, can easily perform. You may be conditioned to believe you are an idiot with no math, or science, or artistic skills. This is how some of the world's greatest geniuses were perceived in childhood. Yet, each went on to unleash the limitless forces of their brains and surpass all of these imagined limitations that were placed upon them.

Yes, there is a genetic architecture of the brain that each human inherits along with 100 billion neurons firing with more

potentialities than atoms in the universe. Anything is possible for anybody. You can build the brain you want.

How? In the same way a body builder builds his or her muscles - training. Every experience you have strengthens neural connections specific to that usage, just as lack of use weakens them. If you want to work with numbers or as a musician, repetition of your studies will strengthen those neural fields. Just like lifting weights builds your physical muscles, strengthening neural connections builds your brain.

This changeability in the brain is called neuroplasticity. This is how we can shape the brain we want - the stimulated neurons physically change the brain.

Let's look further at this regal brain, perched on its throne like a god, but really more a Pandora's Box sitting atop the shoulders.

Inside this micro-universe of the brain, there are systems within regions, glands within systems, hormones and chemicals, electricity and water, neurons and synapses, each with its specific function, yet completely interconnected and capable of crossing the borders of their putative territories.

Biologically, the brain's functions are to receive, analyze, and send signals. Its largest responsibility is regulating the body. It must monitor every sensation, every breath, every heartbeat, every blink of the eye, every micro-vibration in the human machine. The brain directs movement, makes calculations, and determines outcomes, all for the good of the system. It communicates with all the other organs and is the only organ of the body that is aware of all the other organs. Your kidneys don't know about your lungs. Your stomach doesn't know about your liver. None of the other organs are aware of the brain, but the brain is aware of and monitors all of them. It truly is the king of the human machine.

Looking at the unique parts of the brain is not an examination of some paragon of elegant design brought to you by evolution or God. It looks a bit like a child mashing chunks of clay on top of other chunks, trying to make it all these lumps fit into one small container called the human skull. This a ramshackle evolution took more than 500 million years. Studying the working parts of the human brain is a life's work for generation upon generation of brain scientists,

all building and expanding upon the theories of their predecessors. Advanced imaging reveals amazing breakthroughs and opens countless mysteries as scientists try to understand the workings of these virtually infinite neural connections. For every question that is answered, a hundred new questions appear as well as countless beliefs that evaporate.

To better grasp this ungraspable and impossible infinity of brain space, one must accept the two other components of thought: mind and consciousness.

No two people can truly find an acceptable definition of consciousness. This is the sphere of shared fantasy and huge expectation. There are scientists who even believe that consciousness is merely a cognitive illusion. That is how divergent the opinions are in this area.

As to the mind, most people use this word when they simply mean the brain, as if they are the same thing, but they are not. The mind does live in the brain, and it also lives in the spleen. Even undifferentiated cells have a mind. Yes, there is mind without brain. And the mind operates within and outside of the brain.

With these incredible new imaging machines, regions of the brain are identified as centers for behavior as well as controlling body functions. The mechanics of the body are assigned to these brain regions. Behavior becomes the territory where biology blends with psychology and these mysteries grow bigger the more we learn.

It is now understood that a damaged brain can have the functions supposedly controlled by that injured area, taken over by other parts of the brain. We don't actually make a conscious decision to do this. It just seems to happen. When mapping this new brain functionality, scientists observe neural connections jumping from other regions in response to stimuli to the damaged region. Is there a kind of mind within a mind working there? Can you imagine losing your sense of smell and having your feet take over the identification of scent? Or going deaf and then hearing with your fingers? It is just possible that there is more to the systemic mind than the simple explanation of brain regions.

If you look at the theory of brain hemispheres, specific functions are attached to left brain and right brain. The left brain is the

organizational side; the right, creative. But are we talking about brain hemispheres or consciousness when it comes to this conflict between traditional, fear-based beliefs and creative thinking? We are positing a model of the brain based largely on the dualism inherent in our philosophical structures.

The brain has already demonstrated its ability to transcend regional boundaries. As to the battle of left/right, we are now getting into the arena of a primary polar dynamic: experience versus creativity. This is a fundamental conflict within all human beings. Do we adhere to the old beliefs or allow the creative revolution of new ideas? Great nations have dissolved in civil war over these issues. Each individual fights these internal battles every day. Do I accept the status quo and the appearance of safety, or do I allow something unique to possibly upend my world?

New experiences challenge the old consciousness which is constantly attempting to maintain equilibrium to the belief system. Something, as simple as a difference of opinion, can engage a complex defense system that works with miraculous efficiency when dealing with the threats of the environment from the elements to bacteria to predators. When a problem arises, the limbic system will release neurotransmitters, such as norepinephrine, which activate a host of hormones (such as adrenalin) which ready the body for fight or flight.

In this defensive state, the limbic system can temporarily shut down the working memory. Every one of us has experienced this with one of the "button pushers" in our lives. It could be an enemy, a colleague, or even a loved one. They could be presenting a piece of information that is valuable if given proper consideration. We can even prepare ourselves to keep calm and rational in advance. But once this challenging thought has presented itself, and the limbic system has triggered its defense mechanisms, all rationality can disappear. This is quite an internal conflict that a human being, living in complex society, frequently finds him/herself in, and the old consciousness will often place the limbic system at odds with perceived and often imaginary threats.

Creativity is your inner anarchist which continually throws new concepts which present constant upheaval to the old consciousness.

This creates an internal imbalance. The transfer of activity between neurons is optimal when their activity is synchronized. When neurons experience contradictory signals, the emotional chemicals, released by the limbic system, create a frustration called cognitive dissonance. The mind becomes uneasy, feeling like it is working against itself.

It seems that each new belief that we accept entrenches itself and becomes a kind of personal dogma. Our old consciousness is comfortable with dogma. Dogma is steady. Our creative consciousness will then throw out new concepts and, if the old consciousness absorbs this new thinking into the belief system, it then becomes our next level of dogma. The old consciousness doesn't create the dogma. It is simply responding to concepts thrown at it by the environment or the internal creativity. New modes of thinking will strengthen the neural fields associated with that thinking. This is what strengthens the brain's connection to these concepts. When your creativity makes new discoveries to add to the consciousness, the old consciousness will struggle, once again, to fit these changes into the existing belief system. If the changes are too extreme, the old consciousness will reject them. Once again, cognitive dissonance is created with its attendant emotions. Anger and anxiety emerge. Now a new element must step in to try to smooth out these conflicting neural signals - will power. What we call an act of will is simply the mind attempting to smooth out these conflicting neural signals. When the dissonance finally subsides, the new beliefs become our next dogma, and on and on it goes.

This is the warfare going on within all organisms - the battle between creativity and experience, the struggle between old and new. Like an old political system or kingdom, the old consciousness fights to defend its position. It's willing to sacrifice everything, and casualties are irrelevant. In this war, the Old wins many of the bloody battles, but ultimately, the victor is always the New.

THE MIND

So, we have this wondrous organ called the brain, which performs feats and has capabilities far beyond the comprehension of our greatest scientists. The brain is our magic biological computer. Now, add to it mysterious software, a force that exists within and beyond the biology of the brain. It generates all creativity. It can operate beyond the bounds of linear time. It can model in three-D, but exists in a multi-dimensional universe. It functions in every level of existence from the cellular to the extra-terrestrial, at the micro and the macro. It can even think without the requirement of a brain. This is the mind.

If the brain is the system's hardware, the mind is the software. And it can run infinite programs. Run infinite programs? If it can run infinite programs, then there is no limitation to the mind. Correct. There is no limitation to the mind.

The mind is the source of all creativity, a force and an essence. Everything you model with your mind comes into existence. Great experiments by theoretical physicists are performed in the mind. And the mind has no problem grasping and working within these other-dimensional universes. It is a perfect government for the system. However, there is a limitation to this government - the consciousness. Consciousness constructs the reality, which the mind is forced to operate within. Reality is the limit of the consciousness which attempts to keep the mind operating within its boundaries. When a human says consciousness, he thinks infinity... but within a limitation.

We measure our thought processes in linear time, but the mind, like the universe, is a multi-dimensional organism. It produces, reproduces, creates, and recreates, not only sequentially, but in multiple dimensions of time.

Consciousness cannot expand itself. The conditioning is too constricting. However, the mind can expand the consciousness. The mind can take any shape the environment asks for. Education both grows and limits consciousness. Consciousness is conditioned by

the forces of the environment, from the machinations of society to flashes on the sun.

The consciousness attempts to corral the mind, though the mind is never truly contained - only the conscious ability to access the limitless bounty of the inner universe.

Imagine yourself for a moment. You can imagine yourself just as you are, or as you were, or as you one day will be. Now project yourself back in time. Place yourself in a year, long ago, perhaps a moment in history before you were born. Now, take yourself out of the past and transport yourself to the future, a distant future. You are standing on a planet in a newly discovered solar system. Visualize it completely. Conjure it into existence. Your mind has just crossed time and space. Keep holding that image of you on a new planet. Right now, you are existing in another dimension. The first thing you will say is, "Oh, my mind didn't cross time and space, my imagination did." How do you know? Is it possible that other dimensions exist right in your mind, in every mind? You can access them whenever you like.

We identify the mind with the physical brain. And yet, we can't even fully identify what the mind is, so how can we possibly limit it to the physical space of the brain?

There are animals that have nerve systems, but no brain. Can it be said that they have no mind? There is awareness. The system knows how to operate: how to hunt for food, how to defend itself. Does it have a mind?

We think of evolution as unidirectional working with creatures, growing in brain power all up the animal chain. But the simple sponge that lives at the bottom of the sea once had a brain and somehow made the decision that it didn't really need that brain to do what it needed to survive as an organism. Brains use a lot of energy, approximately 20 percent of a living organism's energy, what requires more food. So the sponge got rid of its brain. It wasn't worth the energy expenditure. An animal without a brain, which operates with awareness of its environment - can it be said to have a mind? This is awareness without self-awareness. What part of the sponge decided to get rid of its brain if not its mind?

The universe is a living organism. Every particle is a part of that living organism, from a star to a cell. All organisms communicate with each other. They have to in order to co-exist. Why does one cell behave differently than another of the exact same kind? Is it because of the environment? It is possible. But what if all of these cells are created and live in the same environment? If all cells behaved exactly the same, there would be no diseases. Every cell would do exactly what was right in order to survive. They would all perform exactly the same. But cells don't all behave the same. Do they have a mind? They have a mind in the sense that they act autonomously, even as part of a group. Is that paradox? No.

In a biological organism, each cell is created identically and programmed to perform specific functions. Yet, some cells behave and others misbehave. Why is that? Can it really be explained by simply labeling the well-behaved cells as strong and the misbehaving cells as weak? How do we know? What if the misbehaving cells are actually the strong ones that take the chances by separating their creativity from the pack? In that sense, is a rebellious cell weaker or stronger? New mutations are created by misbehaving cells. You could describe the entire evolutionary chain as a revolution of misbehaving cells.

Is there a mind involved? Inside your body, there are thoughts and decisions being made every micro-second, and the mind is involved with all of them. A strange bacterium irritates a cluster of cells, and infinite tentacles of the mind perform micro-flashes of calculations and decision making regarding this invader. There is a cellular mind, and you are composed of trillions of cells, each linked to your mind, making micro and macro decisions. Your mind is actually a micro-universe of minds connected to the macro-universal mind. Your mind is more than just you. All minds are connected.

You can generate a thought, a unique thought, all your own. And you can pass that thought to another person. Your thought has crossed the physical barrier of body and brain. And now that thought lives on in another mind. It can travel across the globe and live beyond your life span. In our rationalizations for why that thought continues we refuse to acknowledge the actual life and other-dimensionality of a thought. How can we be so sure?

Our thoughts live on, long past the deterioration of the body. Each thought is an energy that passes to others and lives on in the info-sphere. Your thoughts are immortal.

When your mind wanders, it easily travels across time and space. It bounces back and forth, between then and now, through time, back to the present, boomerangs into the future. Your consciousness cannot grasp all of the places it goes to. But your consciousness can feel that your mind has been to more places than the consciousness can comprehend.

Whatever our mind thinks about is modeled both in three dimensions and other dimensions beyond time. The mind can operate simultaneously in the past, present, and future. It is the consciousness which asks the mind to keep linear time. But the mind constructs models of the future which exist other-dimensionally at the moment of inception. These models of the future will often play out in the present and quickly become the past. It is not just fantasy which the mind is creating. It can anticipate future events as if they have already happened. Because the mind can step into the future, create a model of an event, and present time magically moves into that model.

Our minds, which feel incredibly personal, are components of the universal organism. But, unlike our bodies which are limited by our physical dimensions, the mind is not limited. It operates inside us and at the same time outside of our beings. It is part of the universal organism which exists in a state of perpetual kinesis, the movement happening simultaneously in multiple dimensions beyond space and time.

We like to separate and name these complex and subtle processes. We are comfortable drawing a line between unconscious mind activity and mind activity that our consciousness recognizes. The mind is not bothered by this. It makes no territorial demands on your system. The consciousness is trained for all the interferences.

The deep mind is the core existence, the essential and the expansive. No consciousness or sub-consciousness. This is the true essence of the self, the essence of our data collection and identity.

What should this micro-universe of the person be called? The soul? The spirit? The complete self? How do you name the unnamable? Simply, call it the mind... That is more than enough.

CONSCIOUSNESS

What is consciousness? Just saying the word unleashes a cascade of opinions, projections, beliefs, and fantasies. Now try looking it up. The descriptions do little to clarify such an expansive and elusive concept. Are any of the descriptions adequate? It feels like something is always missing.

Read a few of the thousands upon thousands of articles on the subject, and we will be no closer to agreeing on a definition. Something is always missing. Is it the state of being awake? Yes. But one could say this is being conscious but not an actual description of consciousness. Some say it is simply the awareness of the self. Yes, partly. How about an awareness of ourselves as human beings? Okay. But is that all there is to it? It still feels somehow inadequate. Is it a metaphysical presence that links all beings in the universe? That is far more entertaining. Certainly, we'd like it to be that.

To begin to grasp this concept, first we must distinguish between the current condition of human consciousness and its limitations, and what is commonly called infinite consciousness. There is a lot of wishful thinking in our concepts of consciousness. Besides awareness, we want it to have an element of magic. And it does have magic, even more than we fantasize about. Why do we even need consciousness? Why can't we do what we do as objective mechanisms with no first person subjective experience?

We continually attempt to define and fit into our personal mythologies this ineffable infinity we call consciousness, as if it is the magical Force out of Star Wars. But that is only our fantasy. At this evolutionary stage, we are limited by the fantasies of our environment. Everybody wants limitless consciousness. Who wants their cosmic playground limited? But Infinity, as you can well imagine, is huge. Infinite consciousness, by its very definition, is infinite. How will you handle that infinity? Where will you put your feet?

There seems to be a paradox of our perception of limitless consciousness and the actual limitations of our own, current

consciousness. There is no contradiction. We are a multitude of evolutionary steps away from taking part in limitless consciousness.

In later stages of human evolution, we will discover that consciousness is much more than the sweet fantasies of our childish myths, far greater than our sentimental wishes. But we are not yet ready to partake on that level. It's too early.

We think of consciousness as our road to the expansive, but it can also be limiting. A population that is raised under the oppression of an authoritarian regime might be subject to the consciousness of the oppressed. Certainly, modern society lives within a consciousness of consumerism. These are environmental limitations.

Consciousness is subjective. You experience your consciousness. It may be shaped by society, but it belongs to you. It is not yet possible to know if we are sharing consciousness when there are limitless other possibilities of brain activity, opinion, belief and feelings that we can share. Two subjectivities do not make one objectivity. Just because you and I have decided to define what we are sharing is consciousness does not mean that is what we are sharing. Yet, society will often define multiple, agreed upon subjectivities as objective. And these social constructs create a limitation that can be called the current objectivity. It is consensus objectivity. The quality of the consciousness is the fundament for the quality of subjectivity which can turn into objectivity for others. If I know the way you think, I can create a perceived objectivity for you.

You can infect another's consciousness through clever manipulation. Tell someone he's a genius, and you've added another dimension to his consciousness. Now he will begin spending more time on his genius. It is easy to be impressed by one's creativity and remain static in aesthetic arrest, but this expands nothing. It's simply an infection. Doubt is a necessary component in your genius. Doubt will not allow you to feel comfortable with your creativity. Doubt won't allow satisfaction to stagnate the creative process. In order to be today's genius you have to kill yesterday's genius. Yes, the genius inside you.

When we speak of shared consciousness, what is it that we are actually sharing? We can feel a unity with others, but is that really shared consciousness or shared feelings? We want it to be more.

But is it? Could consciousness shared merely be a shared belief or a shared opinion? The glue of any society is the agreed upon beliefs. The shared belief is called shared consciousness. Beliefs, while seeming collectively solid, can be altered and eroded. Beliefs are opinions, mutable opinions. When those beliefs disappear or change, is the consciousness still shared? Some of the people share the old belief, others embrace the new belief.

We like to call shared emotions shared consciousness. We want to believe that we are sharing the cosmic, but we are in fact sharing feelings with each other. And those feelings are very valid and powerful. However, it is our belief system that calls these shared feelings shared consciousness. We want these emotions to be something greater.

True highly evolved shared consciousness will come at a later evolutionary stage, when we are capable of accessing and navigating this expansive universe. What will the future bring to our evolution of consciousness?

Consciousness is connectivity. Think of the consciousness like an old fashioned telephone switchboard with a hundred, or a thousand, or a million inputs. But the operator is not using all of those connections. He rationalizes a limited amount of necessary connections and simply employs five or ten connections based on environmental demands, ignoring all of the other connections. Evolution of the consciousness will happen as more calls come in, and the operator has to use more and more of the jacks. As we become better at expanding consciousness, we will use more of that vast connectivity.

We want consciousness to be boundless, our portal to infinity. It is. But do you think that your consciousness can actually step into the infinite universe and still hold itself together? We think of consciousness as this great unseen force and - it is unseen. But the walls of our consciousness can be seen everywhere - they're all around you. The environment sets the current boundaries to and gives the practical definition of consciousness - it is bound by the limitations of the conscious. Society forms rules and demands that each mind adheres to those conditions. And we call these mind

limitations consciousness. Funny, that our consciousness limits our access to the limitless mind.

Everything in your environment conditions your consciousness. This is the current supply that is made available by the confines of civilization. Changing the environment changes the supply. Moving from one environment to another causes the consciousness to adapt itself. It can be a very difficult and uncomfortable process. If you switch from a wooden environment to a water environment, your consciousness must adapt. Habits, behavior, dress, hair, every change will alter the consciousness. Your consciousness will form and take the shape that the architecture of the environment allows.

Imagine the consciousness environment as a vast apartment building in which the architecture of each apartment is exactly the same, and inside each apartment live people and their consciousness. Can the consciousness expand within those walls? Yes, in small and difficult increments.

Expanding consciousness has two limiting factors: the architecture of the environment and the creative abilities of the person living in that structure.

The good news is, like a hair on your head, the consciousness grows without your effort whether you want it to or not. Maybe not as fast as you'd like, but you can't stop it either. Consciousness expands and grows. It is an immutable law.

So you are in your apartment/world with your consciousness, and you want to grow this consciousness beyond the bounds you live in. Given the constrictions of the architecture what can a person do to expand?

Be creative. Inside that apartment, you can construct new designs producing a new environment, which affects the consciousness. But playing with the architecture of consciousness is not like scribbling on a drawing pad or plucking the strings of a guitar because, although our current consciousness is limited, consciousness itself is not. Within these structural bounds, one must take the appropriate steps to expand the consciousness. You can open the window and let fresh air inside. This changes the environment and expands the consciousness. But if you leave the window open for too long, the room becomes unbearably cold. If

you bring in a grand piano, the floor may not be strong enough to hold the weight.

Play with the environment. Allow your consciousness to vary and expand and fuel it with the sparks of your imagination. But remember that you are playing with the infinite, which can be like a child playing with fire inside your own house. The child is very impressed by the blaze, but if it goes out of control, the building will burn down.

It is possible to step into unlimited consciousness, but without the internal structure to be there, your architecture will collapse. There are limits to what the unevolved consciousness can handle. Before you can step outside of your architecture, you must learn who you are. What kind of structure do you have and how far can you push that structure?

Society limits our consciousness, partly to protect and partly to control, like a protective parent. But this overly protective parent, which controls the environment to keep us safe, also constricts the consciousness so severely that it needs a rebellion to grow and expand.

This is the challenge we face. We want to break free of the overprotective parenting of socially constrained, limited consciousness, but if we bust out all of our windows, the temperature can quickly drop below zero. That is frustrating and disappointing, really. It seems like a tepid rebellion when the infinity of the universe is not the promised prize.

This is the juggling act. How do we push our creativity and grow consciousness and keep ourselves safe? Safety is an illusion. When can we be absolutely certain that we are safe? We cannot.

These experiments in expanding consciousness are never guaranteed. You rearrange the furniture and open the windows to expand your environment, hoping that you close the window before you freeze to death. That is the gamble. But without opening the windows, your apartment will never taste fresh air.

So, what is consciousness? Right now, consciousness is the creative ability of the mind within its limitations. Later, it will be your doorway to the infinite.

MIND-NET

One hundred years ago, did the internet exist? No. Well, kind of no. The formula and raw materials for the internet were always there, waiting to be discovered. Frequencies needed to be focused and sent, first through electric wires, and then through the atmosphere. And when the time was right, and all of this theory came together – voila – the internet was born. But the basic science for an internet has always been there.

Are there more internets to be discovered? More direct and efficient modes of communication we haven't yet conceived of? What could they be? Is it possible that all of our minds are connected, but we haven't unearthed the central mechanism to hook up to each other at will? How would that work?

We know that the brain continually emits billions of bursts of neurons and frequencies. The machinery for monitoring and imaging brain activity is continually evolving. Might we be close to the invention of some new conduit that can transmit those mind frequencies to another terminal?

In the original Matrix film, the hero is jacked into the internet/matrix by a plug in the back of his head that directly wired him in to the network, just like in the early days of the internet when we had to connect our computers through the phone lines. Now the signals can be beamed into our tablets and smartphones while we move through the sky in giant aircrafts.

Does the capability to send those frequencies directly into our minds already exist? Is it possible? We now accept that the collecting, focusing, and transmitting of frequencies is the basis of all our communication. Every creature on Earth is actually a transmitter and receiver of frequencies. This transmitting and receiving of frequencies with their infinities of information is sometimes called the Collective Unconscious, but operates more like an internet for the mind. The terminology of a mystical realm that we all can access, called the Collective Unconscious, is far more romantic sounding than the mechanical sounding Mind Internet. But it is only because consciousness still exists at such a primal

stage in its evolution that we try to create fantastic mysteries out of processes for the universe that are quite mechanical.

We don't understand the amazing capacity of the mind to receive and send frequencies, so we create great mysteries with a kind of religiosity that our consciousness can accept. Why is it so easy for us to accept that a little box made of plastic and a few mineral chips can collect the right frequency amid the trillions of frequencies in our atmosphere and convert them to a human voice that we can recognize, but we can't accept that the human brain, which is a billion times more complex and intelligent than a cell phone, would easily be able to do the same thing, even much more?

One day people will laugh that ancient humans once put more faith in their silly little cellular devices than in their multi-dimensional minds.

You see how limited consciousness is, right now? So, how do we receive and sort these infinite frequencies? Animals have a higher sensitivity and broader spectrum of frequency receiving than humans. You've seen a dog perk up its ears when it hears something just outside of our hearing range. The logical explanation is that it is simply detecting a higher frequency than the human ear can recognize. It seems logical. And that is often the case, but sometimes not. When a disaster like an earthquake or tornado is imminent, all of the animals in the area become jittery long before the storm arrives. Are they sensing rumblings deep in the tectonic plates or receiving signals from other animals? They are receiving transmissions from the entire world around them. These frequencies all carry specific signals. The human mind also registers every frequency it encounters. But it is rare for a human to have the consciousness that can correctly interpret a signal from an impending storm like an animal can. Some can. We call those people clairvoyants or crazy.

The depths of the mind contain infinite storage capacity as well as the ability to go out and access other minds. It is the consciousness which is so limited in retrieving and reading these frequencies. The mind acts as a kind of binary filter for the consciousness. It takes in every frequency and makes a simple calculation - can this consciousness use it? On, off. Yes, no. The mind makes those calculations within its individual spectrum. We receive every

transmission, from the frequencies emitted by the brain of a quantum physicist to the base frequencies of a digesting cow.

Every molecule, every quark and neuron, every single source of energy emits a frequency. Every signal sent from our phones and our satellites and every thought from every creature emits frequencies. Frequencies never die. What happens to them? Where do they go? Certain frequencies remain in terrestrial orbit while others project out of our atmosphere into space, traversing the universe. Mental frequencies collect in a layer at the upper level of the atmosphere called the Info-sphere.

Right now the mind is picking up many signals from the Info-sphere. These are little flashes, from the mundane to the brilliant. When ideas spring into our consciousness, it seems like we are accessing some kind of muse. What is actually happening is we are accessing frequencies from the Info-sphere.

We don't yet have the ability to tap into the Info-sphere at will, the way we can access the Internet with one click on the computer. In the future, we will readily access it rather than wait for accidental inspiration from the muse. We will connect to the Info-sphere through the Mind-Net which will be the conduit that every consciousness uses to connect to the Info-sphere and to link directly to each other's minds, like the internet, but without monthly access fees. The connectivity will not come from wires or satellite transmissions, but from expanded consciousness. This is how we will access and download data from the Info-sphere and other consciousness.

Most of our universe is what we think of as empty space. Not air, which is comprised of several gases, each with its own molecular structure. At the sub-atomic level, tiny particles spin around a nucleus, and the distance between these particles, which compose all matter, is as vast as the distance between our planets - between these molecular planets - space. If you take the space out of the all the atoms of every person on Earth, the entire human population, seven plus billion people, would take up the same volume as a sugar cube. So, our universe, which contains immeasurable stars, and asteroids, and planets, and strange matter, and black holes, is mostly space. But this space between electrons and nuclei is not empty

space. Over eighty percent of our universe, with all its seemingly empty space, is made up of matter which scientists cannot observe. They call this dark matter.

The universe, with all that seemingly empty space, exists within this paradoxical dimension of immense compression and lightness called the ether. Everything exists in ether. This is how your consciousness will access the Mind-Net - through the ether. You are already using it, with limited capacity. When Tesla said he received all of his knowledge from the Ether, he wasn't implying that he pulled it all out of thin air, but out of very "thick air" - ether. In order to access the Mind-Net, the consciousness must learn how to enter the ether. We will be able to do that when the consciousness can evolve beyond the individual ego. It is the walls of the personality that block access to the infinite. We aren't blocked so much by lack of knowledge as by the limitations of ego.

There is a common fear that blocks every one of us on our path toward expanding consciousness and stepping into the unknown. You can call it the fear of death. But what does that mean, fear of death? It is the terror of loss of the ego, the individual self, with a very strong emphasis on the word self. Modern society has elevated the value of the individual. Great social structures are built around the concept of the inviolate temple of the self. And we spend our entire lives protecting this temple called "ME."

When we evolve to the point where we can break down the barriers of the self and truly share consciousness with each other, we will be stepping into other minds. It is quite a terrifying idea, really. Our egos revile the concept of having another step into its thoughts. It feels like a mind rape. Who are we if not for the individuality of our thoughts? What will happen to this unique personality that brings each of us so much wonderful... chaos?

Can we be so sure that breaking through the barriers of self won't enrich us? Why do we see this as a loss? Surely, the ability to share consciousness with another would grow our empathy. In our individual worlds, full of such hideous loneliness, groping desperately for connection, we ironically cling to our individuality which only increases the isolation. This is not a paradox, but the contradiction of human understanding.

And what is the individual? Nothing more than organic matter with a personality attached. At least, as far as we understand individuality. Whether we have souls is immaterial to our need to protect this individual personality. After all, you can't see your soul. But you can certainly see the giant personification of ego right in your own mirror. Look closer, closer still. That reflection is blocking your access to the infinite.

MEMORY

Let's look at this function we call memory. What is memory? Is it the brain's mechanical process of storing data? Why is everybody's memory so inaccurate, except yours? What we think of as memory, does it even exist? Let's take a look.

Memory is a two-part process. Something goes in and something is pulled out - simple. What goes in is the most unadulterated part of the experience, the one most closely resembling the original fact, although it won't be purely objective because the moment of the experience is filtered through consciousness and emotion as it is presented to the system. We always think of memory as the objective imprint of the original experience. We admit our own memories may be faulty, and we are exceptionally aware of the faulty memories of others. Actually, what we are calling faulty memory is not faulty. The memory is perfect. What is flawed is the process of recalling that memory.

An event happens. That event is now stored in the system. But what we call memory is the emotional copy of the original event retrieved through a distorted process called remembering. This is where the trouble begins.

There is a wide disconnect between memory and remembering. We believe our own memories are accurate, and that it's just the people around us who are cursed with an inability to properly access objective memory. There is no such thing as objective memory, at least not when it comes to our conscious access of it. It is like jumping into the ocean and believing that you can emerge as dry as when you jumped in. Too many processes are at work.

The consciousness, which is the weakest part of our thinking process, feeding on and maximizing emotions, always carrying the influence of other consciousness, creates too many distortions for us to be able to access an objective memory. Yet, we will swear a blood oath that we are remembering exactly what happened as a pure objective fact. The consciousness cannot do that. It is not allowed to do that. But the mind can. Buried deep in the system, the memory is pure. And without the interference of our

consciousness, the mind knows exactly how to use that memory. The mind takes in every experience and optimizes it for the good of the system. This is an automatic process. The consciousness takes every experience (and replays) and rationalizes it according to the amount and quality of emotions attached to the experience. If there are heightened emotions, especially negative or traumatic ones, the consciousness will replay these experiences, (refining them) over and over again. The process of remembering is always colored by the emotion added by the consciousness. The rationalization process syncs up with the emotion of the memory and replays it with these added emotional distortions. There is comfort in this replaying - the comfort of habit, especially with trauma. The consciousness rationalizes the need to remember the trauma as necessary to the system. This is a bug in the human machine, a flaw that is created and exacerbated by consciousness. Instead of taking the experience and categorizing it in the appropriate file, we amplify and distort the signal by continually replaying and raising the emotional level, thus overvaluing it. This mismanagement of negative experiences overwhelms the system and stamps traumatic identity on the personality. That person now identifies more and more as a victim. This fully rationalized repetition habituates victimhood.

Imagine your memories as a library of your experiences with wonderfully wide shelves. Every experience is a new book for your library, and it is appropriately filed for access when needed. When you recall an experience, you are not using the original book from your library, but you are creating a new copy of that experience, recooked by your consciousness and flavored with fresh emotions. This is how we remember. There is no objectivity in remembering. There is only the interference of your consciousness. In this sense, there is no objective past... We feel memory as the past, but we've subjectivized it.

When you obsessively recall a memory again and again, you are creating a fresh copy every time, coloring it and then placing each copy back in your bookcase. As big as that library is, it becomes overcrowded by the endless copies of a particular memory with all of its new emotional distortions. Your library is now dominated by

an obsession and all of its endless reprints. There is no room on the shelves for new experiences.

It is important to understand that every experience has a life and a lifetime of its own. Each of those experiences wants to live, wants to be reawakened and brought to life again and again, to grow. However, your mind is continually cleaning the shelves, placing these old books in deep storage, away from conscious access, eliminating old data, making space for new experiences, upgrading your software. This is called forgetting. Although our consciousness hates forgetting anything, the mind understands the importance of prioritizing experience and creating space for new ones.

When you keep your system stuck on the same memory, you are copying and replaying copies of copies of copies, reading the same book over and over again. You are now reading the same book over and over again, when you should put the book on the shelf and forget it while you read new books. We do this most extremely with trauma. And our consciousness works perfectly at rationalizing this obsessive thinking and trapping us in victimhood. This is the area where a habit becomes a destructive addiction. And nobody can rationalize as perfectly as an addict. We rationalize this replaying of the pain as a defense mechanism because we think the painful memory is a warning against repeating a previous mistake. Yet, every time we replay the warning, we are reliving another copy of the trauma, and quite often the distortion becomes more extreme than the original event. Replaying fears and traumas becomes a habit. What we call trauma is not the original experience. Trauma is our reaction to the experience and it is purely subjective. It is a combination of the coping threshold of the individual and the shared definition of the society.

A hundred years ago, it was quite normal for a disobedient boy to receive a beating for his transgression. It was considered normal, even a necessity, so the child wasn't traumatized by an event which was common all around him. If the event happens beyond the boundaries of the accepted norm, it is seen as traumatic. And it is. When an experience pushes an individual past its ability to cope, the trauma is real. A hundred years ago, no child would be traumatized by a small spanking. Now, an entire society will be

up in arms over the spanking. Certain aboriginal tribes still have rituals to bring young males into adulthood that civilized society would look upon in horror. Yet, those young men go through these seemingly brutal rituals and are happy to be embraced by the tribe as men. This is not an attempt to make any pronouncement over the morality of spanking or performing any violence on children, but simply to point out that society determines what trauma is at a particular time.

People are creatures of habit and comfort, and if an experience is within the boundaries of accepted behavior, a single human would rather process it as normal. So, how does one break the habit of obsessive thinking? - By changing the environment. An obsessive thought has its own environment. By continually summoning these obsessive thoughts, we become inhabitants of that environment. The way to break the habit of these thoughts is to create new environments. This is done both physically and mentally.

Remember, we are fighting against a comfort we have created with this habitual obsessive thought. You may think, "How can this be a comfort? I am tortured by this maddening repetition." But habit becomes habit because it is comfortable. It's easy because there is no work involved. You sit there and without any effort on your part the obsessive thought appears.

So how do we process negative experiences so that we can use the information provided without all the heightened emotions and attendant replaying that goes with it? This is where we must understand the division between mind and consciousness. The mind knows exactly what to do with every experience. Its protocols are for processing all information for the optimal benefit of the system. You do not need to continually replay burning your hand on the stove in order to make sure that you never burn your hand in that way again. Your mind needs no help from your interfering consciousness. It is the childish and weak consciousness that interferes with the perfect functions of the mind. Replaying your memories, whether good or bad, will continually disrupt your present and your future. Even that good memory, when constantly replayed, becomes a burden on the system in the form of disruption. When you summon a sweet memory you are getting

high on nostalgia. Maybe you are remembering a success at work or a happy time from your childhood, incredibly sweet. We need this sweetness as part of life. Dipping into these memories easily turns into a drug. Just like repetitious trauma, good memories are the narcotic of living in the past. Don't pretend that you will do it once or twice in your lifetime and then leave it behind. Good memories when repeated create a sense of longing for the past - what an awful thing to do to your system, which is trying to live in the present and build a future. How can you be here now, as the old saying goes, when you are bombarding your system with these sweet memories which drug you in the melancholic addiction called nostalgia?

You will defensively say, "What is the point of having good experiences if we shouldn't think about them?" Those good experiences enrich your being. It is alive inside you without you constantly dredging it up. Your system already remembers everything. Your mind knows exactly what to do with those experiences. It needs no help or interference from your consciousness. Leave your mind alone and let it do its work.

Keep your consciousness away from your memories for the reason that it can't handle them. Remembering is simply perfect lying to yourself. Do you need it?

THOUGHT SOCIETY

All creatures live in societies. There is no absolute solitude for any living entity. Actually, everything exists within a society. From planets and stars, to molecules and cells, all exist in relation to a multitude of similar others, even thoughts. Thoughts are energies, living energies. They are born, they live, and eventually, maybe, in their own way, they die, like people.

Every society asks for the rules to be obeyed. When a person operates within the rules of his society, all is calm in that environment. The society approves. If that person alters their behavior and pushes beyond the accepted boundaries, there is conflict within the society.

Thoughts live in a society of thoughts, organized in a highly complex society within the mind. A thought is born and placed in thought society. That thought is expected to behave in relation to the other thoughts in the society. How does a thought coexist with other thoughts? How does a person coexist with other humans and other life forms?

Society imposes restrictions and identity on you. If you see yourself differently than your society sees you, there will be conflict. You are required to see yourself just as society sees you and behave accordingly.

But who are you? Who can truly see themselves? If you are a tomato, do you see yourself as a tomato or a rose? How can you know the difference?

If you are in conflict with your society, you may be living among the wrong people. This doesn't simply divide up into regions, races, genders, nationalities, or religions. People have inner lives far more dimensional than their outer circumstances. And our inner societies speak constantly to the other inner societies in our environment.

Have you ever met a person who seems like they should be a perfect companion for you? They have similar temperaments, like the same things, share similar ideas, politics, intelligence, looks, humor, and a perfectly complimentary package. And yet, something about them irritates you and, probably, you them. Why? Because

the inner you is not vibrating with their inner person. There is no society of micro-thoughts between you. Everything is on the outside. Who you are is far more than your outer attributes. And people mistakenly believe that sharing these outer manifestations of personality will make for harmonious society. Sometimes it does, sometimes not.

We often see a mismatch of personalities when people choose their lovers. You look at a couple and think, "That's a bad match." Outwardly, this is correct. But something inside is creating a connection between these two people. The usual logic is that their hormones got the better of them and they are together because the sex is good. Why is the sex good? The answer might be chemistry. Is it chemistry? What are chemicals? Certainly something that has nothing to do with the outer personality. Chemicals live inside us and exist as part of our biology. They are part of the inner communication between biology and thought.

When you see two people who seem like a complete mismatch, they are more than idiots being led by their hormones. Something inside is talking. They are sharing inner music which cannot be heard by the outer ears.

If eventually this pair splits up, as invariably they do, it is usually because they can't make their outer society work - the outside forces of environment and self-overwhelm the pair. They go their separate ways, and their friends say that it all worked out for the best because they were a bad combination. Outwardly, they are right, but the outer society has no insight to another's inner life.

We delineate all matter, organic and chemical, into types, which we organize in categorical societies. Planets and stars are placed in galaxies and solar systems. Cells are grouped with identical cells and interact with other groups of cells. These organisms are identified and placed among similar organisms. Tomatoes are planted with tomatoes, roses with roses. All deviations create unease within the society.

Now consider the issue of personal identity. Do you know what you are? Where would you place yourself? Are you a tomato or a rose? If you're a tomato who sees himself as a rose, there is a conflict inside you and with your surroundings. If you live among

the tomatoes and act like you think you are a rose, there will be problems. The other tomatoes will resent you thinking you are a rose. But are you a rose? Maybe you fantasize about being a rose, but you are something else you can't seem to see. Maybe you are a tomato and must learn to coexist with your fellow tomatoes. Nobody can tell you. They can simply give you their emotional opinions, no more accurate than your own.

How can we know? You can only know who you are when you can identify with your inner world as well as your outer world.

You were born a tomato among other tomatoes, but inside you feel you are a rose. Are you a rose? Or is it your (outer) ego that wants to be seen by society as a rose? This is an important distinction. Are you in conflict with the rest of the tomato patch because inside you are a rose? Or you are in conflict because you want to be seen that way. If you are truly a tomato, it's better to learn how to live in the society of tomatoes. But first, find out. Check your outer society and your inner society.

Harmonious coexistence creates a kind of tenuous peace, an illusion of harmony.

When your thoughts vibrate easily with other thoughts, there is a peace of mind. Your thought society is calm. When conflicting ideas appear, discord is created. We call this cognitive dissonance. Your thought society is disrupted. When you throw new ideas at the consciousness, tumult appears. The boat begins rocking. Too much rocking will upend the boat. Your consciousness is dumped in the middle of the sea. What now? Try to climb back into the boat and be careful not to rock it anymore? Or swim away from the boat toward an unknown future? That is revolution. Revolution is the destruction of something old. And it's very painful. With revolution comes evolution. Do we choose revolution or safety? Actually, the consciousness doesn't choose at all. These decisions are made in spite of us. The decisions to always remain safe and never rock the boat are made by your environment (society) and trained with fear. Growth is painful, from within and without. The decision to upend your boat and swim into the deep is made by your inner society. It is a kind of survival mechanism. The mind knows what you need and will always work toward achieving it. This revolution / evolution

in your inner machine is releasing creativity and forging identity. If there is conflict with the outer society, so be it. The inner life must push forward. When this happens, emotions become irritated. Dissatisfaction is created. We don't like our emotions to be irritated – on the contrary, we want our emotions to be pleasurable. And we like the volume of pleasure turned up very loud.

Should we listen to the irritating music? Why not? This irritating music is the great, noisy overture of your revolution. Listen deeply. Since the music that comes next is not noisy at all, you won't even be able to hear it, at first. This is the music of the inner depths, of the universe inside you. Why can't you hear it, now?

Look into the mirror. What do you see? Loud emotions! A creature of want with an insatiable hunger to devour pleasure!

These loud emotions drown out the inner music. To discover who you are, you have to be able to hear your inner music. These are gentle, subtler notes, music that your turbulent consciousness cannot detect. These soft tones are drowned by emotional noise. To hear this inner music you must listen. Turn down the emotional volume. Tune the inner ears. Be still. Listen. At first, you may only hear your breathing, or your stomach growling. Stay still. Just listen. Build your inner ears.

You don't discover these inner symphonies with your passions. Love won't help you coax out these sweet sounds. Hate won't drive you toward this music. Train yourself to be still and listen.

In order to know if you are a tomato or a rose, or some other exotic plant you never conceived of, you must learn what you are inside. Once you can hear those subtle deep notes, you can begin to harmonize with your outer music. When you can hear and integrate your inner and outer music, then you can find who you really are. You may discover that you are neither a tomato nor a rose. You are an orchid.

THOUGHT CONDITIONING

Everybody wants to improve their thinking. But how is it they want to improve it? The speed? Efficiency? Quality of thoughts? Everybody wants to be able to control their thinking. Not just to control it, but to stop it at will, to stop those incessant thoughts and give the mind a respite. Can it be done?

You can never stop your thoughts. It is not possible. When people say they want to stop thinking, they mean they want a vacation from the thoughts that trouble them. Nobody needs a break from happy thoughts since they are immensely pleasurable. And who wants an escape from pleasure?

So, knowing that one can never stop thinking, is it possible to reshape and improve the quality of our thought processes? Yes. The path to change begins with the weakest link – your consciousness, that most unstable part of the psyche which has been built by society in more ways than we can ever realize.

The first step in upgrading the quality of your thoughts is by systematically expanding the limits of your consciousness. How to expand the limits of the consciousness? By breaking the barriers of thinking? By taking new routes to your thoughts?

Imagine that you live in a city, and you want to go from point A to point B. You know exactly how to get there. You take the number 9 bus to a specific location, change to the 215 bus and arrive shortly after at point B. Point B is your destination. It is your thought. You expand your consciousness not so much by changing your thoughts as taking new roads to them. Instead of jumping on the number 9 bus and transferring to the 215, take a different route to the destination. These new routes are new conditions. New conditions bring new qualities to the same thought. You arrive at the same point, but you've changed your emotional state by taking a different route. You can go to the same job every day and return to the same home every night, but you don't have to take the same road to get there. These new paths create change. The change is only a centimeter away. The new route is infinite. Move just that slightest degree in the new direction and a new future appears.

Now, keep expanding; add a new way of using a familiar tool - doubt.

Doubt!? Your first reaction to doubt is that it will undermine everything positive you want to do in your life. You want certainty, not doubt. Doubt is a word filled with emotions, most of them simply complexes which turn into self-doubt. Self-doubt is an infection which pounds away at the ego and quickly turns into a neurosis that cannot help anyone. This is where your new doubt comes in.

Doubt should be a checkpoint, simply a question to regularly ask to navigate yourself toward your goal. You don't have to dissolve yourself with self-doubt or even believe that a measure of doubt is a negative process. Questions are helpful. Doubt should simply ask the question. That is why doubt is an excellent tool to check yourself against a devouring feeling called want.

We want. We constantly want. How many times a day do you say, "I want this" or "I want that"? How many of our thoughts are simply wants? Not needs, but wants. You want to expand your consciousness, or you need to expand your consciousness? Want comes from the consciousness. These desires are pure conditioning. You say you want something, but is it you who really want it, or is it your conditioning that has trained you to want it.

The moment you want, you are a consumer. You want something because you desire to feed on it. Not for nourishment, but for a preconditioned sense of pleasure. Want is not need. You need oxygen to breathe. You need warmth and shelter to survive. You need food to live. You may think you need a specific cheeseburger with light mayonnaise and sweet pickles on it because you want it. This is conditioning. You want a new car, a better job, more money.

Use doubt as your checkpoint. Let doubt ask the question of your wants. Why do I want a new car? Do I need it to get to work? Probably yes. But maybe you don't. Do you want a utilitarian car to simply shuttle you to your place of employment, or would you like a very nice car, one that you can be proud of? This is conditioning. You want society to see you in your shiny new car. You are showing what a top notch consumer you are.

You rationalize your wants in order to believe that your desires come from you. They don't. The "you" inside your deeper mind,

living in multi-dimensional, expansive space, has no need of your preconditioned wants. That mind can already travel to other galaxies without such primitive transportation as a shiny new car. What would your mind do with a ludicrously archaic automobile when it can already cross infinity within a micro-second? Your consciousness wants the car. Doubt your consciousness, but not your mind. Your mind knows exactly what it's doing. It's that tricky little consciousness that you believe is so infinitely expansive which is currently holding back your mind.

Now, you say you want to expand your consciousness. Are you sure that is what you want? You may want the pleasure that you think will be delivered by an expanded consciousness. Check yourself. You say you want to expand your consciousness to achieve deeper spirituality. Are you sure that the spirituality you seek isn't a code word for a state of bliss, which is a huge pleasure? Happiness, bliss, these are pleasures. And every one of us wants pleasure, as much as we can get it. Now, check yourself again. Do you want it? Want is a lack. You want something because you can't have it. If you can have it, you don't need to want. You can.

Somewhere between your wants and needs is a powerful desire that leads to something called wish. There is a powerful distinction between wanting and wishing. Want belongs to the consciousness. Wish belongs to the system - the mind.

It is the difference between passivity and active participation. When you wish for something, and you know how to enkindle the processes to ignite that wish, you are not passively waiting for the gods to deliver you a sparkly new toy, but you are activating internal protocols that take shape in the deeper mind. That is one of the differences between want and wish. Want lies and waits for something to be miraculously delivered. Wish, fully activated, begins vibrating instantly in your micro-universe, which simultaneously vibrates in the outer universe.

Your wants are some of the greatest limitations to your thought capabilities. Your want is not the maximum that awaits you, it is a limitation. Your wants are a limitation to your opportunities. Your wants always ask for the shortest road, but your wish requires the most productive route to the same destination. Your wishes need to

be shown respect. The mind knows precisely how to get there. Will you let your want handicap your wish?

LOGIC AND IRRATIONALITY

Thinking is supposed to make you clever. And everybody thinks, constantly. Logically, this would mean that the world is filled with very clever people - an unstable premise, to be sure.

The complex and unrelenting processes of thought continually overwhelm the individual. Thoughts confuse more than clarify. We employ different processes to attempt to make sense of and clean all the inner and outer stimuli that vexes our minds and demands constant attention.

Tools are needed to traverse this unstable terrain; guidelines created to conduct each person along a safe path. One of the most relied upon tools we use to navigate these bumps in the road is called logic. It is the way we form reasonable arguments in order to make the highest quality decisions for our lives. Everything seems to fall into place when we can box it up in logic. Where does this logic come from?

When a human is born, concepts like logic and rationality do not exist. The mind exists. The environment will shape the consciousness. The human will grow and operate within two environments: the natural environment and the artificial one. The natural environment is simply the state of nature and its demands. If you live in a scalding desert, your biggest priorities will be finding shade and water. If you are raised in the frozen tundra, your priorities will be warmth and food. All of these factors affect the consciousness. The artificial environments are man-made. Like societies. Every society is an artificial environment created by people. As a child grows, it is introduced to behavioral and survival processes by both the natural and artificial environments. The way the child responds to these processes depends on multiple factors, such as the child's hardware: biology, genes, hormones, etc. One of these processes is the skill of problem solving based on the ability to reason. When a sound argument is made we call it logical.

The natural environment will influence the consciousness and create separate logics to suit the needs of different societies. For example, a person born in the city will employ different rules of

logic than a person who lives in the jungle. The strongest influence on the consciousness, and therefore the greatest influence on the reasoning faculty, will be by the artificial environment.

All societies depend on the participation and cooperation of their members. Rules of behavior and prescribed guidelines are created. And, in order that people may operate within these guidelines, society educates them in modes of thinking. It is assumed in each culture that the education they are receiving will be for the optimal benefit of both the individual and the whole of society. One of the modes of thinking society educates its members in is a form of reasoning called logical thinking. When choices are presented, logic is the tool applied to make a well-reasoned argument. Society determines the structure of the logic that will be used by that particular group. Society demands the logic that it will accept.

Without specifically teaching logic, society's logic is formed in the child's consciousness by the dominant forces prevalent in every aspect of life. We are indoctrinated into using this reasoning capability, and we rest much of our survival on this ability. Logic becomes a catch-all term to form the foundation of our decision making.

When we say something is logical, what we mean is it makes sense to us. We don't analyze the quality or depth of our own logic. "I understand you" means - "I can follow your logic."

Logic is used as both a tool to help the individual make the best decisions, but also to create conformity of thought within a society. It is not seen as logical to conflict with your society.

So, what is logic? Logic is the way you process data. Each problem a human faces contains its own share of data. Logic is the glue used to connect these particles of data. Our personal logic is based on our capabilities to analyze given problems. If it's a problem that simply involves three particles of data, we usually have the tools to negotiate it. But problems often involve more data than we are initially aware of. What we think is a three-particle situation slowly reveals itself as a four-particle conundrum, and in no time at all it grows into a twenty-particle dilemma, far beyond our logical capabilities.

New ideas continually challenge our logical faculties. When we receive new data, we try to process it through our logic filter. If the new data is too complex for the individual's logic, the system can reject it as illogical. More often, when we find ourselves in situations where our logic skills are overtaxed by the complexity of data, we turn the problem over to a higher authority. We are indoctrinated to accept logical authority beyond our own reasoning capabilities.

If a mathematician or physicist proposes a concept that we cannot comprehend, we naturally surrender to their authority. We accept their logic. We are trained to do this. But how often is our surrender to authority actually obedience to an illogical domination? Remember, society forms consensus logic to create conformity of behavior in its members. This is the logic of mass consciousness with all of its generalizations. Broad generalizations in logic form faulty conclusions. We are trained to jump to logical conclusions based on surface reasoning. Do we really analyze all possible outcomes before we come to a logical conclusion, or do we simply rely on a conditioned logic that preselects our choices? We take complex situations and try to reduce them to simple conclusions, which is highly illogical. How often are we frustrated by the illogical outcomes that continually thwart us? So society conditions and gives us its logic, then we add our own touches. Our logic becomes so personal, so egocentric, that it's not really logical at all. Since logic is a consensus, it's not based on objective laws. Logical arguments are agreed upon criteria with which we connect particles of data.

We believe in our logic as a perfectly rational function. We think this rational tool can bring order to the chaos that infects our world, daily, and that our only challenge is to efficiently apply logic to our decisions. Logic is a base and rudimentary tool perfectly suited to making decisions like which direction to travel in to reach a certain destination. If I want to go west and the sun sets in the west, head toward the sun and I will be heading west. These are the life decisions logic is useful for. But logic is a catastrophe if you think it will help you evolve your thinking.

Logic is conditioning – we are conditioned to expect certain outcomes based on rational and logical reasoning. Actually, what we

call rational thinking is rationalizing. We are using logic to predict safe outcomes and justify self-imposed positions. We continually attempt to define and squeeze the universe into logical Patterns that we are comfortable with and are continually surprised when the universe breaks apart our logical premises.

Logic is mostly used as a rationalizing tool to support an emotionally created belief. We don't intend it to be such a thing. We want logic to be a beacon that illuminates a clear path, unfettered by emotion and irrationality. And yet, look how easily logic dissolves as we go through our life processes. Why doesn't the logic remain stable? That is because there is one factor which supersedes logic – emotion. In the battle between logic and emotion, emotion always wins. So logic is created by society and controlled by emotions. Not a stable footing for our reasoning capacity.

Can a person build his own unique logic and still make it acceptable to someone with simpler logic? If your logic is more advanced and complex than is acceptable in society, you will be seen as illogical. Logic is a consensus. So, how do we elevate our logic capabilities and communicate them to others who are trained in basic subjective generalizations? There is a very simple trigger which can be used to invite a person to look at complex, multi-layered logic. Simply put the word "imagine" in front of the logic. This presents your logic in a kind of 3-D virtual model. When you tell the person to imagine your virtual model, you can use simple comparisons that they can grasp. This may not help the person to fully grasp your multi-dimensional logic, but it will get them to listen. When a new logic recipe is presented this way, the system automatically slows down to process the data. Complex logic works best at lower speeds, broken down into its most basic steps.

It will take a very open mind to be able to abandon the safety of societally built logic. But the need for safety is a hard concept to leave behind. How can consciousness expand when cushioned and caged in supposed safety? If we are going to allow fresh air into the consciousness apartment and attempt to broaden the consciousness, the first thing we must do is put aside this supposed logic. Fresh thinking requires fresh logic. And most logic is built on old rules.

We build great ladders of science on logic - theory and experimentation follow logical patterns. And then what happens? The mathematician or scientist reaches a place where the logical patterns dissolve. At this point they can cling to their logical premises or, if they are visionary, step beyond the constraints of their logic and explore the other dimensional. Visionaries pull their greatest ideas out of the ether. Unbound by logical calculations, the vast irrationality of the universe dares them to step into infinity.

To grow your consciousness, you will need to be an explorer who throws aside consensus logic.

Creativity is the pathway. And creativity is completely irrational. How rational is a great piece of music or art? Do you think for one second any artist rationalized his creativity into a work of genius? That has never happened and never will.

HOPE OR FAITH

When a person falls to the lowest and most desperate point of his or her life, when circumstances sink below tolerable levels and prospects for the future dim so bleakly that it seems the entire universe is telling them to give up and die, how does a person cope? Something is needed to restore a positive belief in the future, something that can help them to step forward and not sink into despair. They need hope.

Hope is always available to anybody who seeks it. There is always hope. It is the palliative that allows a possibility for the future. In this way, hope can be a gift to one's survival. However, it can also be a curse to one's future. A curse!? How is that possible? Everybody needs hope. We need hope to create a fresh new day, to stay positive and optimistic. Do we?

Hope is very useful when misfortune places a wall of blackness in our path, and when the future seems blocked by impossible forces. A person needs hope to see a way forward. Hope is like a pain killer, a drug. If you have pain in your body, and you need something to reduce the pain and inflammation so that you can continue going to work and doing your physical therapy to improve your health, then the drug is very useful. But this drug can be a powerful infection to the psyche, lulling one into a sense of false optimism and passivity. Let's look closer. What is hope?

Hope is the admission of possibility. Instead of absolutely stating that a desired outcome is impossible, hope admits that it is possible that something good can happen. This is necessary in order for a person, in time of crisis, to see a possibility of some positive outcome and therefore, in pursuit of that positive outcome, to take action.

If you are moored on a desert island or stranded on Mars, there is always the possibility that somebody may rescue you. Even if the odds are very slim. Even if you're aware that nobody can possibly know that your boat was swept six thousand miles off course, or calculated that the nearest space craft is fourteen million light years away. Hope for the best. Perhaps the hand of God will deliver you from your plight. Perhaps it won't. Hope will keep you... hopeful.

And the acceptance of this comfort called hope as good enough can be a powerful infection to the psyche, lulling one into a sense of false optimism and passivity.

I have my hope. What more do I need?

This is perfect victimhood, resigned to fate with a brave smile. If hope becomes all the comfort you need in order to wait until good fortune once again steps into your life, then it is like a drug which you are using to get high, with no real plan of pushing forward to improve your health.

This is when hope is a destructive crutch, when it enables passivity. That is because hope is simply the admission of a possibility and nothing more. To push past this passivity, an inner madman is needed - a madman or woman of inexorable will and unwavering faith.

Everybody knows the legend of the woman in the car accident whose child was trapped beneath the vehicle. In an otherworldly state of superhuman strength, she lifts the car and frees her trapped child. Whether the story is true or not is irrelevant. There are countless similar stories of people performing impossible feats in order to survive or save loved ones. Where did the woman find the strength to lift the car? Fear? Desperation? Hope? No. When that woman takes action to save her child, she has transcended fear and hope. She is propelled into action with a force of will that expels all weakness or doubt. This is Faith. Not faith in God or a higher power. In this situation of supreme crisis, if you take the time to consult with your higher power, you will have thought your way out of the faith you need to move a mountain, because praying to a deity for strength is an act of consciousness. And faith operates most powerfully when there is no consciousness involved. The woman lifts the car because her consciousness has been pushed out of the way by faith. There is no room for possibility or doubt in this equation. Something must be done and faith pushes aside all mental interference and propels the body into action.

Faith is a mental state. A simple description is that faith is very strong belief. But, unlike hope, which is an admission of the possible, faith is the immovable conviction that something will be done. Faith

doesn't consider whether something is possible or not. It propels forward, expelling any possibility of doubt, even expelling hope, because hope always contains the possibility of failure. Stranded on an island or distant planet, faith pushes action, gets the raft built, the space pod repaired, regardless of the lack of materials. Faith finds a way, demands action, and refuses the acceptance of fate. Faith transcends the body. The woman's body cannot lift a car. And yet, the car is lifted.

Why can faith transcend the body? That is because no thought is involved. A person doesn't think, "Do I have enough faith?" There is always enough faith. If there isn't enough, then it is not faith, it is simply belief. While faith can transcend the body and consciousness, consciousness is needed to temper faith. More accurately, consciousness is needed to manage this inner madman and get him to sit back and take things easy.

Let's look at this inner madperson, this creature of faith that can lift cars and move mountains. The human potential both physically and mentally cannot truly be known. In sports, the greatest athletes in the world train and compete with everything they have inside. And yet, athletes keep getting stronger and faster. How do they keep pushing the limits of the human body? What we have inside us cannot be measured. Faith is the force that pushes the consciousness aside and demands everything that can be pulled from the human body – and more. That is how a mother lifts a car off of her child. This inner madwoman essentially guns her internal engine to the maximum in order to resolve a crisis.

But every day does not bring a crisis. And the pure animal state that unleashes the body's full powers appears when the consciousness is forced out by external events. It is a bit like driving your car as fast as it will go because you are being chased by criminals, although that is not the way to drive your car every day.

Imagine you have a Ferrari with 700 horsepower. You know what kind of engine is sitting under the hood of this car. Do you doubt its power? No. Do you believe in its power? Of course, you do. But, more than believe, you know it is powerful. The car doesn't need you to believe in it. Its power is irrefutable. You have faith in the

power of this car. Yet, when you are in the city, you push the pedal very slowly. Why? Do you doubt the power of the car? No. There is no doubt that you have the power to burn up the road. But your consciousness understands that, given the current road conditions, if you turn all that power loose, you will kill innocent bystanders.

Every one of us has seen the sports car burning down the road in complete disregard of the traffic conditions. What do we always say? Look at that maniac! A person driving beyond the acceptable bounds always does so by faith. If there is doubt, you slow down. The highways are littered with the bodies of those who've gotten in the way of a speeding lunatic who has no doubt that he has the skill to navigate a rocket. And often he cannot, because faith does not guarantee success. Faith propels you to go fast. Society needs consciousness to properly restrict the madman.

Faith and hope are two kinds of belief. One filled with enough weakness and desperation to be absolutely human, and the other, so solid that it transcends human belief and occupies the territory of a madman.

You can hope that something is or will be true. This hope is filled with desire. You can believe that it is possible that this thing you hope for can come true. But there is a meager limit to this belief. It can easily be dissolved. Outer forces often crush hope. What is left in the aftermath? A shattered hope leaves little optimism or power in its wake. The destruction of hope leaves a person weakened. A person must pick up the pieces and find a new way to move forward. Perhaps, after a proper mourning period, new hopes and dreams are created. And the process begins all over again.

Faith has no room for hope. Faith is a belief so strong that it precludes the possibility of belief, or hope, because hope leaves very little room for more than victimhood. You hope that something good happens. You dream that something good happens. You pray for it. But it is out of your hands. Hope alone allows no room for self-determination. If it did, it wouldn't be hope, but it would be faith.

BROKEN CONSCIOUSNESS

AND CREATIVITY

And now, you can step back into the world with this brain, mind, and consciousness spinning that head on top of your shoulders. What to do with it all? So many questions, so many areas to explore, so many challenges, a brain with more neural connections than atoms in the universe, a mind that operates in multi-dimension, and a consciousness limited by society that begs to expand and take part of the awaiting universe. It's enough to make you lose your mind. But you won't.

An earlier chapter spoke of the dangers of expanding the consciousness beyond the capabilities of the internal architecture. An extreme expansion of consciousness can upend the social functionality of the personality. There is a natural fear of losing one's mind.

Who knows what happens in these outer dimensions? Actually, The mind does not go crazy. The consciousness does. When a person loses their mind, they are not. The mind is rarely broken. The consciousness is the part that usually breaks. It's the personality that suffers, not the essence. When a person goes crazy, they are essentially having their consciousness transformed. The person experiencing this new dimension of thought appears to be unstable. They will often speak in ways that don't seem coherent or balanced. A host of psychological symptoms may appear: anxiety, paranoia, hallucinations, incoherent speech, depression, the list is endless. What we call losing one's mind is an altering of the consciousness. The consciousness no longer connects to the society in the way that it did before. The value of a person's action depends not only on the richness of the action but in how it is perceived. It may seem crazy, but the success of the action will change the attitude toward it.

Crazy only exists within the values of an environment. When you see a homeless person speaking gibberish to phantoms, you may feel pity for the person, but you are repelled. Why? It's because your

reality cannot sync up with his. To you, this is a crazy person. And most everyone around you feels the same way. Now imagine that this person is surrounded by people who speak the same gibberish. Everybody understands what he is saying, and you are the one who appears to be speaking gibberish to their majority. You are now the crazy one.

Maybe what we see as mental illness, or broken consciousness, is some manifestation of pure creativity operating outside of the accepted modes of communication. We have no way of knowing if a blathering lunatic is attempting to express some contact with a more distant and obscure level of consciousness than we can understand. It sounds like lunacy to us. And when the consciousness cannot grasp the conflicting data of another's logic, it rejects it.

Pushing the consciousness beyond the safety zone is something that can be a traumatic experience or self-inflicted. A soldier or assault victim can be forced into an extreme dimension that taxes or breaks the consciousness. They have no choice in these circumstances. The artist, on the other hand, enthusiastically smashes the acceptable bounds of safety to explore the outer dimensions of creativity. Are they choosing insanity? Yes, in a way.

Imagine you are a visionary like Jesus, or Moses, or the Buddha. You disappear from society and wander in the wilderness to have an experience of God. When you return with your new religious vision, how will you be received? Will people embrace this new wisdom you've come to share? Will they even be curious about it? No, you will be met with skepticism and derision. Who does he think he is, Jesus? In many ways, that's exactly who you are, and your experience will be surprisingly similar. You will be rejected by most, accepted by a few, shunned by many, and at least metaphorically crucified. So, why be creative? Who needs such extreme creativity when it sets one in conflict with society? A crazy person does. And we are all little bit crazy.

Now, imagine a person who, instead of wandering the wilderness looking for a religious vision, locks himself in a room just to think, with no social interactions, no fresh air, no exercise. To the outside world this is just a brooding recluse, a crazy hermit. After two years, he emerges. What will his society think of him? That depends. If

he presents a product of his isolation that society deems valuable, they will declare him a genius - a huge success. Parents will point to him as an example to their children of how hard work and sacrifice pays off. However, if he emerges with no product for society and only a changed personality to offer, people will see him as strange and possibly dangerous. They will gossip. Society won't care about the finer points of his inner journey. They won't recognize any of his creativity without him presenting a product that they find useful.

The connection to one's society determines the valuation of that experience. But does it? Society controls the perceived value. However, the valuation of one's experience is highly personal. Your experiences are your own. It is up to you to decide whether your inner journey needs to be validated by others, or if you will be the sole arbiter of this experience.

Creativity does not actually connect you to your society. On the contrary, being creative requires stepping outside of the rules of acceptance set up by society. If you are being truly creative, you are exploring new territory. You are entering worlds where the rules are shoved aside as impediments. You might argue that if I create something that my society enjoys, a new song or a design concept, they will approve of my creativity. They are not approving your creativity, but its product. And their acceptance is contingent on a myriad of factors that has nothing to do with you or what you produce. They have to be ready for what you are offering them. If The Beatles had appeared twenty years earlier, they would have been laughed off the stage and quickly forgotten. Had they appeared twenty years later, they would have been too late to have any effect. They would have been seen as just more of the same old stuff, unimportant, trivial. Timing is one of the biggest factors in society accepting creativity. But timing has nothing to do with the act or the product of one's creativity. Van Gough was not accepted in his lifetime. He lived as a pauper, shunned by most of society as nothing more than a parasite. He was too far ahead of his time. This obviously did nothing to diminish the quality of his creativity. But he enjoyed no acceptance of his work during his sad lifetime.

So we ask again, why do we create? We do it because we have to. We think we create in order to come up with something that will

win us praise or reward. And for many, that is a big motivation. But we still have to create. We create to be creative. We are compelled to create. Because we are part of the universal organism and, no matter what you believe about the cosmos, the universe has shown itself to be creative. There is never a moment when the universe is not creating. There are many people who show no outer manifestations of creativity. They have no time for it. Creativity is childish. But anybody who is not being creative is taking part in the flip side of creativity - destruction.

Destruction is a necessary part of creativity. The universe destroys solar systems as easily as it creates them. Forging one's creativity requires killing previous success and experimenting with new ways of doing things. You have to destroy your previous work, or else you will simply be repeating the same song. So, there is a constant polarity of creativity and destruction. These two seemingly opposite forces are inseparably connected to each other.

And there is another element which will both support and do battle with creativity - experience. We train to be creative. We acquire experience to expand our creativity. And yet, experience is the enemy of creativity. Why? Surely, Mozart's training as a musician aided his creativity.

Experience continually interferes with creativity. It has to. Any person who's received professional training in their field knows that we instinctively travel the familiar path. If an architect hears somebody's plans for a building, he automatically pictures doors and windows in their proper place, the way he has been trained to. It would be very difficult for the architect to hear his client's vision of lying doorways horizontally at ground level and letting people roll sideways into their houses. But this is what innovation looks like when it is first presented. Like a sideways door. Certainly that is what jazz sounded like to classical musicians, or what Cubism looked like to a Realist. They are all sideways doors.

We use tools and techniques to be creative. Whether building a house, or humming a tune, tools and experience will be part of this process. And we will rely on this experience to guide us when being creative requires that we push aside previous knowledge.

There's a built in irony for an artist of impeccable technique. No matter how perfect the technique of the artist, he can never paint it or write it the way he felt it in inside. That is the challenge to every artist. How to express the pure creativity within the limitations of finite symbols such as notes and scales, paints and brushes, words and syntax. The geniuses get the closest. But even they cannot express it as purely as they felt it inside. Because the technical implements of art: notes, paint, words, are only symbols. And the artist is attempting to transcend the limitation of symbols.

The technique of the artist is not the creativity. It is the means by which the artist communicates that creativity. You may very well be a Mozart inside you. In your head magnificent symphonies compose themselves. But, unless you study music, you have no tools to communicate with that inner music. This is where the value of experience comes in. The more advanced your technical abilities, the more tools you have for manipulating notes and expressing your art. But technical ability doesn't give any more creativity. It won't bring you the closer to hearing those inner voices. Experience is simply the ability to use the tools.

There is an irony, not a paradox, in developing the technique necessary to be a great artist. The technique comes with familiarization of patterns which are necessary to the artist. The artist must understand his or her art, in every way possible. But these patterns are also crutches. A composer may feel some amazing new way to transition from one part of a composition to the next, but may not be able to figure out how to fully articulate it. He can't quite hit the target. The numerous patterns available to that composer give myriad choices to substitute for the unreachable notes. Most artists will be fine with inserting some brilliant pattern in place of these unknowable notes, but others will not. That is the challenge for every artist - the trap of experience. We feel something otherworldly, but our techniques are earthbound. To find those notes, the artist breaks through his irony and invents paradox.

But why fight society and lay all those sideways doors when it brings such a crucible? There is no answer for this. Each individual struggles to bring the dynamics of his or her creative/destructive spectrum into some kind of harmony with their environment. It is

up to each of them to determine the value of exploring their inner visions.

Perhaps, thousands of years from now, when the consciousness is so evolved that we can use the Mind-Net to communicate with each other, we can express our creativity by pouring it directly into another consciousness, without words, or notes, or paints to symbolize the experience, just pure creative expression. You would be painting on the canvas of another consciousness in order to connect them to the purest expression of your creativity. Who knows?

Creativity is not always rewarded by one's peers, but it is always rewarding. When we create we are gods. Not giants. Society will decide whether we will become giants. But we are still gods when we are creating. Because that is what gods do - they create.

Never let society stand in the way of being a god. It is your right.

