

2016

CONTENTS

- How This Work Came About

PART I: INTERNAL ENERGY EVENTS

- **The Beginnings**, The Primal Union
- **The Initial System**, Gathering Sensory Information, Organizing
Sensory Information: Feelings, Experience Structures, Association
- **The Messengers**, Emotions, Dreams.
- **The Attending Faculties**, Sensory Memory, Imagination, Daydreaming,
Intuition, Awareness
- **The Extended System**, The Dominant Faculties: Enter Emotion,
Enter the Intellect, Enter Reason, The Triad in Action
- **The Power of Words**, Thought Networks, Verbal Memory
- **Motivation**, Reason Engages Emotion, Reason Engages the Intellect
- **The Troubles**, Deviations, Consciousness and Awareness
- **The Resolved System**

PART II: INTERACTING WITH THE WORLD AT LARGE

- **Freedom of Choice in Practice**
- **Face-to-Face Interactions**, Charts of 61 Inner States
- **Time Fractured**, Seven Perceptions of Time
- Glossary
- Addendum: First Drawings

HOW THIS WORK CAME ABOUT

The venture started with an attempt to differentiate emotion from feeling and reason from intellect by sorting the sensations by their location in the body—this is a feeling, this an emotion, that's a thought tickling the spine. Tracking the movements of these fleeting events in schematic drawings and grouping the drawings by location, I came up with separate networks for feelings and emotions and for rational and intellectual activities, all grounded in lived experience. It was comforting to have a quiet place in the brain, but having no idea what to make of the findings I started mapping them. And as in the mapping impressions fell into place on their own, the brain appeared to be self-organizing and the mind self-regulating (stop, go there, enough)—both the mind and the body exhibiting a limited tolerance for external and internal interventions. The book is a record of these observations tracked in schematic drawings for over 45 years.

In the early seventies, brain sciences were burgeoning, and from what I read in periodicals, I gathered that although I focused on the same territory, my findings differed greatly. The basic difference was in the approach to the data available: Scientific enquiries, aided by digital technologies, were interpreting the data recorded in controlled experimental situations by looking at what they observed from the outside in, while I, looking only for inklings of an answer, plunged into the source itself (my body), relying on drawings (a tool, a medium) to track the paths the energy took within me. No wonder that Einstein's proverbial elephant (seen from different points of view) yielded different impressions. What amazed me ceaselessly, however, and kept me going was that whatever I came up with not only did not clash with the scientific data, but embodied all that humankind has ever perceived about the invisible powers that affect our lives daily. This convinced me that under the daily buzz of the mind, beyond matters of survival—on the quiet—there is yet another concern: how to live with the visible and invisible forces humans captured in symbolic images long before they could put them into words.

So the brain/mind was stratified by energy events that seemed to function at different frequencies, velocities, and intensities—the outer layer collecting sensory information, the brain encoding their impact, and the mind reaching for it. And when a sensory impact stirred a feeling, the sensation instructed the mind of the effect the impact had on my being. If that feeling was highly charged, the body discharged (emoted) that surplus energy into reflexive

muscular contractions—the emotional expression a messenger come from the deep letting the entity encountered know how I feel about it. The book describes these relays of energy shifts, locates the points where energy-in-motion switches from one layer to another, and illustrates in schematic drawings what propels energy into either physical or mental activities.

In the mapping of these events it became evident that the mind functions in concentric layers. At the core there is the Primal Union, wherein energy and matter are bound in a state of equilibrium present in the elemental states of all things in existence. Surrounding that core is a system of energy movements I call the Initial System, as it could have evolved together with sensory acuity. I found the Initial System enwrapped in an Extended System, which probably sprang into being with language skills, this system shielded in turn by a Resolved System which apparently echoes the self-balancing forces active in the Primal Union.¹

The book closes with “The Self Interacting with the World at Large,” divided into three parts: “Freedom of Choice in Practice” details an individual’s attempts to fulfill his or her personal needs, be they actual or ungrounded. “Face-to-Face Interactions” charts 61 inner states that show how dispositions tailor an individual’s approach during face-to-face encounters. The book ends with “Time Fractured,” where seven perceptions of time guide the individual through changes imposed by circumstance, accident, or some other disturbing event that may not endanger existence but demands attention.

As far back as I can remember, the effect external events had on my inner state was as interesting to me as were the events themselves. When at the age of twelve, confused by unfamiliar swings in mood, I started keeping notebooks, thoughts on paper offered a safety net which encouraged the mind to swing in any direction without getting lost in thought. Later in life, in addition to the notebooks (kept for 75 years), I would also jot down my thoughts on the run and, together with clippings from magazines, stuff them in a box. In my late forties, I pulled out that box and as I started reading the notes one after the other, sensations did not rise one at a time, as they usually do, but surfaced in awareness in a stream—rising, spilling, dipping, connecting or colliding, before they faded away. Then and there it struck me that no matter what we called them, sensations were energy events, their course etched in my body way back in time.

¹*A description of these systems appeared in A. Kasuba, “The Physics of Metaphysics: Personal Musings,” *Journal of Mind and Behavior*, 1998, 19(1): pp. 65-90.

A few days later, pencil in hand, I was about to start working on an architectural drawing when a fleeting image touched off a robust feeling. I reached for a piece of paper and drew the path the sensation had taken, from the first inkling to the location where it dipped, changed direction, and vanished. My hand, however, kept on drawing loops one after the other until the pencil line had returned to its beginning. I named it the Path of Least Resistance. The drawing looked like a roadmap to a mystery or two waiting to be unraveled. Realizing that this venture might take a lifetime, be never-ending, added a sense of urgency. It also piqued my interest in prehistoric art, a longstanding fascination of mine.

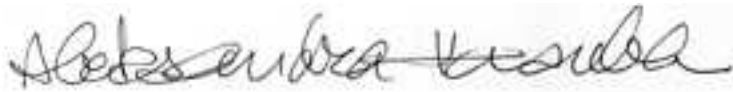
That is when I started tracking sensations in earnest. To my surprise, marks on paper introduced a welcome distance between me the observer and me the observed, drawings making the innermost stirrings visible, comparable, extendable—the medium familiar, trusted to deliver the unexpected. Occasionally, I would note on the drawing where in the body a sensation had taken place, and there were times when drawings ran ahead of observation, as a shift in position of a symbol on paper prompted linkages that had not yet come to mind. Before long, I was describing what the drawings suggested.

In 1980, I met Andrée Pagès, fresh out of Harvard with a degree in English. As English is not my native language, I asked her to work with me on the notes I had compiled. Andrée's questions about what I meant in this or that paragraph led to fruitful discussions, and as we both illustrated our thoughts with actual experiences, I was constantly amazed that such deeply hidden impressions could not only be shared and discussed but also compared and described by degrees of intensity. Andrée worked with me on and off for the next ten years. From then on, family and professional obligations permitting, I worked on the text by myself, rechecking the links, attuning the wording, searching for implications. As the story had evolved in drawings, it was told in the language of signs and symbols familiar to me but not to others. Thus the most perplexing and most challenging task of all was how to tell a visual story in a verbal narrative using a foreign language.

Just as Andrée Pagès helped me shape and structure the book, Wilfrid Koponen gave me the impetus to finish writing *The Mind Gazing at Itself*. I approached him in 2014, asking him to edit the nth rewrite. As we went through the manuscript together page by page, Wilfrid would occasionally stop reading and comment on how contemporary the issues were that I addressed. The encouragement gave me the much-needed uplift to push the basic concepts to their present state.

Essentially, *The Mind Gazing at Itself* is the record of one individual's physical and mental sensations seen as energy events stripped of their historical and cultural ballast. The observations are arranged in a progression that goes from the basic yes and no responses up to the complex interactions mapped in the enfolding layers. By now, I have lost all sense of what was actually observed (which is probably in the collection of drawings) and what was intuited, inferred, or imagined. What follows then is an account of personal impressions collected by a visual artist who tinkered with this material for over 45 years.

The book is dedicated to my son, Alexander Jonas Kasuba.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Alexander Kasuba", written in a cursive, flowing style.

March 11th, 2016

New Mexico

PART I: INTERNAL ENERGY EVENTS

THE BEGINNINGS

Finally, after over two years in exile in Germany during the Second World War, my husband, Vytautas Kasuba, our daughter in his arms, and I, holding a handful of papers, landed in New York Harbor in 1947. By then, I was already in the habit of taking every budding assumption wherever it wanted to go. But to find the mind uncontainable after we settled in the US, made me wonder what was there.

In the house I grew up in, Darwin was much talked about. I still remember Mother rushing into the room with a German magazine in hand to show us that in its early stages the human embryo resembled those of fish and reptiles, that all species had evolved from a common ancestor. Though still in grade school, I got it: Fish and reptile were part of me. It was easy to imagine myself being *Homo erectus* and walking the world *sapiens*—leaving an imprint of my hand on a cave wall (the side of our house), building a small shelter of sticks covered with leaves pinned with pine needles, or drawing a circle on sleepy water and watching it vanish (I still do). A sign left behind was a message: “I was here.” Similar things seemed to happen inside my head, only in mirror reflection: My brain/mind was the landscape I ventured into, and while the senses delivered impressions, each imprint was saying: “I am here now.” A mark left out there changed the landscape within, and the brain/mind made it its own. End of story.

I did not start thinking about these matters simply to entertain my curiosity. What interested me then and interests me still is: What happens to these markings after they slip to the dark side of the moon? How do I get *there* from *here*?

By the time I started school, I was more intimate with the wind in the trees and the taste of buds in spring than with people. I was glad to be made of stardust, like the rest of the world, glad to be in mute communion with sensations in my body that let me know what was going on inside and around me, no secrets between body and mind.

No religion was practiced at home. World religions were in respected history books on some other shelf. The past and present gods sounded unreachable in their separate heavens. In my native country, Lithuania, the last country in Europe to be Christianized, I saw a peasant

woman lighting the morning fire and crossing not herself but the fire, a pagan ritual. I kept wondering: What keeps such ancient beliefs alive?

Eventually, the answers considered converged in a single word, attraction. Not as in desire or in some primal urge, not as a footprint of attraction but as attraction-in-action—like the active state of matter known of old as the spirit.

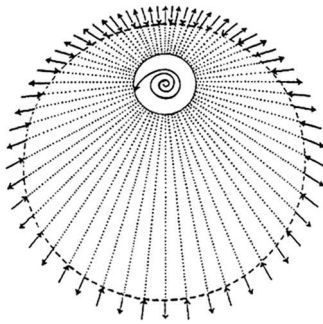
I experience attraction and repulsion as a single force, moving either toward what attracts or away from what repels, the energy flow merely reversing direction. As fluctuations in one energy field tend to affect the surrounding fields, in the chain of events, I too am affected by passing energy fields and may never know what they leave behind or take away. Imagine that, and you will see that where the multidimensional laws of attraction apply, $1+1$ need not $= 2$, as one event may swallow the other, cause an explosion, or manifest itself in some other permutation. That is how attraction in action feels to me.

THE PRIMAL UNION

Realizing that I was no longer dealing with word meanings but with energy events, I came to see attraction as a source of energy (like electricity) that creates energy events (like a lit bulb). From that perspective, my body was matter amassed in the shape of a female, and my spirit but the active state of that amassed matter. Hence I focused not on what the spirit is, but on what the spirit does. And while exploring the effects the spirit has on my general state of being, I came to see the spirit as “trapped” in my flesh and bone for the duration of my life span—trapped but still bound by the laws of attraction from which it sprang.

In this mental setup I found the spirit not only responsive to the fluctuating needs of matter, but also, when needed, drawing energy from the source it sprung from. And as the body also draws energy from external sources, the two energy sources were in want of some kind of coordination. This suggested that some other factor might be at play, such as would calibrate the intake and output of energy to keep the state of matter in equilibrium. Suspecting that it might be the job of attraction (not some intent of the spirit but a given), I waited to catch a flicker of it. And sure enough, as the exploration continued, I had many occasions to catch the spirit holding breath, miss a beat or two, attune this or that and then move on.

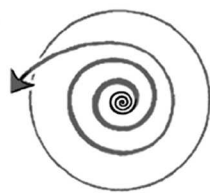
There is a system at work here: That added facility that seems to attend to the state of



The primal union

equilibrium would place the spirit in the role of an agent, an intermediary between the inner and outer energy sources. And this is how I *envision* the spirit doing the balancing act: Say the body calls for an energy spurt. The spirit glides closer to its source at the core of my being. As its charge increases, it becomes more of itself and so has more energy to pass on to matter. After reaching the contact point at which the called-for energy matches the charge it carries, the charge grounds itself in matter. If the body needs to unwind and relax, the spirit moves

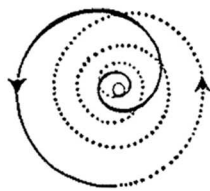
away from the core, diminishing its energy content, and being less of itself, it relaxes the body as well. Not for long—as soon as a change in energy level is called for, the sweet spot is sweet no more, and the spirit is whisked off to meet the next demand, either from internal or external sources. By fulfilling the needs of matter, the spirit renders these innermost energy events self-balancing. I call this system of matter and spirit the *Primal Union*.



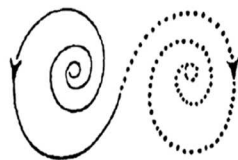
1. Inner energy source



2. Outer energy source

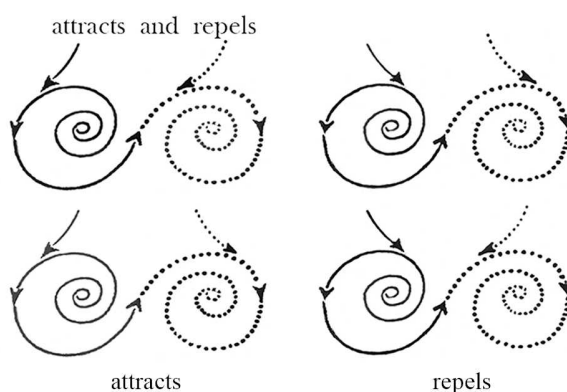


3. Sources in rotation



4. Rotation unfolded

The Spirit in motion



The yes & no responses

In all cases the body clamors for instant satisfaction, while the spirit appears to be indifferent to what happens to the energy it delivers, suggesting that the spirit remains innocent of intent. I am also under the impression that the spirit always moves forward, never reversing itself on the spot, which implies that it might be spiraling in and out within set parameters. To see what that would entail, I made a few drawings and found that the spirit need not change direction,

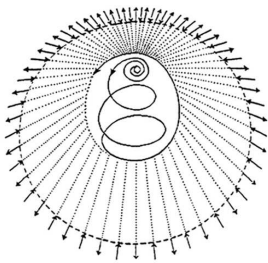
only fall forward—toward the core from which it sprang, or away from it, toward the perimeter of its own energy field—depending on whether the pull (attraction) or the push (repulsion) is stronger. Then I noticed that the direction in which the spirit moves affects my response to an incoming sensory impact: I get excited when an external impact gives the spirit a boost and am dispirited when the impact counteracts the spirit's momentum. These then would be the primary *yes* and *no* responses vital day in and day out on every level of existence. This may also account why the same sensory impact can, next time around, leave an opposite impression—be upsetting instead of uplifting or vice versa.

THE INITIAL SYSTEM

GATHERING SENSORY INFORMATION

The five senses are the receptors of energy impulses by which the surroundings make themselves known to me. Vision and hearing cover a range of space that separates me from things near and far; smell covers a smaller area, alerting me to nearby presences seen and unseen; touch informs me of texture and temperature in close proximity, and taste gives me an intimate experience of what is about to become part of me. These five separate impressions inform me of what is in my surroundings. Although the mind instructs me differently, experience of the concentric sensory arrangement places me, the perceiver, in the center of the world, wherever I happen to be.

When attention settles on something specific, be it a friend come to visit, a pet or animal, or an object, the state of sensory activities shifts from peripheral or scattered to focused. In that shift, there is usually a pause, during which my senses scan what is in focus. If it is human or animal, we both take a few seconds to eye each other, often simultaneously. It is my impression that during that pause, another sensory switch takes place, for as soon as a single sensory impact—tone of voice, facial expression, gesture, glance, scent—catches my (or the animal's) attention, the sense organ involved reads that specific incoming energy vibration, wavelength, or pulsation by attuning itself to that particular energy content. In that instant, the

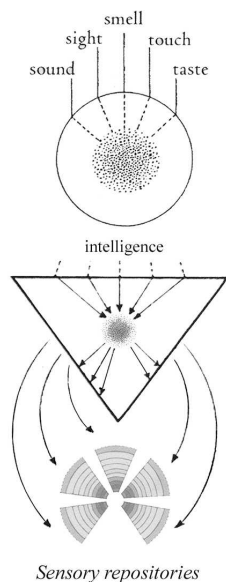


The Initial System

sense organ and the energy impact are in a state akin to two well-tuned pianos, wherein a note struck on one resounds in the other—the point where the external stimulant and the sensory receptor assimilate and act as one. That is when we sense the state of the other as if it were our own. (So does the animal sense my state; in the case of an object, I sense the state of energy that went into the making of it.)

I have heard that impulses of each sense organ register in the brain in separate repositories. But isn't there an interim place, a zone abuzz with multiple incoming impressions, some converging, others colliding, echoes bouncing? When too many impressions flood in at once, doesn't that antechamber get overcrowded and at times overwhelmed, disoriented by the rush of a sensory influx? Must I not turn away, take a break, and give time for the commotion in

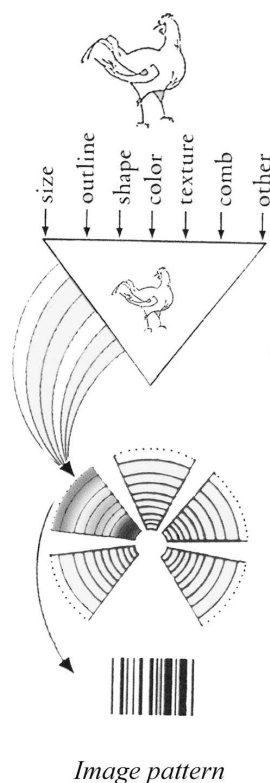
the head to settle? The activities that I have described—impulses entering, converging, dispersing—suggest that this interim place may have properties akin to those of a prism and may function as a prism does.



I take this prismatic triangular area (or mass) to be *intelligence*, a faculty that is receptive but not selective, more like a receiving and dispatching center serving image-related impressions. Say I am looking at a rooster, admiring its strut, the color of its feathers, and the shape of its comb. I hear it crow and recall the texture of feathers and the taste of chicken soup. But how does the brain handle such a variety of energy inputs, not only from one rooster, but also from a multitude of other images day in and day out?

Memory offered a clue: My younger brother and I were trying to communicate by Morse code, which was in broad use by the 1930s. What I remember vividly is the impressive chart of the coded alphabet we looked at when tapping wood blocks on the table—long and short silences between the taps indicating a dash or dot in the

chart. Aren't most things in nature *encoded* in patterns? Look at seashells, seedpods, leaves, insects, animals, and at the body, with its features, limbs, and organs *inside*—every form in nature has an ingrained self-organizing pattern unique to its kind. All natural processes seem to be programmed to perform specific tasks in a set sequence, every step routed to unfold the next one until it reaches the beginning that starts the cycle over again and again. Why should the brain be exempt?



I look at the rooster again. As impressions received via the five sense organs flock to the focal point of the chamber I assume to be intelligence, there appears in the mind a sort of holographic image of the rooster, this after-image in full regalia pulsing with cognitive visual impulses of the bird's outline, size, colors, and other details. The multiple impressions don't linger; they scatter from intelligence to their separate repositories; yet the holographic rooster, although stripped of vivid impressions,

seems to retain a general pattern common to roosters. There is no telling where these basic image patterns may register, but in recall, they recollect their sensory attributes to their proper places. Assuming that all visual impressions undergo similar procedures, I made a drawing to see where this might lead.

When I see another rooster, I experience the moment of cognition: The sight apparently activates the correlate image pattern held in memory, as the old rooster's after-image pops up in the chamber of intelligence with all the scattered energy imprints. As the old and the new images overlap and align, cognition occurs. Beside cognition (the realization that what I see is a rooster), additional events take place almost simultaneously: First, the discrepancies between the old and the new impressions become apparent (the rooster I see is not the same as those seen before), and these two initial events (cognition and dissimilarity) suggest two more events—my past impressions (those already imprinted) may, on contact, neutralize impulses registered earlier and receive only those impressions that are new to the pattern. This process may not stop there, as the procedure suggests that future encounters with roosters do not alter the basic rooster pattern, but add to (and so refine) the existing attributes with ever-finer subdivisions of detail—akin to color shades along the spectrum chart.

Possibilities proliferate: The channels used by attraction during imprinting also seem to be in use during recall, as when a memory excites intelligence from within—the traffic reversed now fixating a corresponding sense organ from inside, whereby an organ's sensors, so fixated, are receptive only to those external impulses that activate that particular energy pattern, excluding all other energy events in the field of vision, sound, smell, or touch—intelligence the catalyzing agent all over again.

A fixation seems to be in place when a mother can sleep through a raging storm, yet hear the whimper of her child, the fixated ear blocking out all other sounds. A fixated eye locates a yellow pencil lost under papers on my desk—when shuffling the papers I hold the image of the pencil in my mind, a glimpse of yellow makes me reach for it. If I forget what I am looking for, to resume my search I'll have to reinstate the pencil's image in the mind. Moreover, one fixation can hold another in line. This time, I am in a friend's garden looking for berries that ripen to the color red. The eye, already fixated with the pattern of a raspberry bush, scans the garden until, upon contact, the bush jumps out of the greenery. The eye, now fixated on the code for red—not just remembering how red looks but acting red—scans the

bush for a matching energy field until, through sensory assimilation, a ripe berry catches the eye. The events described above assure me that the two well-tuned pianos are in constant use.

There is a limit to how much sensory stimulation the mind and the body can take before a stimulant begins to irritate. In my experience, the threshold of tolerance is reached when a usually pleasing stimulant causes discomfort. Any stimulant applied beyond that point makes me cringe, recoil, or scream—built-in reflexive muscular contractions releasing that surplus energy in physical activities to ease the mounting agitation.

On the other hand, it seems that sensory cultivation deepens pleasure—the eye no longer looks but absorbs what it sees, the ear no longer hears but feels each sound sink in a sensation, touch no longer recognizes a surface but feels the texture, and taste savors every ingredient that lingers on the tongue. I will suggest that the primal human hungers tap the most intense sensory engagements—be it nutritional, sexual, emotional, or intellectual. Although each of the hungers is rich enough to engage the mind in a lifelong exploration, the line between sensory engagement and its refinement (or exploitation for pleasure by the self or others) depends on interactions that are outside the interests of this venture.

ORGANIZING SENSORY INFORMATION

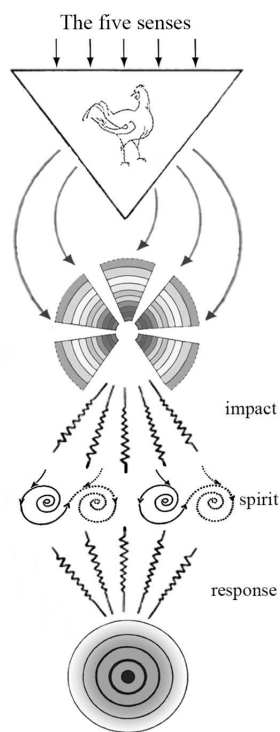
Feelings

But what if the strut of a rooster is appealing, its crow invigorating, the claws threatening, the feathers pleasant to touch but offensive to smell, while its flesh in a dish is savory? Attraction sorts out the confusion: While these sensory elements imprint in their respective repositories, my responses to each of them (appealing, offensive, savory) surface together in a feeling—the components of a feeling rising to awareness like a musical chord.

I have come to experience feelings as the spirit-in-motion, the cause of every energy shift in my state of being. The notion that a feeling connects to the quick of my being brought up the following impressions:

- Feelings do not reflect the external world; they reflect how my inner state responds to a sensory impact.
- Feelings do not affix to the source of their origin; they cling to images like wafts of vapor in passing.

- A feeling can harbor no more than five responses, one for each sense organ, each a part of a feeling's cumulative effect.
- While images leave a static imprint, feelings fluctuate with every encounter.
- Regardless of whether feelings are generated by sight, sound, scent, touch, or taste, are positive or negative, all share one feeling pattern, merely shifting positions within it.
- Attraction sorts out the above inconsistencies by placing the most intense impressions at the center of the feeling pattern and the least intense at the outer fringes.
- The concentric arrangement of sensory impressions suggests that a feeling pattern might replicate the dynamics of ripples on water.



Feeling pattern

Moreover, the basic feeling pattern harbors a wide range of impressions, their number, multiplied by the factor of five senses, multiplied again by the fluctuations in their duration and their intensity, rendering the variety of imprints within any one feeling staggering. No wonder feelings are so difficult to sort out.

It felt strange indeed to discover that a single sensory imprint can hold a great variety of impressions, as would the touch of a child, parent, husband, friend, pet, stranger, or foe, each evoking a different response. Although the physical sensation (the touch itself) might be the same in every case, my response in its wake can be affected by the emotional baggage already stored in the brain. There, in a relay of specific particulars related to that cumulative experience, the feeling links with the image of the one who touches me; and as the energy of a feeling arcs from spirit to image, in the hook-up one other event occurs: the sensation stirring in the body links up with the image static in the mind, the

transfer of energy changing not only my inner state but my mind-set as well.

One other thing: A feeling takes time to develop. The number of shades etched in a feeling pattern may account not only for the complexity of feelings in general, but also for the effort it takes to form a reliable feeling. Keeping in mind that there is a time lapse between the physical sensation (in the body) and a sensory impression (in the head), plus a lapse before

the sensation surfaces to awareness (if at all), a feeling in formation is easily interrupted, a change in the image or a blink in my attention causing a break in the feeling's continuity. If that instant gets filled with data picked from some other source, the feeling's authenticity is distorted. There is more to befuddle feelings, as the object of my attention keeps changing, as I do myself, the upkeep of a reliable feeling calling for repeated updating. One more observation: As feelings stimulate thought, next time around, the feeling might already be tainted by some mental expectation, anticipation breeding surprises.

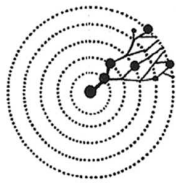
Experience Structures

Noticing that prolonged events leave in their wake a string of feelings, I looked at a recent family reunion: the planning, the preparations, the travel, the coming together, and the time spent with the group and individual family members. As the event progressed, feelings fluctuated, and when the gathering was over, a single feeling surfaced—the pitch of the dominant feeling branding the whole event.

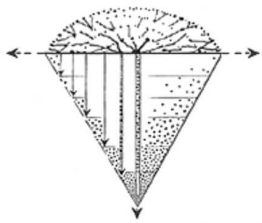
During this extended event, feelings flared and faded, were renewed, replaced, or deepened. My personal energy level changed with each encounter, a change of faces or activities marking the ending of one feeling and the beginning of another. Major energy shifts also took place at points when the reunion entered another phase, say when preparing meals, sharing the food, hearing news in the family, or saying parting goodbyes. Back home, images flashed in memory randomly, without any apparent order. Only when feelings began to surface did images start to anchor at the intersections of events—the flow of a feeling in my body restoring the visual order of events, the most pronounced feeling marking the whole event.

Isn't every facet of my life saturated with extended feelings—home, childhood, schooling, family, gender, adulthood, and professional life—each facet holding a lasting pictorial record laden with feelings? I did not expect to find experiences of a kind to compile separately, not chronologically, but as they did, they remained nevertheless responsive to one another on many levels. When I aligned my childhood and adulthood for comparison (how things felt then and how they feel now), I sensed that feelings extended in time laterally, fading at the fringes, while the core images of home and family rooted deeper. The two movements—images extending vertically, feelings horizontally—would then be forming a structure conical in shape, with the deeply rooted images and the most intense feelings bound to each other all the way down to the tip of the cone. Moreover, as each cone structure was also stratified by

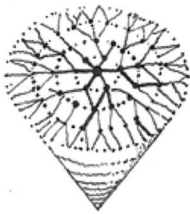
gradations of a feeling's intensity, as the cones clustered, they aligned also by degrees of intensity, the energy concentration in the very tip of amassed structures most electrifying.



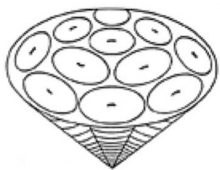
An extended feeling
studded w/images



Structure forming

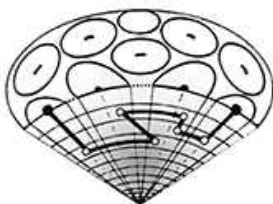


Formed structure



Structures clustered

Experience structures



Association

I envision new impressions entering the mass as if flagged down by attraction—first gathering at the fringes of feelings, then gravitating along a feeling toward that sweet spot where the local charge matches the charge of the arriving imprint and locks in. As the flood of imprints is constant, an image pattern overloaded with details seems to shed those not essential to cognition, while an overloaded feeling pattern discharges that surplus energy into physical expressions. One other observation: As all sensory impulses imprint in the here and now, they remain in the same state as they were in the instant they registered, the mass of images and feelings holding no past and no future, only a perpetually fixed *now*.

It seems that when the line of particular experiences is no longer active, the structure does not vanish but stays put, as if for reference. As the mass of compounded impressions shares a great number of similar energy imprints, the separate experience structures associate by resonating sympathetically underground. Due to association, an activated imprint may leap from structure to structure across time and space, and a streak of shadow outside my window may bring to mind a walk across a meadow, a swaying branch recall a parting, and an autumn leaf a shirt in my closet. A song may sound blue, a taste may be sharp or hot, and a color be cold, soft, or blazing—association placing the whole arsenal of lifelong impressions at my fingertips.

There is one other experience structure, probably the first to evolve. And unique it is, as it does not rely on sensory input but on the involuntary body rhythms, like heartbeat, breathing, and visceral sensations—the degree of pleasure or discomfort they

provide reflecting a degree of deviation from the ordinary state of being. Thus rhythmic body movements, such as walking, running, rocking, or swaying, probably register in this primal structure, encoding the patterns of muscular engagement and their durations. For example, in the dark the body remembers the number of steps to the landing upstairs, when to turn right or left and when to reach for the handle of my bedroom door. Likewise, the feet remember the steps of a dance, and the fingers the position on a guitar or piano to produce the sound ringing in my ears. And so do people working shoulder to shoulder, marching in step, or dancing, or singing or making music together. And as we fall under the subliminal spell of a beat in the air, with our differences and individualities momentarily suspended, we move as one in body and spirit.

THE MESSENGERS

EMOTIONS

I experience emotions as an offshoot of a feeling, as a feeling in overload expels that surplus energy into reflexive muscular activities—the resulting emotional expression carrying that deep-down feeling across the spatial divide that separates entities from each other, informing the thing out there how I feel about it. Whether I hug, grin, or fight, the surplus energy of a high-pitched feeling is propelled along the path of least resistance into muscular action—the emotion an involuntary activity that reflects the feeling’s nature. In the preverbal Initial System, emotions are simple affairs: In comes a charged feeling, out spills an emotion, and, unless the response to that emotional expression leads to interaction, that’s all there is to it. (More about emotions appears in the sections on the Extended System.)

DREAMS

During sleep, intelligence is unhampered by sensory activities, and that is when the self-organizing processes seem to move into high gear. In dreams, my cumulative past meets the changes taking place in my life, dreams summoning me to witness how the past receives the present and how the present affects the past.

Suppose I dream of a canary kept in my childhood house. If in remembering the dream I see the caged bird as “freedom denied,” the dream may yield a false insight because both the bird and the cage are symbols of two separate things. Thus when they are seen as one (a captive bird), the interpretation disregards their symbolic independence. But if I recall the feeling stirred during the dream, the feeling will inform me whether in the dream I related to the captive bird or the captor, whether the cage restricted the bird’s movement or served as a barrier between the captor and the canary, preventing closer contact. The feeling I identify with—the feeling I wake up with—places me, the dreamer, in a state of heightened awareness.

To me, images are the silent language of the Initial System, the messengers that echo, relate, and unify the system’s activities prior to verbal or rational interpretation. Thus when in dreams feelings translate into visual terms, dream personas seldom represent themselves, but stand in for a feeling once felt in their presence, dream images a visual reminder as to which feeling is influencing me at a particular juncture of my life. As dreams originate in sensory repositories, a realm of patterns that is separate from the physical world, dream images appear

shrouded in ominous silences and, acting with ritual precision, look like apparitions from another world, which they are.

Some dreams rehash the events of the day, sorting them out. In other dreams, images personify feelings that may contradict themselves, and as they act out their assigned roles, I, watching the spectacle from the wings, feel watched by them in turn—the dream personas checking whether I am getting the message, giving me a chance to decide which of the conflicting feelings is to get my attention. Some dreams present a sobering resolution, others a foreboding, while a few confer blessings—dream images foreshadowing the next act in a drama that has not yet taken place. When hostile forces pursue me in a dream, if I dare face the phantoms squarely, the pursuers tend to dematerialize in some spectacular manner, and if I read the underlying feelings accurately and follow what the dream feeling suggests, the dream may turn out to be prophetic.

Dreams reinforce what the waking mind intuit. When dream feelings go unread, the dream tends to repeat itself and will, in my experience, stop coming back only when its message has been received or is no longer relevant. When I trust the underlying feeling to guide me, the feeling is apt to suggest action as well—to move on or turn back, to let things be or persist—the choice squarely in the dreamer's hands.

Although dreams may confuse the waking mind, they keep me in touch with the intimate self within, the periodic accounts delivered through imagery attuning me, the dreamer, to events I encounter in life. Dreams stress what needs to be addressed or relied on, what casts a shadow, highlights an experience, or prevents its integration into my past. The *what* in the dream might perplex the waking mind, but the dream leaves behind implicit directives as to what to daydream about or elaborate with imagination.

ATTENDING FACULTIES

SENSORY MEMORY

As mentioned earlier, cognition and memory use the same pathways; in recall, the traffic of sensory imprints simply reverses. Thus when a scent conjures up a childhood scene, the nose, tickled by chemical particles, activates a chain of related images. As images leap to the forefront and feelings come into play, the scenery in the childhood memory fills out with vivid details.

A memory summoned at will needs only a fragment to start images rolling. As a scenario unfolds, a feeling saturates the prevalent inner state, mood fluctuations offering clues, aligning the images in the order of *before* and *after*. If memories roll by too fast, I can slow them down by paying more attention to detail or speed them up by skipping over details. When a recollection falters or halts, it reflects a gap in the chain of feelings, gaps sidetracking memories, association filling them in with events often borrowed from other experiences. Nothing is truly lost to memory, as time and again, association touches off long-dormant experiences, bringing up memories with the immediacy of their initial impact.

The following experience illustrates how inexhaustible memory is. After eleven years of no contact with my parents, who had remained in Soviet-occupied Lithuania, to remember faces or family events was too painful. Instead, I fought homesickness by bringing to mind every room in the house. I would open a door and see the salon dappled with shadows of leaves. Next time around that room would be dissected by winter light into black shadow triangles, light skidding on polished surfaces. The long corridors were passages between secluded worlds, my upstairs bedroom facing the huge chalice of linden trees planted in a tight circle in the garden, in summer or winter always a festive greeting. After I revisited all the rooms, details rushed in: rug designs in close-up, patterns of upholstery fabrics, the huge ledgers Father filled with colored inks, not a single correction, page after page. In the music room, someone at the piano, a familiar silhouette here and there, the sound of a lone instrument teased in practice. At breakfast, the samovar with cups on the side, family seated, the kerosene lamp over the table, a tassel missing in the silk lampshade's fringe. The mahogany *bombé* chest between the corner and the door, the aromas when the doors opened, the spices in jars on shelves, the tea packets in the right-hand drawer in transparent red wrapping over foil, under the gold string a picture of a camel, pyramids in the background. A spoon stirs in a cup and there is the sound of a small circle.

IMAGINATION

In memory, I am a participant, one of many things remembered; in dreams, I am a captive witness to events unfamiliar in my waking hours. Imagination puts me center stage and endows me with powers of a higher order. While things recalled rise like a pyramid from a broad base of experience, things imagined reverse the pyramid, as imagination springs from a point in actuality and, through association, expands into endless possibilities.

Imagination acts like an interface between feeling and image: It infuses feelings with personal meanings and outfits images with borrowed paraphernalia to render the image more pleasing or more repellent. It is my impression that a trained imagination roams the nebulous experience structures actually riding association, in passing sampling and tickling the mind with intriguing pickings until the desired effect is attained. When the inclination is to render an object, a person, or expression more attractive, imagination will replace any questionable detail with borrowed attractive attributes, embellishing its looks or an idea that makes it more appealing or convincing. When the intent is to make a thing repellent, imagination will refurbish the object with borrowed repulsive details to diminish its value or importance. By making mountains out of molehills, imagination acts like a magnifying lens, rendering both the emboldened image and the feeling more accessible to scrutiny.

Suppose I am driving home from a meeting. As long as I am recalling the events that took place at the meeting, I am remembering, detailing, and organizing the meeting's events. But as soon as I begin to wonder what might have happened had I asked a certain question, I start imagining—envisioning situations that did not take place. Then suppose I pass a hitchhiker and wonder what might have happened had I picked up that lanky fellow. A passing impression triggers the thought that he might have refused to leave the car when asked, and now imagination soars—in a succession of flashes, I envision myself beaten in gory staccato detail, left bleeding on the roadside. In the next flash, I am fighting, biting, and kicking the poor fellow—the honking of the car behind jolting me back to reality.

In imagined situations, I direct, invent, orchestrate, and promote whatever I wish, the scenes imagined tickling my fancy or scaring me stiff. As I myself furnish the circumstances, choose the participants, manipulate the course of events, and decide the outcome, in the privacy of my mind, I am a savior or a villain, a queen or a homeless bag lady, a slave or master to anyone dead or alive, safe in the notion that I can cut short any scene before things get out of hand. In these staged mental events, I discover a self of many faces, capable of both heroic and unspeakable deeds. I see myself withering in some situations and thriving in others. I recognize my inclinations, my strengths, and my weaknesses, shoring up my self-esteem or tearing it down. In every imagined situation I keenly observe myself in action, imagination distilling an image of self that inhabits the mind, impersonating me. This image then comes to stand between my perceptions of the world and how I relate to it, the image flushing out what

appears attractive and what is not worthy of attention. In short, that interfacing self-image gets in between my perception of external events and my responses to them.

I also learn that unless the necessary circumstances come along, my favorite self may lie dormant—a sleeping beauty awaiting the kiss of chance. But when a situation laden with possibilities does come along and I act as I imagined I would, the dormant interfacing image sets standards for my behavior. When events turn out differently than expected, the painful letdowns and humiliations cut the image to size—imagination first clipping, trimming, and bleeding the image, then adding changes and padding it with choice attributes all over again. Another self thus comes to stand between the actual world and me—readying me for eventualities, preparing me for the future. To a great extent, I become what I imagine myself to be.

DAYDREAMING

Daydreaming takes care of impressions that in the rush of events fail to register and, left behind, linger in intelligence. Daydreaming does the housecleaning—it removes that backlog. The debris usually consists of fragments—a patch of color detached from an image, a tone of voice that clashed with the facial expression, an unfamiliar spice sprucing up my favorite dish. Daydreaming feels like sifting impressions through the finest sensory sieves, association fingering the intricate discrepancies until an image claims the floating morsel—the patch of color a stray accent of light, the facial expression reflecting a passing thought, the spice a touch of cloves. Daydreaming enriches both image patterns and feelings by refining them with endless subdivisions. If after a swarm of impressions, I neglect to daydream, a cluttered intelligence dulls sensory responsiveness and receptivity. If the debris is left unattended for too long, the clutter dulls attention and so renders me absent-minded. In that state trainloads of events may roll by without leaving a trace in memory.

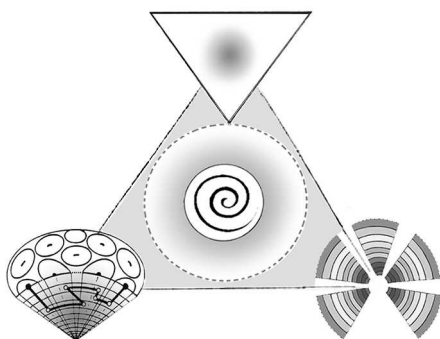
When memory is at work, images come up whole, as they do when I look at things, and as things remembered jump into the foreground, they behave as solids do in space. In daydreams, fragments of sensory information merely drift in and, caught in the web of attention, are taken apart to their basic energy impulses, which then sink back into the nebulous background where these elemental energy parts sort themselves out. To remember things in their sequential order calls for a feeling, and it takes effort to pinpoint that feeling, while daydreaming, the least intense of all mental activities, simply rides attraction and is easily

disrupted. To daydream effectively requires calm in the body, the mind, and the surroundings, a state akin to idling or loafing. Even background music is disruptive to daydreaming, as its mood and tempo suggest scenarios that tend to replace daydreaming with fantasizing, where imagination hungering for experience orchestrates images to its satisfaction.

Remembering and daydreaming actually complement one another, memories inviting daydreams and daydreams sharpening the details of things remembered. If a recollection is losing momentum, daydreaming may start tugging at an image for some minute inspection, and a bit of flotsam may pull up a string of vivid memories. And as another morsel worth daydreaming about pops into focus weighty with minutiae, it may disrupt a rolling memory or bring up a spell of memories unrelated to the spin or wander off on a tangent to places unexplored before.

INTUITION

I turn to intuition when I am confronted with something unfamiliar—a sight, movement, verbal expression, sound, or smell that escapes cognition. Intuition fixates attention on what is intriguing yet confusing, turning my gaze to association in search of clues in my past. During intuition, that inward gaze suspends attention in a point of overlook, from where, hovering like an umbrella over the mass of experience structures, it pulls up images that relate energy-wise to the fixation. As these image clues come up on the mental screen of intelligence they make up a makeshift scenario akin to a visual metaphor—the insight, at once cognitive yet unreal, is ready for interpretation, merely suggesting what might be in question.



Intuition

Intuition is a self-induced internal state. Unlike awareness, which has a fixed place in the brain that instructs me of my inner state in general, intuition is summoned for a specific task. It does not make things known. It only invites interpretation to aid orientation in situations that are confusing.

AWARENESS

And who watches these spectacles? The spirit does; it responds. I envision awareness seated in the narrows between the body and the brain, with one hand on the brain and the other on the spine, sensing every seismic quiver, internal or external. Its single eye fixated on the point where seismic quivers weigh in, the message of

awareness reflects in every quicksilver move the spirit makes. In my experience, awareness delivers the message in vibrations, pulsations, and wavelengths, akin to sound reverberations that echo in sensations informing me whether the spirit has quickened or dulled the body and/or the mind. As these echoes dip into my past, experience suggests a response. And I, suddenly engaged, rise to the occasion like a flock of starlings in migration. The soundings, manifest in responsive creatures in feelings, are the live wire between the body and the mind.

In the brain, awareness hinges the *now* to what benefits, obstructs, or threatens my existence at that very moment, its message limited to *yes* or *no* responses. And when awareness insists that I hear the message, it rises like a will greater than my own: The she-wolf, she knows: the rumble of hunger in the gut is a force. No longer trusting the flickers of experience, her heart no longer bolts when stalking; she zeroes in. Hunter, the she-wolf does not hesitate. The eye trained in dreams is ready for the unexpected, the taste of blood strips the world of detail. She'll lock her jaw on the kill.

*

It appears that I have walked the dark side of the moon already, as I hoped to at the beginning of this venture. What I found there has been described as it was intuited, visualized, interpreted, and revisited, and the findings catalogued by degrees of intensity, their impact measured by the scale of my responses. The faculties were found to work in a united effort—instructing me as to what takes place around me, how it affects the quick of my being, and what action to take. It is comforting to know that my ruminations seem to have merged into a larger whole. There is space enough ahead to see which of them will hold.

At this point, the mind is still at the stage of a primate. What turned this primate human?

Gazing at the mind from within, it looks as if, way back then, the brain/mind could have been forced to extend itself, such extensions long in practice, samples of it still abounding. Changes evolved: instead of suffering the excesses of energy-on-the-loose, for example, the system found ways to expel that surplus energy or use it to advantage. One way or another, the brain and the body have adapted, and will continue to do so.

So it might have been in preverbal times, when in the light of a flickering flame my ancestors exchanged sound-utterances laden with meaning. So it might have been when hunger blunted the edge of danger, danger sharpened the tools for tomorrow, and tools soothed the sting of fear. In those distant times, the grazing eye and the budding mind relied on the intuitive

foreknowledge delivered in dreamlike visions. A mind rooted in this foreknowledge could have seen the world as a mirror bristling with surprises—the inner eye watching what the senses delivered, aware that invisible forces were also watching the mind watching them. Today, if by chance I glimpse myself in that darkening mirror, I enter a realm where the inner and outer worlds, already vivid in communion, seem to mimic each other.

THE EXTENDED SYSTEM

The Extended System consists of only three faculties: emotion, intellect, and reason. I was surprised to find the faculties stuck face-to-face in a seemingly secluded zone. Although all three were rooted in, sustained, and attended to by the Initial System, when it came to words or thinking, or acting intentionally, all three behaved at times as if lost—as if they were still learning to function united in force for a single purpose: to keep the whole in equilibrium, as the underlying Initial System does.

To begin with, the words *emotion*, *intellect*, and *reason* were already so laden with interpretation that the words had to be stripped of their historic, cultural, and gender connotations before their activities could be taken at face value. To a great extent, this happened in the mapping of sensations in schematic drawings, when energy on the move—say a feeling, an emotion, or a thought in the making—was caught raw on paper, not yet packaged in interpretation.

My earliest recollections of how it felt when the grazing eye instructed the mind were of the buzz in the brain/mind shifting from place to place when I was staring at things new to me. There were places in the brain that were animated or stilled, chambers that hummed or echoed in response, or reverted when stared at to the mute language of images. That was the mind I knew then. And there was another place in the brain with no life in there but the life I had in me. The life I brought resounded like footsteps, familiar before the sound of words dropped in. When I was learning to write, I would enter that hollow space and find there parts of a puzzle that made sense only when the new part fit into a larger picture. What made the place feel alive was movement—words that broke loose and ran ahead, words that aligned themselves, words that took the shape of things deliciously confusing. If I slipped into that shadowy space for no particular reason, I'd enter a silence empty of the buzz that permeated the rest of the brain.

When words started mutating into different meanings, meanings butted into dead ends, into thoughts lost and found, revisited later in some tunneled premonition, words leaping into afterthoughts luring the gaze into an abysmal beyond where interpretations drifted in and out or burst like pricked balloons. Shadows collected the discards, the dribbles of thoughts, the afterthoughts to be found in the web of a feeling, the weight of an overloaded emotion too

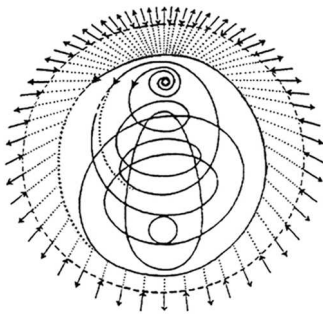
heavy to carry on with when memories repositioned themselves in a heart already overloaded with astonishment, that wholesome hunger insisting more softly now.

Realizing that the mysteries of the mind lay on the other side of reason, I started paying attention to the absurdities that for no reason impress themselves upon the mind—freeze the hand in midair, the tongue in midsentence, or twist a thought out of line, the audacious connections even more fascinating. The longer I dwelled in these uncharted regions, the more it felt like a doomed archaeological venture: as if I were digging for something hidden under layers of verbal rubble, its shape lost to memory. And as every deeper probe disturbed some established notion, occasionally I would stumble upon a raw feeling that quivered with a sheen that charged the mind in turn. Handling these findings like shards of something that had once been intact, I had no doubt that I was touching the essence of my being—our common heritage centered in some fierce determination.

In that common heritage, back then, a stargazing *Homo sapiens* must have noticed that the repetitive movements and positions of celestial bodies in the sky coincided with the repetitive changes in nature on earth. And a stargazer must have grasped that a power, invisible yet stronger than human volition, was ruling the world. The mind, now wheeling from observation to wonder, from fear to awe, eager to interpret and articulate every observation and share it with others, might have set itself on a course that, due to that central determination (equilibrium), may not have been random. The mind must have roamed the corridors of interpretation to come up with a sense of order, maybe even whiffs of what we call understanding, in a zone in the brain beyond the majestic material world and way before the supernatural wonders, a zone abuzz to this day in every creative undertaking—the place where the physics of metaphysics solidify to conviction.

So now I am in a space that has an oculus in the ceiling. The light it casts falls on the collection of shards urging me to sort them out and locate some kind of order in them. But where to start when things are no longer strung on a string that links the findings point by point, knotting here and there, but are instead on a string in a cat's cradle, where a point pulled at shifts the positions of other points enough to frazzle the wits of a mind gazing at itself.

THE DOMINANT FACULTIES



The Extended System

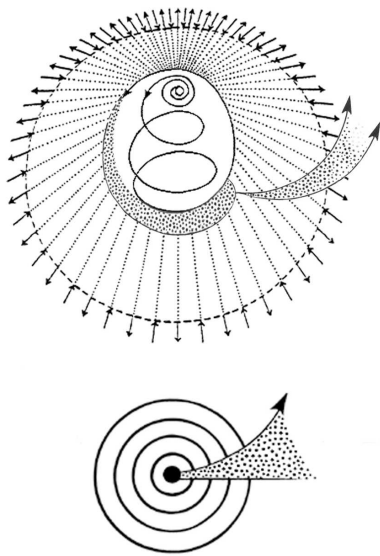
What I noticed first is that when emotion and intellect were active, both took the path of least resistance, behaving as fluids do. In the presence of reason, however, emotion quickened or slackened, while the intellect rushed off to places unknown. Reason, the youngest of the three faculties, was often groping for words, as if startled by the forces washing around it. This left the impression that although reason was receptive to stimulation, when it came to action, it was in need of schooling

—to acquire language skills, to use word-power, and to learn to handle the emotional and intellectual challenges effectively or interlope and stick around, causing discomfort. This discomfort, however, might have prompted the Initial System to extend emotional and intellectual activities to integrate the newcomer.

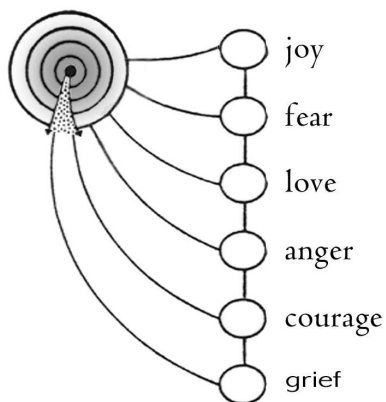
By the time reason appeared on the scene, emotion and intellect probably had their own means of expression in place, and language, introduced by reason, might have felt intrusive (as at times it still does). In my estimation, this is what the Extended System is all about: It provides a playground setting wherein the three faculties are bound to interact and can, by trial and error, develop their inherently separate properties, learn their particular skills, test their potential, and apply effectively what has been learned to keep the whole in equilibrium. The task is to work out a viable mode of interaction that engages emotion, intellect, and reason to act in a united effort in a world that brims with ever-greater challenges. And it might have been language—word-sounds bound to the sensory network—that offered a form of internal communication accessible to all three faculties.

Enter Emotion

As mentioned earlier, emotions arise in the wake of an overcharged feeling, the surplus energy expelled into reflexive muscular contractions spending itself in physical (emotional) expressions that reflect the feeling's nature. Whether the emoted energy surfaces in vocal, gestural, or physical activities, experience suggests that an emotional expression manifests itself in the part of the body into which that expelled energy spills. For example:



Emotion and symbol



Emotions along the spine

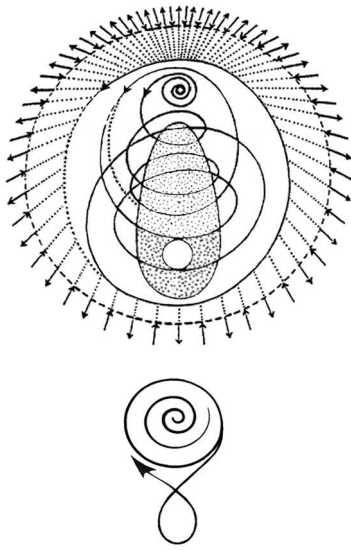
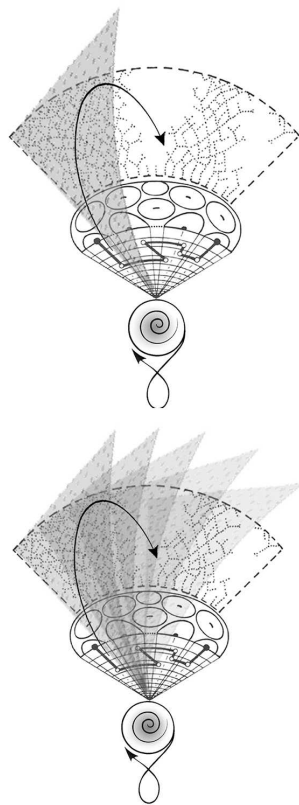
- I find joy seated at the base of the skull, from where the influx of energy leaps into frenzied exuberant actions that offer release but accomplish nothing in particular.
- I sense fear rushing to the throat to halt action by halting breathing, fear marking time to determine whether to freeze, embrace, flee, or fight what is encountered. My impression is that once danger is eliminated, the energy raised by fear converts to curiosity, an urge to investigate what has startled me or caused the scare.
- Love saturates the regions of the heart with sensations awash with well-being. Yet these sensations are not love for a significant other, but for the self unfolding in its presence, the degree of unfolding fluctuating, the self in love constantly ebbing and waning, becoming what it was not before. The energy spends itself in acts intended to sustain this unfolding, energy vacillations accounting for love's vulnerability and devastation, consistency bespeaking its strength and transformative qualities.
- Anger churns in the pit of the stomach, ready to jump-start assertive or defensive actions to ward

off what disrupts an engrossing engagement. A show of anger aims to safeguard that state by intimidation. When expressions of anger are ineffective, the emotion either escalates or churns, inflicting discomfort. When action is necessary but stamina lacking, anger directed at the inadequacy of the self is a readily available energy source.

- Courage snoozes in the small of the back. When summoned, courage leaps into action with the force of a spring released, or it rises incrementally, backing up an emotion in need of support. Courage clears the mind of what gnaws at it.
- Grief envelops the spine in a numbing protective sheath, imposing a moratorium on sensory activities, the isolation from intrusive stimulation allowing for adjustment. The energy spends itself on attending to the void left by the absence of a vital presence, where, in waves of pain cresting and waning, the healing begins.

Regardless of how familiar an emotional expression may be, a robust emotion arrives raw, as if for the first time. This suggests that emotions, originating inside the body, might bypass the sensory networks altogether, leaving no imprints behind. This would also account for why emotions seem to escape memory, for when I try to recall an emotion, I find myself relying on hindsight—looking for the feeling from which the emotion sprung (What was it about?) or for the responses that my expression has elicited (What was all the fuss about?).

Emotions have many forms of expression, from hardly perceptible to physical. My favorite is in the casual energy exchanges when we meet. I have come to see these exchanges as a primal form of communication granted to all responsive creatures at birth. This silent language carries our inner energy state across the spatial divide via eye contact, a movement, or vocal intonation between humans and between animals, as well as between humans and animals—this ur-language bypassing the rational mind to this day. When an emotional exchange does occur, the first scream at birth, a glow of satisfaction, or a frown are no longer sufficient, and that is where emotional schooling begins. What needs to be learned is not just what kind of feeling the exchange evokes in me, but the effect my expression has on you, the effect depending on how my feeling was delivered. And as any emotional expression is a performance—not unlike on stage or screen—it takes skill to show the nuances of a feeling accurately, the skills acquired either by instruction or observation and honed in practice. Skills set the tone to the interaction and when a feeling's expression is in proportion to the occasion, it secures at least an agreeable coexistence.

Enter the Intellect*Intellect and symbol**Intellection*

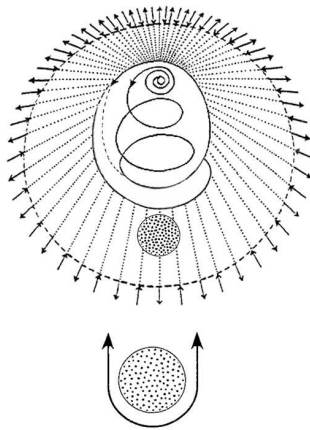
I see the intellect as an extension of intuition. Both run on energy drawn directly from attraction at the core of my being, and both cast a bird's-eye view on the past to assist the present. The difference between them is in the data that each handles: Intuition, housed in the Initial System, pools attention into a static energy field that hovers above experience structures, activating images that relate to that pending mental confusion, the pulled-up scenario offering a metaphoric suggestion about what puzzles the mind at the time. In intellection, attraction is dynamic—it swings across the boundaries between the Initial System and the Extended System, connecting experience structures with thought networks. Although the intellect is apparently active already in the Initial System, say when relating a color or sound to other colors or sounds in a setting, or the fine points between things that escape definition, intellection extracts from a group of similar impressions a common denominator—an abstraction which, tucked under the umbrella of a single word or symbol, now stands in for a group of impressions.

This is how I visualize intellection at work: Say, an overwrought intuition propels a spark of attraction across the divide that separates the Initial from the Extended System. The spark, pulled back by attraction to its source and expelled again—is now leaping, falling, looping in such rapid succession that, like a flywheel, intellection creates its own energy field that vibrates with a hypnotic, monotonous drone that pervades both systems at once. That looping and humming field of energy would then be the intellect-at-work—intellection invading both experience and thought networks simultaneously. And as via association, intellection picks up similar energy imprints, it stitches the two systems together, one image, one sound bite, one word at the time. When the spin momentum dies down, intellection collapses

on itself, resuming its intuitive preverbal state. Velocity and silence (absence of words) are the intellect's main characteristics.

Intellection is a strictly mental, closed-circuit event. Even when idling, it generates a residual energy field. But unlike emotional urges, intellectual activities have no ready outlet. What compounds the situation is that having no traceable locus in the body or the mind, the intellect generates a field of restless energy that invades body and mind. If that itch is unheeded or suppressed, the intellectual urge may never gain the momentum it needs to get into gear, and becomes instead the cause of a discomfort that is difficult to pinpoint. If intellection finds no release in handling a material that yields to being shaped, left to its own devices, intellectual aspirations tend to invade imagination, creating scenarios powerful enough to reshape thought. But when the intellectual urge has an outlet, it can deliver a seemingly inexhaustible energy supply to sustain a meaningful engagement for a lifetime.

Enter Reason



Reason and symbol

Whatever the origins of reason are—whether an accidental byproduct or an outgrowth—reason must have rooted in the Initial System to become a functional part of it. Observation suggests that reason has tapped into an emotion-in-passing, emotion supplying reason not only with energy, but also with motivation to act with a purpose in mind. These roundabout ways may account for why, in comparison with the ease and speed at which emotion and intellect function, reason is a pedestrian at heart.

As the Initial System must have already been functional when reason appeared on the scene, I had many occasions to see reason grapple with the dynamics of the System that surrounds it. After years of tinkering with these issues, I am left with the impression that reason readily engages in tasks that concern basic survival needs, such as food and shelter, but must learn and acquire skills before it can successfully implement intentional activities. In short, to this very day, every newborn child has to learn to think and act with some purpose other than survival in mind.

It seems that the primary task of reason is to put to use what the material world has to offer. I will attempt to enumerate the skills which reason is equipped to handle and master by trial and error:

- Acquire the skills of verbal communication
- Learn or detect the sequence of cause and effect in natural processes, and from these observations, deduce a sense of order that governs the material world
- Apply that sense of order to sensory information
- Track, measure, weigh, quantify, and categorize the information by means of comparison
- From this information, project future activities and prepare to implement them
- Share the knowledge so acquired by demonstration, word, symbol, or sign
- Build on the findings of others

The following list shows some of the tasks that cannot be taught but are to be found, explored, and applied by each individual to his or her own advantage:

- Recognize one's inherent abilities and limitations and learn what brings them to the forefront
- Apply these abilities to what is at hand and define an aim
- Use imagination to explore the possibilities

Reason's prowess is manifest in its will, the will seated in the order derived from observing cause and effect in the material world. To reason, words and symbols are a means by which it engages emotion and intellect and manipulates their activities, the application of pressure similar to the tightening or loosening of a screw. The above observations also show that reason's capabilities are limited—it can handle only those things that can be observed, tracked, weighed, measured, duplicated, compared, categorized, and verified by others as being factual. Consequently, reason cannot handle—only assume, suggest, interpret, or delegate a meaning to—what escapes duplication, demonstration, and comparison. Thus matters that escape rational explanation also escape rational control. These include feelings,

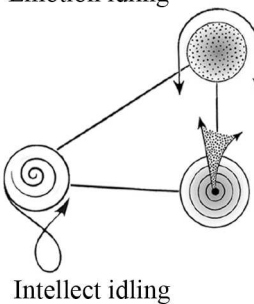
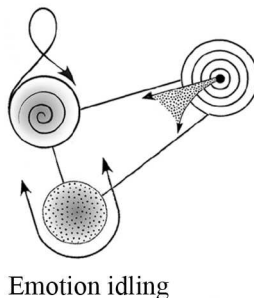
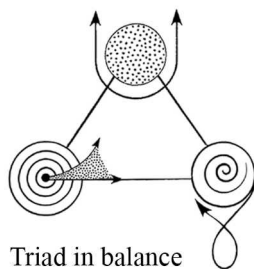
motivation, intellection, imagination, and spiritual engagement, all essential and integral to every creative endeavor.

The above scenario suggests that reason functions in isolation from immediate sensory activities, in the dark as to what goes on in the here and now. It uses hindsight to see what has actually transpired, suggesting that memory holds up to reason a rearview mirror in which reflections of cognitive images play themselves out. Reason thus moves ahead by looking back to see what has taken place—always in hindsight, after the fact.

The Triad in Action

The above findings suggest that the three faculties have developed in collaboration, as by now emotion, intellect, and reason are bound in a triad that renders them interdependent, strung together as if on the string in a cat's cradle:

- All three faculties draw energy from the Initial System and are sustained by it.



The Triad in cat's cradle

- Each faculty has its own thrust and pull, which translates into will: Emotion derives will from the self-balancing forces active in the Initial System, the intellect from attraction via intuition, and reason from the perception of order it derives from the logic of cause and effect detected in the material world.
- Each faculty responds to, is regulated by, and in turn regulates the inclinations of the other two, whereby a dominant faculty falls under a double influence in return.
- Although each faculty has its own agenda and exerts its will on its own behalf, their interdependence renders the Extended System self-regulating.

The three faculties need not be engaged at the same time. Getting a job done requires no intellectual reflection, only rational directives and emotional stamina; in these situations intellectual interjections would only distract from what needs to be done. Likewise, dealing with factual data requires no

emotional engagement, only sequential logic and intellectual vigilance; in those situations emotional intervention would merely divert attention to personal considerations.

Consequently, when reason engages emotion, intellection may speed up the interaction or apply caution to regulate it; and when reason engages the intellect, the emotional drive regulates the urgency, adjusting the pace of activities accordingly. When emotion and intellect consolidate their effort and the two align, reason might restrain itself from interfering, or interfere by interjecting rational concerns. In short, strung like on a string in a cats cradle, whenever two faculties are engaged, the third, although seemingly idling in the background, exerts its will indirectly, as if by remote control.

In these interactions, all three faculties empower themselves by engaging imagination. Emotion relies on imagination to fortify or diminish the motivation for a projected expectation by adorning images in ways that increase or reduce a feeling's intensity, imagination thereby regulating the momentum of an emotional thrust. Reason reaches for imagination to support some rational point in question by bending association to its will—instructing imagination to bring forth suggestions from which reason will choose to enhance or diminish the effect of that targeted image. Treated by reason as a handmaiden, imagination is trained to fulfill its demands and will convert appearances into what they are not—sprucing up an ordinary image or an idea by fitting it out with attributes borrowed from different sources, or replacing attractive features with repulsive details—the pickings intended to fortify a point in question. In the hands of the intellect, a glint or nod in any direction suffices, and imagination responds like a maiden wooed. In the blush of excitement, eager to please and tease the mind into ever-greater expectations, imagination embellishes what an image already is, rendering an alluring object hauntingly attractive, an unpleasant image fabulously ugly or horrifying. In these rushes, familiar details that were unrelated before may group themselves in ways that bring to life a thing new to the world.

THE POWER OF WORDS

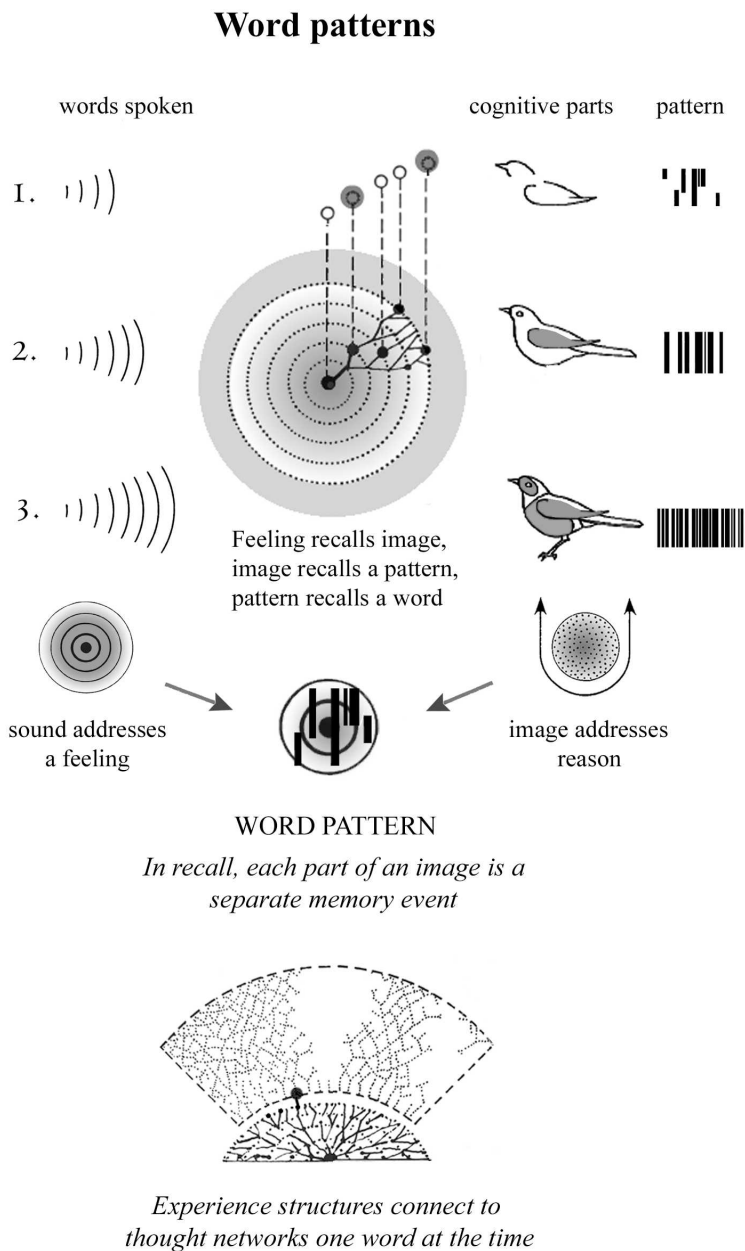
In the house I grew up in, six languages were spoken: Lithuanian, Russian, Polish, German, English, and occasionally French. Languages changed with the faces at the dining table. I recollect the occasion when a question was asked in one language and answered in another without missing a beat. What was the key to understanding when the singsong changed? After the meal, up in my favorite apple tree, I recited out loud the word *tree* in several languages: *medis* (in Lithuanian), *derevo* (in Russian), *Baum* (in German), *tree* (in English). No matter in what language the word was spoken, the same tree stood fixed in my mind.

Any language is an array of specific sound arrangements exchanged by people in agreement as to what verbal utterances stand in for what appearances or movements. In the naming of things—in the translation of images, events, and thoughts into their verbal equivalent—words are labels attached to appearances and activities. In all languages, the words in use build in the mind a world that is separate from the familiar world known through the senses. Considering that the senses perceive things by their energy content—wavelengths, pulsations, and vibrations of different frequencies—words not only strip things and events of their original energy content, but also record things as neutral and static entities, as they were the moment they registered in verbal memory, words stripping the world of the ongoing changes inherent in all material things.

It could be argued that words that serve as labels to what the senses collect falsify reality. Yes, there are times when I feel that the world gets lost in the shuffle of meanings and vice versa, that words, attending to some self-serving purpose, erode experience, rearrange memories, and so distort perception. But then, how can one compare realities that exist in parallel, affecting each other profoundly, but function by incompatible laws? While reason follows the linear logic of cause and effect, attraction operates by its own dynamic multidimensional laws, its dynamics affected by changes in every energy field, be they inside or outside of me.

Reason must have crossed a threshold when it noticed that a verbal utterance stirs the underground tremors of an emotional response. Reason took advantage of this, for at this point, all it had to do was modify the vocal inflection of words and use verbal **sounds** to coax, harass, or tease and divert an emotion away from its course, then use the diverted energy in actions meant to fulfill some rational intent. To this day, reason does just that: It talks to itself,

it asks questions and answers them, it praises itself and complains to itself, and it consoles or scolds itself, listening intently to the effect that the seismic verbal reverberations have on a feeling. Upon hearing a tremor, reason may ignore it or pounce on it, as a cat pounces on a mouse, and using emotional channels, divert the borrowed energy to the brain to stimulate thought and so engage that energy to generate activities that will advance some rational objective.



But where does the connection between sound, image, and word take place? Where do the two incompatible worlds mingle or meet? Based on a longstanding personal impression that reason and emotion seesaw—when emotion is up, reason is down, and vice versa—I started to pay attention to what happens to words when I use them.

As shown in the word-pattern schematic, someone may ask, “What is the sound I hear?” The flash of a feather, beak, or wing triggers my answer, “It’s a bird.” Asked what kind of bird it is, the outline of the bird subdivides, and the words *head*, *tail*, and *throat* jump to mind, and as the throat turns red, I reply, “A red-throated warbler.” Asked to name its

characteristics, the memory map subdivides to accommodate the details, each division, like in a color-by-number book, calling for a specific word, each word a separate memory event. If I

have to describe the bird's size, birds of different sizes pop up on the mental screen for comparison, and I say, "It is small."

What brings words to life and renders them meaningful to the listener are the emotional intonations aloft in the speaker's voice. It's the word-sound that impregnates the static cognitive images with an energy content that carries the emoted intonation across the spatial divide that separates the speaker from the listener. In these processes, other faculties have a hand: Association brings up the image pattern to which the sound pattern relates, and as the sound triggers a cognitive image it gives the word its meaning, cognition sealing the connection.

A childhood memory may have nudged this perception: During one of our family visits, Grandfather called us to come and watch his favorite terrier, Nelly, respond to his commands. I had seen him train his terriers before, but this time, instead of saying, "Nelly, stand!," in the same tone of voice he clearly pronounced, "Nelly's hand," and Nelly stood up. Instead of cooing, "Come, my dear," he cooed, "Run, my dear," and wagging her tail, Nelly licked his hand. "Animals don't know the meaning of words," said Grandfather. "They respond to the tone of my voice, the way I pronounce the words." And so do I, to this very day, as a word's meaning is not always in context, nor is it in the sequence envisioned. The word-sound, however, always hits a point.

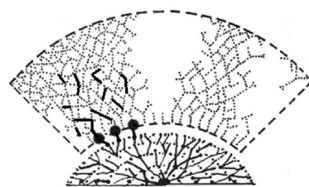
In verbal exchanges, where images stand in for the word's meaning and the word-sound renders the word personally meaningful, even when the words spoken are carefully chosen and well aligned, they convey but a fraction of what the speaker has in mind. I find that in verbal exchanges, that fraction is up to five times removed from actuality. The transformation begins in the speaker's mind, where a cognitive image is already stripped to a pattern. Take the pattern of the word *tree*. In my mind, I see a trunk branching out in a mass of leaves, which in my mind is a skeletal replication of trees stripped of their particulars. As the word-sound arrangement carries that diminished pictorial depiction across the spatial divide, the singsong activates in the listener's mind a correlate pictograph, which is then filled out with details pulled from the listener's personal reservoir. After this fourfold transfer—from the speaker's image pattern to the intonation of a feeling (1), which rings the emotional tone in the word-sound (2), to the sound-arrangement evoking in the listener's mind a correlate image pattern (3), to which details are added from a personal reservoir (4)—the perceptions behind the word tree held in two separate minds may no longer resemble each other ("And I thought

we were talking about this, not that”). Yet that is not the end of it, as that image can be further transformed (5) if the sound intonation hits a feeling that conditions the listener’s response in some personally meaningful way. Only when the talking takes place while both the speaker and the listener look at the same thing can there be the fusion of mind and heart called understanding.

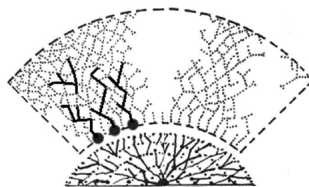
THOUGHT NETWORKS

As words stand in for impressions of separate entities, their locations, movements, or actions, thoughts stand in for experiences. In the translation of personal experiences into words, the linear logic of cause and effect replaces the dynamic logic of attraction, words reconstructing sensory events into rational events. Consequently, only those impressions that can be arranged in a linear logic will make sense to reason.

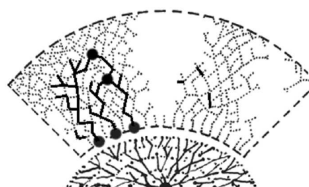
I detect three kinds of thought: unintentional, intentional, and resolute:



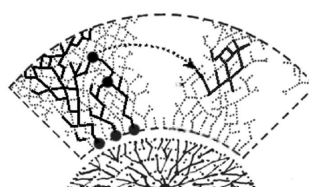
Unintentional thoughts



Intentional thoughts



Resolute thoughts



Assumptions

Thoughts in the making

- Initial thoughts are unintentional. They amount to a random collection of sensory impressions gathered on the heels of what the eye, the nose, or the ear picks up—fragmented cognitive impressions merely dotting the verbal networks, informing me as to what has drawn my attention.
- Thoughts are intentional when the mind returns to the scene and directs the senses to collect specific information intended to fill in the gaps between the random initial glimpses. As intentional thoughts do the detective work, that additional data connects the existing impressions by cause and effect.
- Resolute thinking brings reason into power. Having verbalized enough data to rely on words and thoughts alone, reason starts functioning independently, no longer needing to rely on memory to supply information in hindsight. Backed up by enough verbalized facts, reason can now project thoughts ahead—plan ahead and prepare and so advance rational concerns to advantage.

Resolute thoughts, however, do not come to reason naturally; they call for rational skills. Thus to this day, every youngster must learn not only to talk, but also to think—to make sense out of sensory data by arranging words in an order that makes sense to other people. And having traced the linear logic by which material things come together, having deduced an order in natural events (cause and effect), reason applies that order to direct its own activities and so embarks on a venture uniquely its own. The knowledge so laboriously attained has given humanity a grasp on how the material world works, and knowledge shared has fostered foresight, foreknowledge led to planning ahead—calling for specialized rational activities and related language skills, acquired in practice or by instruction. And while musing along these lines, I came to see interpretation and assumption as the mental glue between things that do not quite fit together, substitute kept on hand until (ideally) it is replaced by factual data.

As reality tends to disregard what reason puts together so carefully—or worse yet, threatens to undermine some established line of reasoning—instead of questioning its own handiwork, reason habitually ushers upsetting information to a region of the mind reserved for such eventualities. This provision enables reason to discredit what fails to support or contradicts whatever reason is professing and treat it as illusory or unworthy of attention. That information, however, registers in memory and tends to return when assumptions collide with reality. There seems to be a circuit in the mind that causes the discarded thoughts to resurface for revision, and this might explain the practice of scientific inquiry, specialization in a field adding to the list of skills that reason, given a chance, is capable of mastering.

VERBAL MEMORY

Unlike sensory memory, which is activated by external and internal energy impulses, verbal memory is activated by request. It is the word-sound, heard, voiced or subvocalized, that recalls a visual clue to the focal point of intelligence, the clue prompting memory (via association) to supply the answer. When I know the object in question and what part of it I need to recall, the recollection is instant; when there is nothing to recall, memory hits a blank. If I want to stop rambling and shorten or extend the story, I make such a request, which then imposes upon memory a time frame that presets the duration. When words fail to jump forth when I need some specific information, unless I improvise it, memory apparently keeps on rummaging, as these blanks do not fade away but gape in readiness to be filled in. Weeks later, I am leafing through some magazine in the dentist's office and the missing word I was looking for jumps out at me.

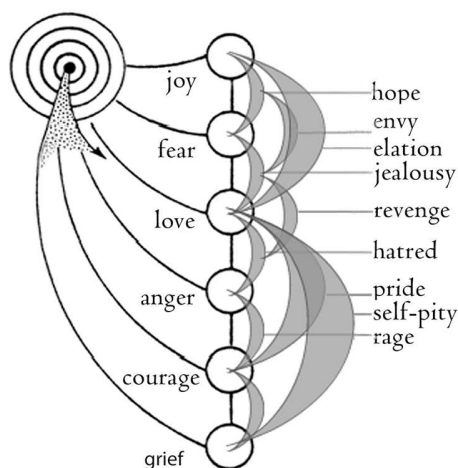
MOTIVATION

REASON ENGAGES EMOTION

Reason crosses another threshold when it notices that the energy being emoted leaves a trail of tremors in its wake. In contrast to a feeling, which arrives like a whisper or a jolting drumbeat that fades or lingers, sometimes insistently, an emotion (the messenger) rises from the deep and moves outward in a single wave. That wave of energy spills into a locus in the body, where it triggers muscular action. But not every feeling is strong enough to trigger an emotional expression, let alone a physical action. A budding emotion may thus be halted by reason at one of the three thresholds that the emoted flow crosses on the way out.

The first of the three thresholds is detectable in the spine, where a tingling pressure announces that energy is about to surface in the corpus proper. At this stage, the sensation may trigger a faint smile or frown, signaling what kind of emotion is about to surface. The second threshold is in the seat of an emotion into which that extra energy spills; there the energy is apt to halt, take a break, or perhaps collect itself, measuring up the occasion before it erupts in action. The third threshold is in the trigger that opens the floodgates and spills the emoted energy into muscular expressions, the strength of the feeling reflected in the strength of the emoted expression.

Look what is apt to happen when reason controls the trigger: Unless the emotional flow empties itself dry, the left-behind emotional residue, having nowhere to go, remains stranded.



Derivative emotions

For a while, these leftover or held-up energy drifts seem to respond to verbal utterances belated, but once they stop responding, they do not simply go away. Their energy diminished, they drift along the spine, and as the drifts apparently mingle, these bundles of energy-on-the-loose may eventually dribble away into casual activities, mental or physical, or they may just as well seep into the larger mass of the body, invading some natural processes there.

Thus while unhampered emotions just surface and spend the energy in delivering the message, a

derivative emotion originates when drifting energy leftovers mix. For example, when whiffs of love held back mix with inklings of fear, the two mutate into jealousy; add to love a dash of held-back anger, and the mixture tends to escalate to envy or hatred, the chemistry more potent than before. Add to love a touch of both fear and courage, and revenge lurks around the corner, ready to inflict harm. There is no telling how many derivative emotions may dangle around. Although these emotions are caused by reason's intervention, emotion usually takes the blame, and so attention misguided by reason starts spreading confusion within and without. The schematic drawing suggests what might happen to emotions when, due to reason's intervention, the mingling drifts produce derivative emotions.

I was surprised to learn that aside from the actions that secure basic survival needs such as food and shelter, action does not come to reason naturally—reason needs motivation to even lift a finger, motivation providing that extra spurt of energy needed to generate muscular activities. At this point, a longstanding hunch that emotion and reason are seesawing—that the energy flow that animates both might be one and the same, like a flow split and branching out—started making sense: The more energy reason used, the more drained emotion was, and when reason relaxed, emotion gained vigor. But if seesawing between reason and emotion was the norm, then what made emotion resist or challenge reason's manipulations? It was not the emotion itself that got stubborn, as an emotion released is already of a fixed power. It was the underlying Initial System that in response to rational interference thrusts the emotion up from behind, the system eager to rid itself of that surplus energy that upsets the self-balancing forces active in the Primal Union and the Initial System.

Say a youngster fancies a jacket in a store window and imagines wearing it to school and collecting admiring glances. Feeling diminished in stature without it, he asks his parents to buy the jacket for him. They say that he can have it on condition that he does his homework before dinner. To get his wish, the boy will have to give up his favorite TV program. The bargaining addresses his reason. But since gratification postponed causes discomfort, the irritant is now supplying a steady energy flow that motivates reason. The boy's wish lends itself to manipulation by the parental eagerness to change his habits or by the boy himself. He can manage the urge by using his imagination—inflate a sagging wish by embellishing the jacket's attractive details or strip the wish by inflating its less pleasing patch of color. But if the boy weighs in his mind the emotional benefits expected from the jacket against the enjoyment he gets from the TV program, he may well decide to give up the jacket and be at

once relieved of the wish incited by his own imagination and fixated in his mind by none other than reason.

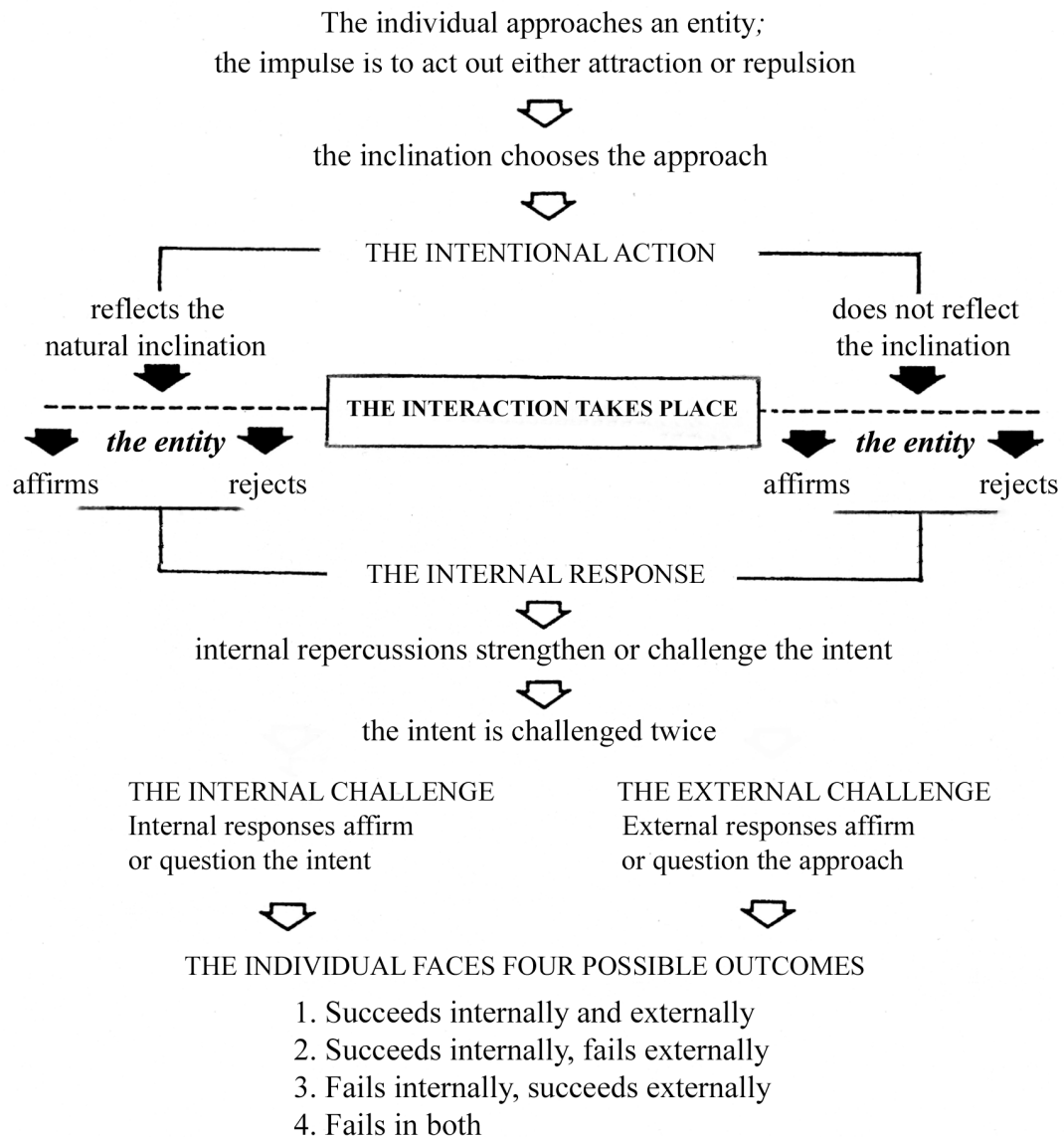
The words we use to describe these action-motivating urges are *wish*, *want*, and *desire*—words that stand in for stirred feelings and hung up emotions, that rouse that extra energy that incites intentional action and generates muscular activities for whatever purpose. As a wish or want fixates attention on the image that has generated attraction or repulsion, the wish or desire rides the fixation until satisfaction is obtained.

When it comes to satisfaction, the sequence of internal events leading to it is more complex than in actions that lead to another action (as when I reach for the car keys, I am not preparing to take a shower). Table 1 illustrates the sequence of internal events that when satisfaction engages another entity or an object, there are four possible outcomes: inner and outer satisfaction, only inner satisfaction, only external failure, and failure all around.

Table 1 follows

TABLE 1

THE SEQUENCE OF INTERNAL EVENTS DURING
AN INTENTIONAL ACTION



It seems that ever since reason first tasted the vigor of an emotional thrust, internal bargaining (“I want/don’t want” or “I should/should not”), a tug of war between emotion and reason has been part of the game. When that power play begins to challenge reason, any passing emotion given attention, be it anger, rage, fear, or a casual attraction, may escalate to passion.

Apparently, reason does not fare better when it sharpens its wits and plays the cat-and-mouse game to the hilt. For if a want turns into an obsessive desire, an agitated emotion is apt to put reason in a triple bind: it must channel the energy into physical or mental activities to obtain a measure of relief, it must keep the emotion in check or be trampled by it and suffer the consequences, and it must also titillate the emotion to sustain motivation. Lack of skill and discipline invite frustration, but when reason is prepared to handle such high-wire balancing acts, an obsessive motivation, handled in measured releases, may settle into a productive long-lasting ride.

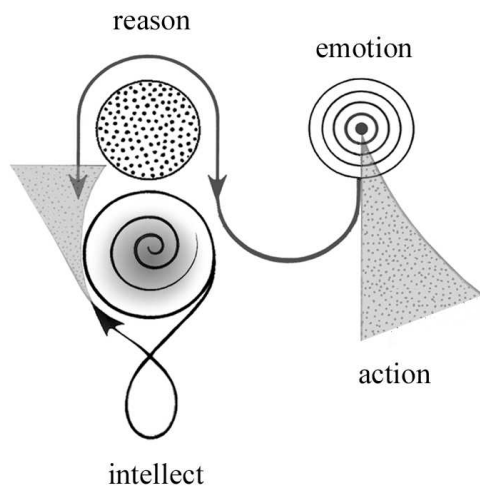
As mentioned earlier, it’s not always from lack of willpower that reason fails to control emotional flare-ups. There is a point at which the underlying host system stops tolerating rational interventions and, summoning an overpowering wave of energy, delivers satisfaction, putting reason to shame. It’s in these high-voltage confrontations that reason finds its own strength and learns its limitations.

REASON ENGAGES THE INTELLECT

When baffled enough by thoughts that upset the linear logic of cause and effect, reason may attempt to weigh the unverifiable, plumb the immeasurable, or divide the indivisible. Enter the intellect, and the most rigid lines of reasoning start making illogical jumps, association dealing the wild card: intellection rendering the apparently impossible thinkable, intellection challenging reason in turn.

To begin with, it bears repeating that the intellect draws (via intuition) energy from attraction. Intellection thus runs on energy that has no traceable locus in the body but invades together body and mind instead. It’s that trapped intellectual restlessness that itches to be expelled, but having no means to release that cooped-up energy (as a feeling does via emotion), it just asserts itself, causing discomfort. If in that restless state the hand reaches for a material that yields to manipulation, the hand then coaxes or teases that material into a form, whereby the energy invested into shaping that object (or song, or idea) inhabits the product—the results exposing the intellect’s intensity to a viewer’s or listener’s senses. This transfer of energy

(from the inner to the outer realm) happens in the handling of a material, the craft mastered facilitating these processes. Although these energy transfers may occur spontaneously, to savor intellectual offerings intentionally requires disciplines that involve not only intellectual engagement but also rational and emotional participation.

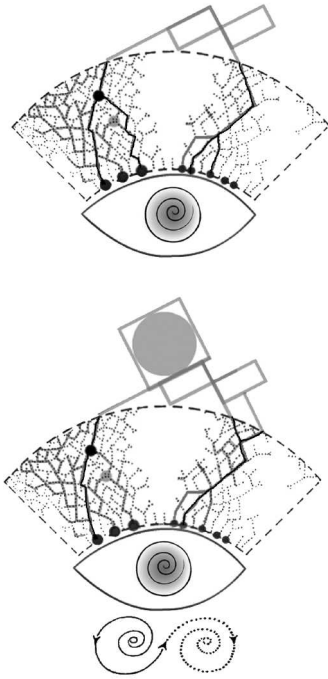


Reason transfers the intellectual charge to action via emotion

The intellect works on many levels at once, thus intense intellectual engagements are apt to cause sympathetic reverberations in both experience structures and thought networks, even reshuffle a mind-set—cause enough for reason to regard intellectual activities as intrusive and unwelcome. If reason ignores intellectual restlessness persistently, the intellect may seek relief in imagination, and in the rarified atmosphere of encrypted image and feeling patterns create visions that fixate the sense organs from within. And when images overpower the mind, words get pushed out of the way, and deprived of words,

reason is rendered powerless. Yet in hindsight, reason may detect in the esoteric visions amusing offerings and, forgoing logic and rational proof, take a risk and use them to advance its own objectives. Better yet, when reason itself initiates intellectual interplays, it can come up with incentives that further rational endeavors.

Still, the intellect's main task remains the same: to secure a linkage between the nonverbal Initial System and the verbal Extended System, images rendering intellectual activities personally meaningful. The intellect, however, does not slow down to fuss over details (experience structures take care of that), but targets the high points of experience. And as association sweeps over minutiae, the intellect distills from the mass of related impressions a common denominator, which may well be in the details. Take words such as *truth*, *beauty*, *liberty*, *justice*, or *freedom*: Each harbors familiar life experiences amassed by a common denominator among them, and as that picked-up denominator registers in a single word (*truth*, *freedom*, and so on), that word now stands in for a whole group of related experiences offering a shortcut in verbal exchanges—the shortcut an abstraction, the variables in experience inviting interpretation and argument to this very day.



*Abstract thoughts distilled
from common denominators*

Though the dynamics of intellect and reason differ greatly, reason can engage intellection at will by acquiring the disciplines that regulate the floodgates. This is how it works for me: First, the self-generating intellectual energy must gather enough pressure to put reason through the rigors of learning the craft of a medium at hand, as a craft mastered facilitates intellectual expression. When the rush is on and the material is taking shape, reason needs to restrain itself from butting in with comments like “I don’t like it, I want this, not that.” For every time reason interposes rational preferences or censors the results on offer, like a hapless pedestrian caught in high traffic, it only disrupts the flow and has no way to restore it. Reason’s task is to keep the floodgates open, thus instead of tampering with the flow (even when intellection takes a breath), reason must wait for the rush to exhaust itself. Only then is it safe for reason to look at the results, and comment on what is there already—suggest a line be softened, remove or

add a detail for balance, sharpen the focus. If reason learns to leapfrog (take turns) with the intellect, the symbiotic interaction between the two finds its groove. And while emotion in the background sets the tempo (the level of urgency), the venture is apt to reach fruition.

When emotion, intellect, and reason thus collaborate, to witness a feeling come alive in a material I am working with, is an experience in itself. The intellectual rush comes like a wave risen from a place far back in time. Slow in coming, it swells. And when the swell crests, I am but an instrument to pass on what is brought up to what is receptive to it. And as the unexpected is passed on to what is at hand, it is not that mysterious after all: It takes a certain pitch, like an angle to lean into, the angle aligning a point within with a point without until the guiding feeling hums taut like a live wire. Occasionally, a wave halts at my fingertips as if waiting for attention; then rolls on incessantly as if at whim. Although not all visions suffer a loss in transition from the inner to the outer world, the process itself does not secure a measure of value to what it delivers. That depends on the minute decisions I make in a blink when every eye-catching detail is under the intellectual scan for their relation to the whole.

In a state of collaboration, intellect and reason engage each other also in reflective, retrospective, contemplative, and analytical forays.

- During reflection, a feeling expressed in an emotional act may call for a detailed revision of what was expressed by measuring the act against the response it has received.
- During retrospection, that emotional expression is placed in the context of feelings, intellection pulling up the feeling's highlights, reason articulating the reference points before and after the event.
- During contemplation, the intellect pulls up the reference points within the feeling examined in reflection and retrospection, exposing the feeling to a wide range of related events, be they personal or impersonal, or merely fragments observed. As memory adds significant data, the intellect plumbs it, attuning words to the feeling's effect, testing the feeling's integrity, refining, regrouping the range of related feelings.
- The analytical approach offers a method to bypass personal experience altogether. For me, the method is in the following sequence: Reason takes apart the actual data in question to its elemental components, then exposes the findings to intellectual scrutiny (as in daydreaming). Intellection then pulls out of the mass the relevant parts and hands them back to reason, which rearranges them in the logic of cause and effect, the process repeated over and over again. The result may no longer be a singled-out abstraction (although it may still be so) but a structure of layered abstractions, removed as far from actuality (and the self) as the logic of the method will hold. On the one hand, an analytical structuring of thoughts provides a shortcut to anticipated future explorations (part of the homework), while on the other, a small change in factual data on any level may topple the whole enterprise.

Although conjoined in the triad, each faculty still holds on to its own agenda, so complications abound. Consider this: As a spill of intellectual energy discharges through emotional channels, it is bound to pick up emotional energy drifts. If reason is not vigilant and idles in the background, emotion and intellect may line up in a symbiotic relationship and rush headless to fruition. The results, however, may not be in tune with rational objectives or convictions. So next time around, reason may get a hold on a swelling emotion and use the energy to its own satisfaction, and if the intellect is idling, persistent rational engagements

may exhaust emotional motivation. The same happens when reason and intellect join forces and emotion lies low—the two on high octane may run the whole system into the ground. Reason serves emotion and intellect best when instead of regulating the other two, it acts like an attending midwife. Although the results may hardly bear witness to reason's input, its assistance is instrumental in human endeavors that seek the highest expression of their potential.

At this point, the level of skills that reason has mastered can drive any venture to regions in which innovation and invention bring new things to the world. The disciplines that keep the triad in balance, however, depend not so much on rational skills as on how much attention reason pays to intellectual and emotional needs that fuel the rational drive. Whereas both emotion and intellect function as they must and reason has the power to direct the energy available to it, reason will pursue any course only as long as emotional or intellectual motivation last.

THE TROUBLES

From the standpoint of reason, both emotion and intellect can be seen as forces that are unreliable, unpredictable, and susceptible to suggestion and manipulation—raw potential on the loose in need of control and regulation. Encountering no indication that the forces washing around it are not meant for its use alone and enamored of the idea that human nature is in need of guidance and supervision, reason seems to be inclined (or is induced) to harness emotion and intellectual potential in the pursuit of rational objectives.

Action is the ultimate test and measure of reason's prowess. Constantly tested by what it sets out to do and what it actually accomplishes, reason faces its own shortcomings most severely when its efforts to make things better only make them worse. In the following interactions, reason takes center stage, assumes the burden of responsibility, and disregarding (or unaware of) the triad's self-regulating principles, engages emotion and intellect to advance its own agenda—language the instrument.

Suppose an emotion, motivating a seemingly placid enterprise, starts for no apparent reason to flare up. Armed with verbal intonations, reason comforts the emotion, bidding it to sustain the steady rhythm of activities the agenda demands. Emotion, harnessed to monotonous activities, cannot stand still, as it will either gather momentum or dull to oblivion. Reason pitches its voice, sweetens talk with teasing, coaxes emotion to comply. Placid no more, emotion gets stubborn. Meeting the challenge, reason collects itself, persists, leans in. Invigorated by attention, emotion heaves. Full of purpose, reason presses harder, makes fun, spreads emotion thin. Instead, the emotion gains vigor. Agitated, its own vigor in question, reason demands obedience, insists. Emotion matches the pitch. Threatened, reason intimidates emotion with verbal abuse, whips it raw; and inflamed, emotion inflates and overpowers reason. Insulted, humiliated, reason leans back and sees emotion getting its satisfaction. Left dangling, reason may contemplate and comprehend. (Come to think of it, the roles may just as well reverse.)

In the above encounter, emotion and reason intensify measure by measure. In every challenge met, there is a moment when action equals reaction. At that instant, either one—the internal balancing forces or reason's will—may give in. There is no telling when or which of the two is to win. If it so happens that emotion collapses on itself first, reason moves on victorious, as if the outcome were expected. But when, overpowered by an uncontrollable emotional push,

reason retreats, left dangling on a string of questions of how come, what now, and so on, reason faces a vacuum of its own making.

The scenario changes when reason is irked by intellectual prowess. Early in the game, it has an advantage: Instead of granting the intellect passage via emotional channels, reason has the option to deny it—to hold back intellectual urges by keeping the emotional channels busy with activities that need no intellection—brisk work-outs, a new project, massive engagements will shut off intellectual pressure. Such strategic shifts in attention may even choke up the intellectual urge for good, as lacking sway and velocity, the intellect collapses on itself. But if imagination is active, the body merely strutting around will not quench the urge. Trapped, the intellect may do what comes naturally to it—slip into imagination and spill that surplus energy into lofty acrobatics without a safety net. Reason, left to its own devices, suddenly heavy-footed, grotesquely immobile, usually follows suit and does what comes naturally to it—hurriedly narrates the wilds of imagination enjoying its own performance just as much.

Suppose the intellect is denied expression, under house arrest. Hung up on grand ideas, the intellect complains, steams, rebels. The captive remembers that it too can say no and freeze up, restraint but a fence to keep sensory stimulation at bay. Running on emotional sap, the intellect itches and scratches in ways that may entice emotion to deliver the disabling punch. Reason urges: *You failure, misfit, no-good, get a grip on yourself.* And you do, you turn on yourself. Reason, cowed somewhat, shows concern; comes around and suggests: *First do this, then that.* But *that* does not show up. *Well, if you had done it differently.* . . .

One other attempt: Stagnant energy has no direction. Sluggish already, the intellect churns; and unless it manages to break out, it withers, dries up like that odd branch on a healthy tree. In rational parlance, to spill means that it's time to choose a direction, implying that a decision must be made and consequences will follow. In intellectual affairs, to spill means to explore, to collect information, to interact with unexpected gravities, to face the aftermath and watch it unfold. What then? Grab that good feeling by the tail, go for it. And then? Squeeze the feeling into a shape, give a material or a thought the form it wants to take, and funnel its logic until that feeling inhabits the silence of the object—the feeling stays there, is alive to behold, the feeling invested talks now to you as well. And? Tremors will rumble the void. Plunge again. That is the pattern. Which might be the problem.

As it happens, when intellectual activities have rational support, the two faculties feed off each other, excelling in soliloquies, dialogues, unheard-of endeavors. Whatever the topic of the season, all is fair and dandy as long as the frenzy is productive. That self-incurred momentum, however, can set the mind into a spin that draws energy into regions that have no outlet. There, residual inner states, such as anxiety, guilt, suffering, and despair, tend to invade and can pervade the whole system to exhaustion.

- I am in a state of anxiety when reason, waiting for some pending information, wrestles with fear of imagined consequences. As imagination whips up alarming scenarios, reason weighs the possibilities, shaping and reshaping the fears that kindle the anxiety. If reason keeps feeding on what imagination suggests, the buzz may vex the mind until the data that caused the anxiety are finally on hand. If at that point reason fails to take the action the data suggest and instead wanders off to what could have happened, might have happened, was expected to happen, or surely would have happened, if only . . . circular possibilities tend to exhaust the mind and the body to a state of depression.
- Guilt is groomed in the aftermath of an unfortunate outcome, regret mixed with anger, cornering reason into self-examination. Having the benefit of hindsight, in search of clues as to what could have prevented the mishap, thoughts replay memories of events that led to the unforeseen results. As imagination takes hold of every flashing detail, it also highlights reason's shortcomings—lack of attention, neglect, faulty judgment, too little, too late. In the rehashing, imagination also suggests what could have been done instead, driving, twisting, diving into the pain—scratching the wound so that it will not heal. As long as the scruples are hinged to actual events, the reexamination may yield instructive insights. However, if thoughts turn into an instrument of self-flagellation, self-punishment is motivation enough to continue this painful indulgence—pain means being alive.
- Suffering settles in when the demands of living appear insurmountable and no change in circumstances is expected. In this state, imagination belabors memories of events that have brought on this state. As anguish saturates experience, the pain brings notions of degradation, insult, or injustice. If one feels victimized, then bleating and bleeding are the norm. In that state, only the pain is real. But when one's self-image bears a martyr's stigma, endurance tends to become a measure of strength, and the inactive hero is ready to embark on a tour of grand delusions.

- Despair takes hold when reasoning is no longer effective or does not make much sense anymore. If trying to make sense becomes too overbearing for too long, in self-defense the system imposes a sensory moratorium, its last resort. As echoes of distant memories weave into the cloth of losses and the present goes on in a haze, the future grows distant, too far to stir imagination. In the absence of imagination, hope is also absent. As the spirit hovers in the realm where nonbeing gives comfort, action, for better or worse, offers escape.

Back there, behind despair, is one other place, a side door to salvation: Alienation. From there, it's but five steps down to the void. On the first landing, imagination stunned flat out lets go of its grip on pain. Awash with relief, you look back: the crack of light at the edge of the door—opened but not shut—is the threshold between you and the hurt of living. On the second landing, the door flings ajar and a weakness coils in the gut—no, not again—let me be. On the third landing, the past walks away, and the future eye-to-eye now stares back at you. And the body in darkness forgets how it feels to feel. Breathing is still possible. On the fourth landing, you inhale the breath of darkness, the void inhales your exhalation, and there's a stirring: The pendulum of expectation sways with a force much greater than your own—*it* invites: Lean into the swing and you'll be out of here. On the fifth landing, *it* strikes. There's no telling whether you are to take your life or to receive a new one. It makes no difference.

DEVIATIONS

It bears repeating: Reason faces its own shortcomings most severely when its efforts to make things better only make them worse. A mind in distress tends to wander to the far side of reason, where the primal law of survival still reigns: Take what you need, or perish. In that state, to deviate from social norms takes little effort. It's enough to envision myself doing something about a distress and a plan of action springs to mind, imagination suggesting every possible venue, eager to partake in the venture. The buzz of being alive and ready to plunge into action is already a promise of better tidings.

Suppose I act out the plan that invites itself. Glory be if the risk taken delivers the expected gratification or lifts some pressing need. It's the planning, the cunning, the daring that is paying off. Yes, the world is there for the taking. Yes, every challenge is alluring. Another plan, a few more risks pulled off, and omnipotence—reason's sweet dream, reason's ultimate reward—drifts into focus.

Reason always falls into line. Consider the joys of laying out a plan of action and following the rules of cause and effect diligently, with a clear purpose in mind. Every turn of thought engages imagination. Images parade in the mind, luring, teasing, and tempting me to step over the line that holds me back from action. Excitement brings the object of desire closer; in the mind's eye, it's already in my power. Before I know it, the moment approaches when temptation grins—it has a face, takes on flesh, an old trick of the mind. And as the image steps in tall, it's familiar, ready-made—Satan, demon, witch, mammon, the devil of lore, all doing their job as written in sacred texts, as painted on walls to raise fear in those who deal with obsessive temptations, the affliction familiar from time immemorial.

It's only fair that I, an occasional victim myself, may victimize others in turn. "An eye for an eye" says it all. The logic is simple—flip the attitude, attune the mind, and there is nothing to obstruct progress when survival, real or imagined, justifies action. But isn't reason the only faculty able to divert energy from its intended course and channel it into actions intended to deliver expected returns, actions designed to fulfill a specific need? Isn't planning ahead—arranging actions in the sequence of cause and effect—the exclusive domain of reason, at the foundation of every civilization, past, present, and future? Remove reason from the equation, and where else in the brain will you find the tools necessary to plan ahead, figure out the means, lay out the approach step by step, and so fulfill a need? As imagination inflates a feeling, the itch compels the system to act, the intellect pushes and pulls at what is at hand, while reason merely wishes. That's where reason is at its best—wishing engages both emotion and the intellect, and with motivation pocketed in the wish, wishing keeps stirring imagination, reinforcing the calculated goal. All that's left for reason to do is plunge into action and hope for the best.

A tool has no morals. A tool works on what it is applied to, and so does reason. While moral considerations may have originated in the wisdom of "Do not do unto others what you would not have them do unto you," the recipe for evil deeds calls for no special ingredients: Pick any object or image, strip it clean of clinging feelings so that no scruple will sneak up to corrupt the enterprise, and you are set to act. The victim, dehumanized to mere object, is now either a prop or an obstacle in attaining the satisfaction built into the wish.

What is called evil—acts that victimize others for personal gain, advantage, or satisfaction—is grounded in an ancient rationale accessible to every human being. An occasional wrongdoing may slip into memory unnoticed, but when such activities are backed up by sufficient

experience, when reason sees itself as all-powerful and almost foolproof, it can do harm ingenious enough to evoke a bystander's admiration.

Codes of social behavior are not unique to humans; they are observed in animals that live in groups. Animals also watch their step to avoid rejection, confrontation, or punishment. Observation instructs which actions invite deprivation and which reward obedience. Although animals do this in the moment, we humans love to ponder, take time to reason and figure out what will, step by calculated step, serve our own interests best. As long as a desire tickles reason, one can rely on reason to provide a well-reasoned explanation and then rebuke that line of reasoning just as forcefully the next time around.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND AWARENESS

For all the good that words have done humankind, they have also done damage: The din of nonstop mental chatter muffles awareness of the sensations that instruct us how we fare in body and mind right here and right now.

For years I tried to differentiate between consciousness and awareness, befuddled by expressions such as "to be conscious is to be aware of...." Yes, the two are related, but also separate. In my experience, consciousness and awareness address two different planes of existence: Consciousness requires language skills which separate humans from all other species, while awareness is grounded in lived experience, an affinity we share with countless species. So I have come to see consciousness as being rooted in language and shared among people through verbal communication, while awareness instructs the mind via physical sensations, the information imparted then and there experienced personally by the individual.

From this perspective, being conscious implies that the individual learns that he or she belongs to a certain family and is familiar with the social norms and behavior patterns practiced in the community. It is assumed that he or she is told what actions are deemed right and wrong and is expected to conduct him or herself in accordance with the moral standards shared by the society. Consequently, societies governed by these principles formulate rules of conduct which, to secure a level of peaceful coexistence, intentionally standardize social behavior – laws (not always on paper) instructing individuals that they are also expected to inhibit their own volition and act with a common good in mind. Ideally, people conscious of their social obligations are encouraged to share their findings and their insights in all fields of human endeavors, their input intended to benefit the wellbeing of a society at large.

Awareness, rooted deeper in time, instructs individuals that they are responsible to those who take care of their daily needs, and they acquire a sense of self in the course of living. Lived experience imparts two kinds of awareness: one personal, as experienced in the privacy of one's own mind (inaccessible to others unless expressed), and the other communal, acquired in group activities where an experience is shared moment-by-moment with those present. In both cases, experience instructs that whether an action is right or wrong is circumstantial, the outcome unpredictable beforehand. The information so acquired prepares one to be self-sufficient and act independently, as well as to fall in line in group activities. The two experiences impart a two-fold obligation—that one take care of one's own personal needs and willingly serve the group that secures not only the group's survival but also your own in turn. In general, an individual who lives by the rule of now is steeped in freedom of feeling and freedom of thought, boundless in his or her own mind but limited when it comes to matters of behavior. When challenged, such an individual instinctively turns to self-expression (a natural asset) and faces challenges as the situation suggests.

Both domains come with a fixed mental set-up that impulsively engages the energy available to it, energy in awareness taking the path of least resistance and in consciousness laboring against it. When words resound in the brain, consciousness is in charge, and when a feeling or emotion overwhelms the verbal buzz, awareness takes over. If the energy in the area targeted is already engaged in some task, the gaze of attention consolidates all local activities into a field of energy, ready to spill in any direction. In awareness, the energy takes the path that leads to equilibrium, but when word-soundings take over, the flow, coaxed off course and directed toward some preconceived resolution, faces those irksome nudging sensations that feel like moral pangs. I sense a similar aura of moral righteousness hovering over attitudes—attitudes also attempting to settle an unsettled mind into some tested behavior pattern, attitudes acting like the banks of a river that guide a flow mindfully.

I was amazed to find that the built-in mindsets do set faculties into behavior patterns that allow awareness to slip away from consciousness and consciousness from awareness, the two working hand in hand as well. For example, when I sense a feeling welling up, the energy level in my state of being is already changing. Both mindsets pick up the feeling's tonal reverberations (wavelength, velocity, intensity) and set the course accordingly. In anticipation, all of me rises to the occasion, and as the small and large energy events in the field of attention consolidate into a field of energy, body and mind are ready to deliver the feeling's

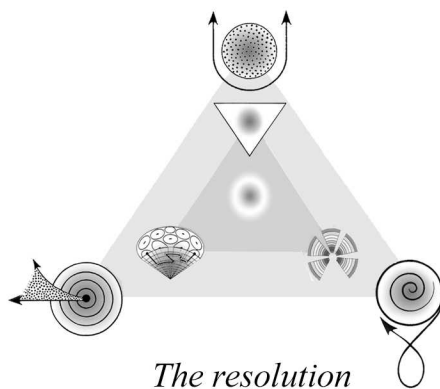
message in a physical expression or act. And then, under the hot spot of attention, the faculties stationed along the path align themselves in a relay. The first to respond is intuition, stirring up glimmers of images that relate to the feeling energy-wise, intuition dipping awareness into the past for backup. Next in line is cognition, which may at this point accidentally release the energy in a spontaneous act (resolution achieved, awareness escapes the clutches of reason). But if the feeling has roused an emotion, emotion takes over, its tonal reverberations directing the emotional act at what has, out there, caused the energy level to shift. Alerted by the commotion, reason reads the unfolding scenario in hindsight and, to make sense of it, translates into words what attraction has brought up in sensations, and as words land in thought networks, they fall in line with the logic of cause and effect (the flow now firmly in reason's grip). With awareness in the background, intellection starts swinging—linking awareness back to consciousness (experience structures to thought networks), rendering words meaningful and factual. And as verbal energy rides the music of an emotion, the energy atoned spills into action. In the balm of equilibrium, the spirit nestles from whence it sprang.

The relay of events stops at the point where it started, and that's where the initial feeling recalibrates itself. And if the action taken evokes another response, the active energy point loops between body and mind and back again, association at the hub ensuring that every move registers in experience structures. Consequently, in prolonged interactions awareness and consciousness work hand in hand, relays completed coiling like a spring—relaxing here, compressing there.

That's when awareness and consciousness talk to each other. And as echoes calibrate their differences in the feeling, both respond—one in streams of words, the other in a vibrant hum. The duet addresses me, the listener, like the chorus in a Greek drama—each voice commenting on what is unfolding on the stage, each offering a different perspective. When one rushes in, the other steps back, and if one restrains itself, the other urges it to respond. Come to think of it, these exchanges, harmonizing, contradicting, or leapfrogging over each other, differ little from when the two realities talk to each other in the back of my own mind, chatting, listening, weighing the odds, considering which face or what action is best suited to the situation at hand. And then, aside from my personal refrains, at times I hear distant voices tune in and lead the chorus in song.

THE RESOLVED SYSTEM

If reason keeps insisting that it alone can fix what ails, the malaise continues. But if reason faces its limitations squarely and by its own strength recognizes its shortcomings and steps down from the pedestal of its own making, priorities shift: In a sweep shadows lift, light floods in lucid luminous—*tabula rasa* a homecoming—born to it, lost it in the knowing, and longed for it ever since. A return to the beginning—a tall river cascading down, lazy deep on the planes the shimmer skims the reeds and spills over the horizon where the river gathers itself tall again.



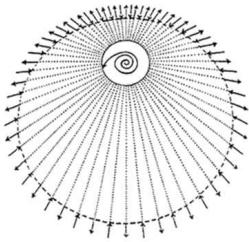
In the surge, the Initial System and the Extended System come into confluence and become a Resolved System. In that state, feelings ring clear and true. Emotions spill as they must, leaving no residue behind. Wanting, striving, longing is no longer an affliction but a measure of restlessness. Reason, the irreplaceable tool granted to humankind, is unchallenged. Relieved of chasing after emotions and fussing over controls, it rises

now to the task when its unique skills are called for. Destinations open ended, reason assists the spirit in the balancing act, removing the obstacles encountered and weighing the possibilities, while intuition, waving the magic wand, suggests. Daydreams attend to housekeeping, dreams offer clues, and imagination explores every venue, paving the road ahead. While intellection guards the integrity between thought, experience, and spirit, awareness aquiver directs attention to what animates or stills the whole. Only the spirit and matter, back-to-back to each other, stare at different horizons—flesh at material things, the spirit at motion in energy fields.

The following drawing shows The Four Systems aligned.

TABLE 2

THE FOUR SYSTEMS

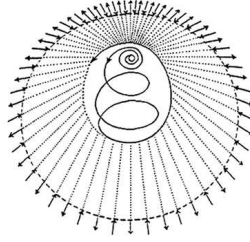


THE PRIMAL UNION

Harbors attraction
in matter (the body)
in spirit (activates matter)

The Primal Union is
in equilibrium

Present in all things
in existence

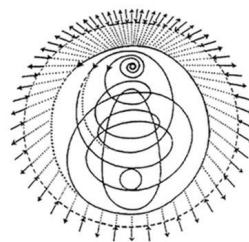


THE INITIAL SYSTEM

Collects and organizes
sensory impressions
stores them in experience
structures; retains
sensory memory
engages assistant faculties

The Initial System is
self-balancing

Present in most organisms
equipped with sense organs

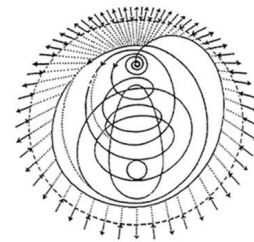


THE EXTENDED SYSTEM

Engages emotion, intellect
and reason; uses language;
creates thought networks;
retains verbal memory;
abstracts thought

The Extended System is
self-regulating

Present in all people



THE RESOLVED SYSTEM

Holds the Initial System
and the Extended System
in confluence; makes them
function as one system

The Resolved System is
self-balancing and
self-regulating

Present in all people
some of the time

In the habit of waves, the “glory, glory, alleluia” does not last. So it goes when the discomforts of being human prevail, when the impermanence of things, the mending of broken expectations, and the adjustment to changes are never-ending, the hassles of securing one’s daily bread nibbling at the mind. How then to go on living when the ancient guidelines no longer apply? It helps to remember that change must first be imagined before action will follow. When the spirit has a voice, every dream has a chance. Once a dream begins to take shape, imagination feverishly shapes that forward-pointing self-image, be it benevolent or destructive.

That image projects me, the dreamer, into a future role. It's neither reason, nor convention, nor belief that fashions the new me. What shapes the image is consistent attention on what is to fulfill my dream to its full measure. As before, that self-image still sets priorities, still negotiates, chooses the options, and channels energy into select intentional activities. It's that finger-pointing self that compels me to think and act and conduct my affairs in accordance with that phantom that impersonates me.

What then is this phantom self? A multitude: I am daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, an artist, and several other personae on the side. Each image wears a different face, has a specific role to play and skills to master that are of little use to the other selves. When a situation calls for a particular skill, the one on call steps forward, its role not always without dispute. The bargains that these self-images strike between themselves set priorities, while indecision as to which is best suited to handle a situation causes frustration, if not failure.

Each interface has its own stained-glass window hung tall between me and the world out there. Drawn on that window is that particular me facing the world then and there, ready to do this or that and take measure of itself. When a color catches a glint of light, that which has cast the glint gets detailed attention—if a facet of a color sparks, I am improving, seeing myself stronger connected to the world I live in; if it dims, I'm still dreaming; and if the whole window is aglow, I have arrived, hoping for the moment to last.

As the interfacing images fluctuate and change, what carries over from one to another are several consistencies: Facing and telling or not facing and not telling the truth; keeping or not keeping promises; taking or not taking responsibility for my actions; loving or not loving my neighbor. These trends, challenged daily in ordinary encounters, are cast into the foundations on which my life is built. These habitual trends uphold, as well as restrain, that finger-pointing self. The same trends carve notches on the crossbar of scales by which I weigh my life—not against moral or social pronouncements, but against the integrity of the dream I hold in mind.

Reason enjoys these meandering forays. It still stakes out claims and posts road-signs and digs in the meadows of life leaving potholes behind in need of repair. The finger-pointing self still insinuates that at the helm, there always is a singular willful (or not so willful) self. And whoever happens to be at the helm at the time, singular it is. What I used to call the self is now a junction of dynamic interfaces. I feel alive precisely because of these energy fluctuations within.

Is there a purpose in life? Among all other purposes considered, I found none more compelling than the full use of the faculties I was born with, invested in what is at hand. These inherent assets, including my shortcomings, are challenged at every turn. The measure is in the speed and strength of what is awash within—in a thought rushing toward a resolution, in the pull and push that moves me on, in the give-and-take exchanges that expect nothing in return.

Like gravity, attraction is a partner for life. There is no way around it. Every moment of my life is spent either in the grip of attraction or in resistance to it. Or entrusted to the pinpoint in my eye where light-years intersect—invert—expand—enough to dazzle this whit of cosmic dust in a universe of her own. I have no free will, only freedom of choice.

PART II: INTERACTING WITH THE WORLD AT LARGE

FREEDOM OF CHOICE IN PRACTICE

Freedom. There are many ways to be free and many occasions to forget that we are born free. In the loss of freedom, I learned what freedom is. This happened during the Second World War, when Lithuania, my native country, was under Soviet occupation for one year, then under Nazi occupation for over two more years. In the fall of 1944, when the Germans were fleeing and the Soviets returning, with my future husband, the sculptor Vytautas Kasuba, I walked after the remnants of Hitler's army to Germany. There we remained as refugees, the latter part of our time in a displaced persons camp under the care of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. In 1947, we embarked with our small daughter for America. Having been raised in privileged circumstances, I found that after facing periods of homelessness and hunger in exile, I had received a hefty dose of how fast one's point of view changes when elemental survival needs are threatened.

In America, the '50s and '60s provided many occasions to dwell on various social issues. Strange memories bubbled up, some reshaped by war and exile, some seemingly trivial, like the following episode from somewhere in Germany. My husband and I were spending a night in a railway station (a roof overhead, benches to sleep on), when in the hush of sleep, a woman across the aisle raised her voice and said to the youngster beside her, "Forget the world. The only thing you can change is attitudes. The rest is inborn; we are stuck with that." It is true. We are not born with attitudes but pick them up by observing the behavior of our parents, elders, teachers, and friends, as well as learning from books we read, things we see, and ideologies floating around.

Eventually, I noticed that people have patterns of behavior and respond to situations as if by habit. I found that European patterns were out of place in America. I worked on changing my manners but stopped when after a few years my husband commented that I had erased them too far already. As behavior is taught and learned, and manners can be changed, the behavior patterns looked more like a tool than a path to follow. Having a tool made little sense unless there was a goal or a dream cast into the future, something to wish for, to aim for and pursue.

To learn more about the usefulness of attitudes, for about a week I tried to live without them, approaching people I knew as if for the first time. The experiment revealed little about

attitudes but was almost disastrous socially, for relying on intuition tamed only by fear of blunder was theatrical at best. I found, however, that regardless of how hard I tried to respond spontaneously, attitudes leaked into the most casual human exchanges, a nod, a pause, a shrug, eyes shifting—all hint at what went on in my mind and theirs, suggesting where we might agree or differ, show interest, or get bored. I have come to see attitudes as part of our inheritance, as common sense deduced from various human experiences and passed on from one generation to another. The logic is simple: Actions that have repeatedly proven to be effective in certain situations will, under similar conditions, produce similar results.

In retrospection, it appears that attitudes (ingrained or hand picked) reroute a spontaneous urge from its intended course, attitudes acting like the banks of a river. Whether the banks hold the energy flow in or not depends on whether there is a dream cast ahead, as that dream gives direction which in turn fashions a self-image that acts out a projected role—sets up signposts to quicken orientation, narrows the field of distractions, and so directs the energy flow onward. And as that self-image also roams the corridors of the mind, it chooses from what life has to offer, attitudes forming the mind-set that keeps the dream intact and action on track. At their best, attitudes fixate the mind on desires, passions, or convictions that root in layers where words create emotional needs that urge the rational mind to arrange one's life around them. That is, before the dream-image gets frustrated and starts morphing into another persona, leaving the old one brooding in some shadowy corner.

The downside of attitudes is most apparent when the banks of that river are used as blinders, intended to narrow the outlook and so reduce sensory stimulation. This happens when behavioral and mental regimens aim to protect a cherished self-image from diversions rampant in the mind and the world at large. In my experience, when an attitude insists that I pay no attention to sensory clues as to what is actually there, and the mind minds only what pleases that established self-image—that's when temptations gather at the front door. Whether this restrictive mode is practiced in thought or in behavior, when sensory signals are ignored for too long, a self-induced indifference leashes the spirit to habit. Yes, selective indifference does offer a comfort zone by cutting short the mental anguish of hesitation, sparing much thinking and frustration as well. But when indifference becomes the norm, behold—without much fuss or bustle, a self intentionally domesticated by itself succeeds in keeping the spirit dormant.

I put together the following chart (Table 3) to see whether aspirations grounded in basic human concerns actually form attitudes strong enough to shape a life.

TABLE 3

CONCERNS, ASPIRATIONS, AND ATTITUDES

<i>Selected concerns</i>	<i>Corporeal</i>	<i>Emotional</i>	<i>Intellectual</i>	<i>Spiritual</i>
The objective is	physical security	emotional security	independent thought	coherence
Driven by	survival needs	emotional needs	curiosity	conviction
Seeks liberation from	deprivation	oppression	convention	ideas & ideologies
Thoughts focus on	improvement of conditions	social interactions	possibilities	actual experience
The means are	survival skills	emotional control	observation	perseverance
Energy is spent on	securing basic needs	adjusting to social changes	making sense	staying immersed
Outcome depends on	adaptation to external changes	assertion	mental agility	mental integrity
Success amounts to	accumulation of goods	fulfillment of social aspirations	advancement of knowledge	tranquility
Misuse results in	obsession with goods	obsession with power	self-righteousness	self-promotion
Endangered by	physical debilitation	loss of social status	alienation	flying off the edge

What this exercise revealed was that attitudes not only shape a life, but also give structure to a life; that aspirations, pursuits, and related concerns create worlds so different and separate that they can hardly mix; that similar pursuits rely on similar attitudes to engage not only individuals, but entire sectors of a population in occupations that rely in turn on related skills. Apparently, factors other than economic or cultural differences divide societies just as effectively into strata or classes.

In theory, in our society, freedom of choice is always there, the hope of a better tomorrow prominent in most decisions that we make. In practice, however, once a choice is made and a stand is taken and some effort is invested, the pursuit of a dream is all uphill. Consider the responsibilities, commitments, personal and social obligations, promises and expectations—all entrap one's sense of freedom in demands that routinely threaten to derail the dream. The obstacles to these noble intentions challenge the dreamer at every turn, the quest burdensome at best. The least productive attitudes seem to be the ones that rely on willpower to do the job, as willpower alone only wears down motivation, and once motivation is drained, then even skills well mastered can fail to deliver one's expectations. What's missing is that every personal engagement needs to harness one's emotional and intellectual potential to render any undertaking meaningful. I suspect that hard-wired attitudes are double-edged: they may advance the quest, but as they also serve as blinders to what is not essential to obtaining the dream, they neglect to provide the sensory excitement that sustains motivation.

Nevertheless, attitudes and emotions surface in every social interaction. Any society that lives by the law alone fails to satisfy all the people, and before long, discontent rouses emotional unrest. Say a person or group of people who work each day to eke out subsistence complains or envies those who have mastered this part of existence. Lack of expected support tends to evoke feelings of humiliation and degradation. If the goods earned by their labors are not shared and help is not forthcoming, their feelings may escalate from anger to outrage. In turn, those who find themselves better off may feel obliged to extend a helping hand and, in so doing, find themselves in a position of power. Yet if the good-hearted are prominent or socially respected individuals, they may fail to speak out on issues that might open them to ridicule from those who, having attained intellectual stature, tend to speak their minds without fear of social retaliation. An intellectual might ridicule people who live by conventional standards, but cater to those who support their undertakings or evaluate their achievements, and occasionally admire those who live by their convictions without accounting to anyone. It is likely that only the spiritually free are unfettered by such emotional trepidations, because they have nothing to gain by catering to others.

What about those who impose religious or ideological doctrines or their personal views on my person, or those who issue and enforce the laws and so infringe upon or limit my rights? Under such circumstances, what are my responsibilities and odds of exercising freedom of choice? Common sense says that as we are inherently free to move about, it's only natural that

society expects us to provide for ourselves. To do that, I must master the skills applicable to the environment, and as long as I stay fit, my chances of survival are similar to those of all other able individuals. But once I delegate part of my responsibilities to someone else (parent, spouse, institution, or government), the other party expects something in return. Here the laws of primates seem to prevail. I am also a member of society. If I expect to receive the benefits that society provides, I must pay the dues and observe the laws by which it governs itself and maintains social order. When I disregard laws or norms of conduct, I provoke scorn, contempt, or punishment, my misconduct inviting law-upholders to do their job.

However, if I am socially skilled, this implies that I have managed to suppress my personal inclinations in public interactions. Still needing to express them, I may engage in freedom of speech, only to learn that I need to master the skills necessary to communicate my convictions and deliver them effectively or suffer ridicule. Suppose I attain the requisite measure of intellectual skills, yet am still burdened by civic, ethical, theological, moral, or ideological doctrines. I may even find myself hankering after freedom unencumbered by social restraints. Still in need of expression, I may turn inward, plumb some latent potential, and look for outlets that might offer a more meaningful way of spending a life. Suppose I find such an outlet, master the skills, and occasionally savor encouraging rushes. Still, if I want to express myself without censure, I must support myself independently of the good will of other people, and be self-reliant and self-sufficient in all worldly matters. Providing that I do not step on anyone else's toes, only then am I a law unto myself.

Attitudes are easily indoctrinated, and easy to manipulate. At once challenging, tempting, and questionable, sometimes daring, attitudes bring the buzz of what-if, what-then, and what-now to the realm in which the fun of dream-wishing ends and a laborious performance gets going.

And it remains to be seen whether attitudes are the only mind-thing that I can change at will. Nevertheless, the woman in the train station in Germany was right—I am free to reshuffle, replace, and discard those attitudes that have outlived their usefulness and free to upgrade those that uplift me like a song, and so outfit a new self-image in pursuit of some other unknown. Most of us do. Only the scope of the dream and the degree of commitment differ.

FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS

It was in 1976 that I got up one night at 3:00 a.m. to write a letter long overdue. At my desk, to organize my thoughts, I drew in the center of a sheet of paper a vertical line and placed on both sides of the divide circles aligned in rows: those on the right to show where the rational mind had a positive impact, and those on the left to show its destructive tendencies. I filled in the circles but I never sent that letter. Over the years, the fill-ins changed, yielding a much wider range of rational tactics than I had imagined. Eventually, the letter turned into five dispositions with 61 diagrams of inner states among them.

The following episode illustrates how readily dispositions come into play. Say during a spring deluge a stone surfaces in my driveway. After hitting it several times, I approach it in anger and, trying to see how deep it sits, kick it several times. Realizing that physical and emotional exertion will accomplish nothing, next evening I step out with a shovel, a crowbar, and a block of wood to use as a fulcrum. I dig a hole on one side of the stone and try to pry it up. This rational approach seems to have loosened the earth around it. Now assertive, I dig some more, tie a rope around the stone, tie its end to the rear of the car, and pull. But the stone does not budge. The task too big to handle, I need to think it over. Resigned for now, I tidy up the dig. While raking circles around the stone, I notice how tranquil it looks in the setting and feel like planting daisies around it. Resolute by the end of summer, I hire a contractor to remove the stone and pave the driveway.

In the above episode, five dispositions surfaced: emotional, rational, assertive, resigned, and resolute. The first thing to strike me was that these behavioral tactics, strategies, or approaches—picked up randomly, by observation or experience, in no particular order—are double-edged: As my approach affects the targeted thing, its response affects me in turn. Thus every time I act with a purpose in mind, I put myself on the line.

The question of which disposition to use sets in as soon as I know that to obtain my objective, an agreement or approval will be needed and that will take effort. To consolidate the whole of me for the task, I need to strike a disposition, and as each situation calls for a specific dynamic, the shift in disposition feels like a conscious shift in gears. Thus while attitudes foster responses adaptable to many similar situations by adjusting the outlook, a disposition

organizes internal resources for one specific task, namely what warrants an interaction—be it with a thing, a person, an institution, or the powers that be.

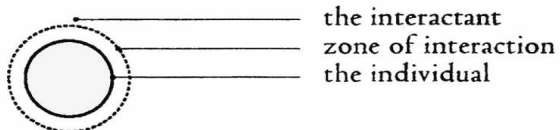
In general, as my approach puts the target's response to the test, the response tests my approach in turn. Thus when I initiate an interaction, I track progress by noting several events at once, each gleaned only in minute, fleeting details: whether the targeted party yields to or resists my approach, and how the response I receive affects me—mainly whether the response increases my chances or sets me back. In daily face-to-face encounters, I catch these nuances and calculate their impact intuitively, but in more official matters, I tackle two challenges at once: The first is external, as my calculated approach addresses the one out there, and the other is internal and personal, how the response affects my own inner state (as shown in Table 1, Intentional Actions). As I weigh and evaluate the moves I have already invested, the mind considers whether I should soften or increase the level of pressure on the other. If the party is responsive, whether human or animal, he or she has the same options and may at any point take the initiative and become downright offensive, or break off the interaction and walk away.

The following diagrams show the changes in my inner states during such face-to-face interactions. The dispositions and related inner states are arranged in an order that shows an escalating persistence on my part, whereas the responses of the targeted party are limited to yielding or resisting, or a *yes* or *no* response. As dispositions intensify sequentially, in this self-inflicted drama, it is I, the pursuer, who is responsible for and suffers the consequences. The subtext illustrates what motivates me to initiate an interaction, but it need not be personal, as a formal approach will have the same effect. Above all, the diagrams demonstrate that any tactic carried through to its exhaustion is likely to be self-defeating.

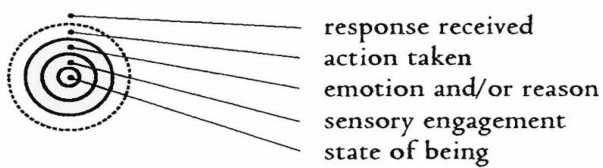
The Five Dispositions

Key to the Diagrams

Zone of Interaction



The Individual



States of Being

ordinary

depleted



Sensory Engagement

casual

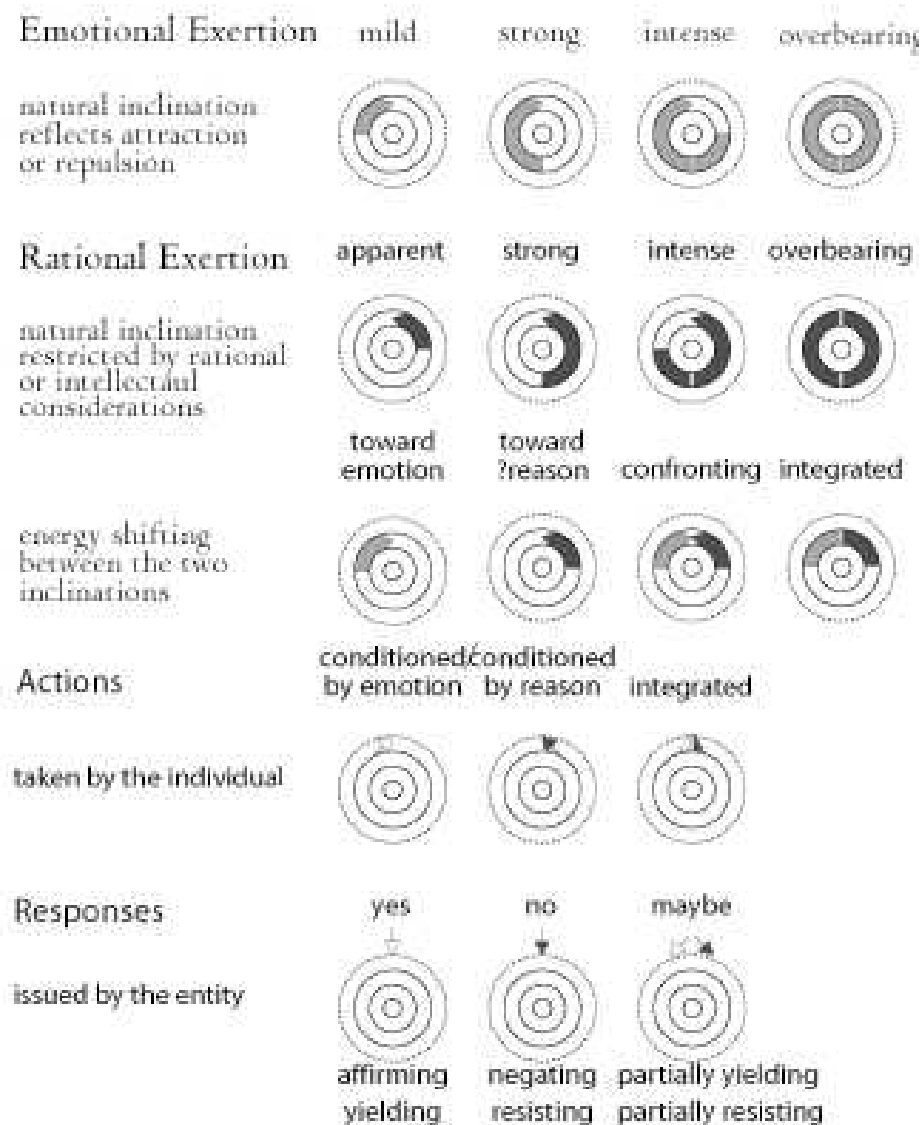
acute

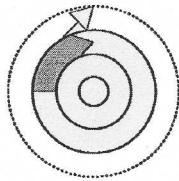
waning

repressed

blocked





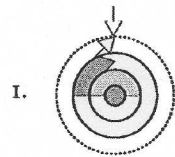


I. The Emotional Disposition

The emotional disposition displays interest. The external challenge is to overcome restraints and the internal challenge is to overlook them. If the approach receives a favorable response, the action taken may fulfill the goal; if the response is negative, it hastens to terminate the interaction.

In the subtext: I am curious about you

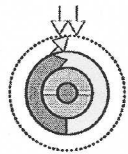
Ia shows emotion



1.

- emotion is expressed intentionally
- sensory engagement is casual
- the action receives a positive response

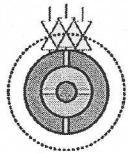
*I suggest that we go out;
you say, let's do it*



2.

- the affirmative response encourages the course of action taken
- the natural inclination strengthens
- the display meets no resistance

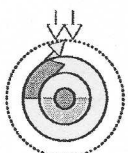
I am excited



3.

- repeated affirmation evokes an emotional flare-up
- both are at the peak of excitement

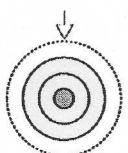
I am rapturous



4.

- the emotion is spent
- sensory engagement recedes
- excitement diminishes

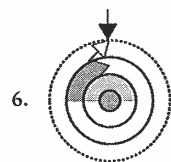
I experience a letdown



5.

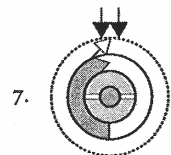
- the ordinary state of being returns
- the interaction is casual

I lose interest

Ib *shows reason*

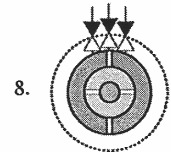
- emotion is expressed casually
- the expression meets a negative response

I approach you again;
you say no



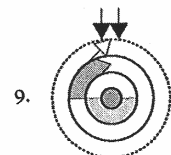
- resistance agitates
- expression is more pronounced
- the response is negative

I insist



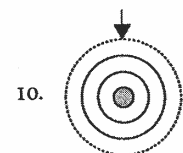
- persistence evokes an emotional outburst
- this state cannot be sustained
- resistance is equally forceful

I flair up, make a scene;
you are unimpressed



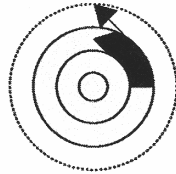
- inability to overcome resistance
diminishes my interest
- sensory engagement recedes

I give up, simmer down



- discouragement disengages the senses
- the interaction resolves

I don't care

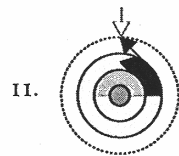


2. The Rational Disposition

The rational disposition employs reason alone. The external challenge is to engage the other with an objective that justifies the approach, and the internal challenge is to suppress a natural inclination. If the response is favorable, the approach chosen was correct; if it is rejected, discouragement frustrates the interaction.

In the subtext: I want to settle matters

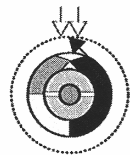
2a shows reason



11.

- action is conditioned by rational considerations
- emotion is repressed
- the response is positive

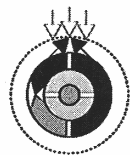
I ask you to go out with me;
you say okay



12.

- the affirmative response stimulates emotion
- restraint increases

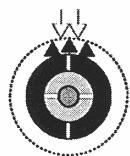
I don't show excitement



13.

- the response encourages the course of action
- the natural inclination is repressed
- the response remains positive

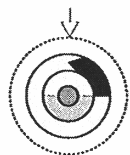
I suppress my excitement



14.

- overbearing restraint overpowers emotion
- sensory engagement is aggravating
- the inner challenge is met, I have made a statement

I am pleased with myself

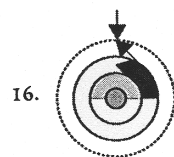


15.

- the senses disengage
- the urge to interact is gone
- the interaction resolves

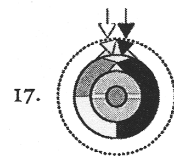
I lose interest

2b *reason challenged by emotion*



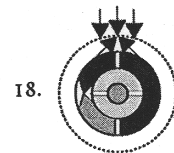
- action conditioned by reasoning is met with resistance

I suggest that we go out;
you say no



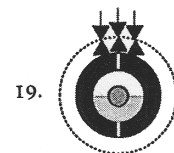
- resistance agitates the inner state
- the natural inclination surfaces
- control intensifies
- the response is negative

I try to reason



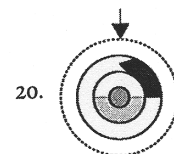
- the emotional inclination is subdued
- sensory agitation is aggravated
- resistance is not overcome

I insist, try to convince you



- overbearing restraint pushes back the natural inclination
- sensory engagement recedes
- resistance is not overcome

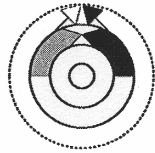
Rejected, I leave you alone



- failure to overcome resistance discourages further involvement

Downcast, I brood

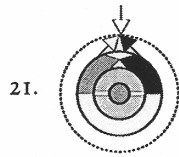
3. The Assertive Disposition



The assertive disposition aims to engage the other by any means. The external challenge is to project conviction, and the internal challenge is to reinforce a rational approach with an emotional charge or charge a rational approach with emotion, as the occasion demands. Even when the goal is attained, the pursuer may fail internally in becoming either overly rational or overly emotional.

In the subtext: I want to win you over

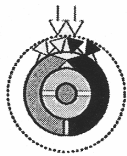
3a *shows emotion tempered by reason*



21.

- emotion is tempered by caution
- the senses are engaged

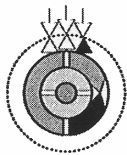
*I approach you determined;
you respond favorably*



22.

- affirmation intensifies both tendencies
- internal agitation is high
- the response is positive

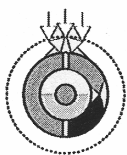
I restrain my satisfaction



23.

- emotion gains the upper hand
- internal imbalance threatens my composure
- the response is affirmative

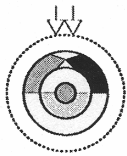
emotion takes over



24.

- absence of resistance slackens sensory engagement
- failure to exercise restraint disengages the senses

I am disappointed with myself

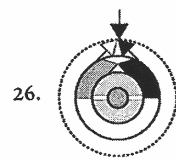


25.

- composure is restored
- the challenge is met, the intent is implemented
- the interaction is satisfactory

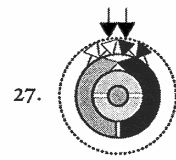
I remain composed

3b *shows emotion taking over*



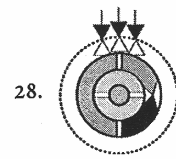
- a subdued emotion is released to explore the situation
- the response is negative

I act casually;
you say no



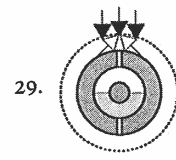
- resistance aggravates both the emotion and the tendency to restrain it
- the action meets with resistance

Irritated, I insist



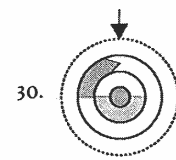
- heightened emotion diminishes control
- expectation aggravates the inner state
- resistance is persistent

I show emotion



- an overbearing emotional flare-up overwhelms restraint, control is lost
- aggravation is relieved
- sensory acuity subsides

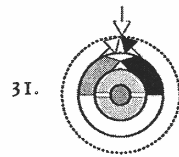
Loss of control doubles defeat



- composure is reinstated
- failure discourages further action
- the interaction remains unresolved

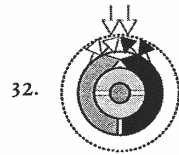
I feel foolish

3c shows reason taking over



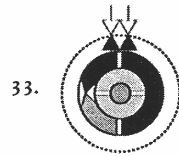
- emotion is revealed with caution
- the senses are alert
- the expression is affirmed

I approach you cautiously;
you respond cautiously



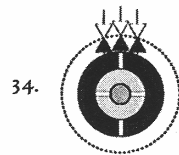
- both tendencies intensify
- anticipation is acute
- the approach is affirmed

Encouraged, I feel excited



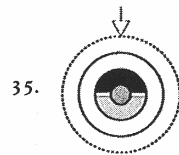
- the tendency is to exercise more restraint
- composure is threatened
- the response is positive

I restrain the emotion



- overbearing restraint secures composure
- internal tension aggravates the state of being

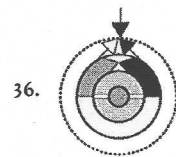
To preserve the situation,
I clam up



- aggravation is relieved by repressing the senses
- the state of being is under duress
- the exertion has paid off

I recoil

3d shows reason in control



36.

- action reflects restraint
- it meets with resistance

I suggest that we go out;
you say no



37.

- resistance agitates both tendencies
- anticipation is high
- the entity does not yield

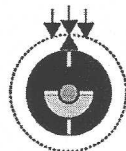
I fortify reasoning with
emotion



38.

- the inclination is to exercise more restraint
- the inner state is precarious
- resistance does not diminish

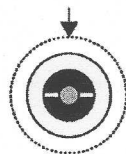
I assert myself shamelessly



39.

- overbearing restraint represses the senses
- the state of being is under duress

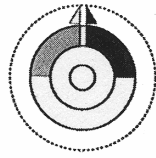
I loathe myself



40.

- the senses disengage altogether
- the state of being is shattered

Self-confidence broken,
I lose ground

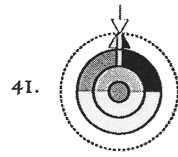


4. The Resigned Disposition

The resigned disposition aims to prolong an ongoing interaction. The external challenge is to keep the other's interest alive, and the internal challenge is to show strategic doses of emotion and reason. The suppression of one's own feelings invites the other to take the initiative. If one so empowered benefits from the interaction, the goal may be achieved. If no benefit is derived, indifference may terminate the interaction.

In the subtext: I want you to stay

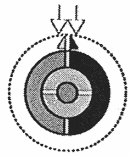
4a shows emotion challenging reason



41.

- emotion and reason temper each other
- action is unassertive

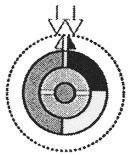
*I approach you cautiously;
you respond favorably*



42.

- the response encourages the approach taken
- both tendencies intensify
- action is received favorably

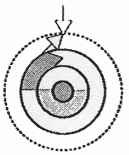
I maintain composure



43.

- affirmation relaxes restraint
- sensory engagement remains intense
- internal imbalance threatens composure
- the action is affirmed

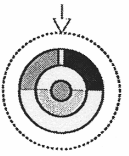
Against my resolve, I relax control



44.

- the natural inclination surfaces
- sensory disengagement secures composure
- the interaction is in danger of resolving

Showing emotion makes me cringe

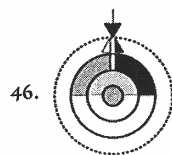


45.

- composure is reinstated
- habitual actions are encouraged

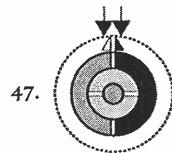
Calm is restored

4b shows reason challenging emotion



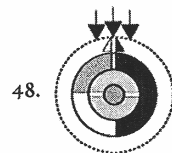
- a subdued emotional expression is released
- it receives a negative response

I approach you cautiously;
you say not now



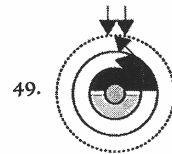
- the response aggravates
- composure is maintained
- the response remains negative

I show no aggravation



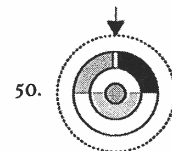
- the tendency is to show more restraint
- an unbalanced internal state threatens composure
- the entity is not yielding

stubbornly, I restrain myself



- sensory repression secures composure
- the emotion is silenced
- the urge to interact is threatened

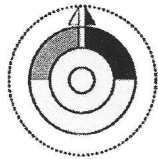
Proud of my composure, I recoil



- remnants of an emotion are rekindled
- composure is restored
- habitual actions are encouraged

Calm is restored

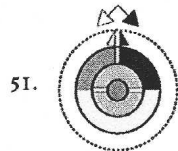
5. The Resolute Disposition



The resolute disposition aims to overcome indifference. The external challenge is to apply pressure by any means, and the internal challenge is to detect in responses the yielding and the resisting tendencies and pounce upon them. If resistance is persistent, a resolute initiator terminates the interaction, blaming either the self for misreading the responses or the other party for failing to deliver the expected results.

In the subtext: I must verify my impressions

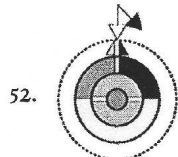
5a shows emotion challenging reason



51.

- an integrated action probes the entity
- the entity is partially yielding and partially resisting

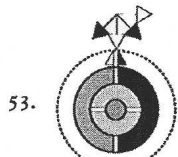
Resolved to address the yielding points, I suggest we go out; you agree



52.

- cautiously, action pries deeper
- the entity's response remains the same

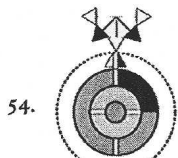
I am hopeful



53.

- no resistance encourages the course taken
- the entity is still partially yielding and partially resisting

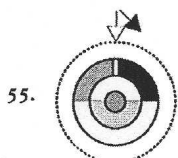
I am giddy with expectation



54.

- concentration on the yielding parts makes the entity appear as yielding
- inner imbalance threatens my composure
- the entity's responses are the same

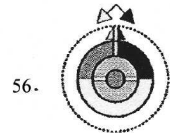
I am convinced that I will succeed



55.

- in absence of resistance, an impression is formed that the entity is yielding
- the senses relax; the urge to interact wanes
- the entity turns away

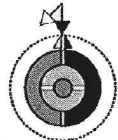
Victorious, I withdraw into myself

5b *shows reason insistent*

56.

- an integrated action probes the entity
- the entity is partially yielding and partially resisting

I try again; your evasiveness is aggravating



57.

- action addresses the resisting part to learn what hinders progress
- the internal state is intense
- the entity remains indifferent

To provoke you, I pry insistently



58.

- the entity appears to be stubborn
- rational deliberations dominate the natural inclination
- the internal state is precarious

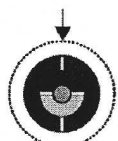
I am ready to use force



59.

- persistence intensifies aggravation
- the entity remains unmoved

I must act or bust



60.

- resistance appears insurmountable
- all inner activities are on hold
- my selfhood is at stake

I recoil deeply into myself



61.

- the state of being is at a standstill
- this internal state cannot be sustained

Devastated, I shut down

TIME FRACTURED

Years ago, my preschool daughter asked, “What is space?” I pointed to the gap between two chairs, between the houses across the street, at the sky overhead, and she got it. Although she read clocks already, soon thereafter she asked, “What is time?” Pointing at my wristwatch, I said that clocks were invented to show what time of day or night it was. “But what are the hands pointing at?” At the hours, I repeated. “Yes, but where is time?” Years later, my daughter’s question hit me hard. I was in Grand Central Station in New York City, sitting at the window of a train parked next to another. When one started moving, I could not tell which of the two was in motion. In the confusion, time froze, stood still. What happened?

An environmental artist by profession, I was building at the time tensile fabric environments intended to evoke specific sensory impressions. I was now wondering what it would take to simulate the above experience for closer observation. Two movements were needed: one moving the visitor mechanically, the other on a loop of film on a screen. By changing the speed or direction between the two parallel movements, I could place the visitor in situations that would evoke sensations of time long enough to grasp their impact, such as falling in and out of synchrony, or feeling delayed or rushed or standing still while in motion. I was sketching the machinery that was to move the visitor, when, to my surprise, the setup yielded seven interactions—seven durations correlated to sensations of time. Having no hope of ever seeing such complex machinery built, I settled instead on describing the experiences that I envisioned and entertained. It may be worth mentioning that whenever a sensation unmitigated by thought pulled up an image, and the two—sensation and image—aligned like water with gravity, imagery was key to the nature of that sensory experience.

Here are the descriptions of the seven facets of time: the Absolute Now, Linear Time, Useable Time, Stagnant Time, Personal Time, Circular Time, and Timelessness.

1. The Absolute Now

There is a time when the past and the future part like curtains and the present stops fleeing. It happens when I become other than myself—at one with a bird straining to rise, a branch swaying outside the window, a shadow wrapping itself around the corner. When I am other than myself, the past separates from the future. And in that suspended state—bracketed by *before* and *after*—awareness crosses over from the visible to the invisible, to a world inhabited

by forces watching me as I watch them—the world a mirror held up to me and I a mirror to the world.

2. Linear Time

When the world shatters into a myriad of entities, change renders everything separately mutable. As myriad changes take place everywhere at once, in the steady flow of changes, all things together move from the past into the future. In this river of changes, durations of events small and large embrace, encase, and replace each other—the boundaries between them porous, the exchanges constant. The ride at times is arduous, at times boringly agreeable, the future predictable. Trapped in this river of change-in-time, I have only memories and dreams to call my own and hold on to.

3. Useable Time

There comes a time when the flow of changes seems less intrusive, time less imposing. From the safety of this niche, time looks like a commodity free for the taking, like water, like air. Once I learn how changes come about, I get a grip on change itself—I can now intercept the changes swarming around me, redirect a flow from its intended course and, foreseeing the outcome, improve my lot by introducing a sideshow of devices that were not there before. Empowered by what I can do, I buy time, sell my time, and use time as I see fit. In Useable Time, life amounts to a string of right and wrong actions, every intentional act a black or red entry in the balance sheet of gains and losses. The future is but one other event-in-the-making, the present but a means of getting there.

4. Stagnant Time

Every so often, the futility of human arrangements shocks me to a standstill. Nothing makes sense anymore. What's the rush? Where to? What's the fuss and bustle all about? In the end, what difference does it make how I amuse myself in the meantime? Yet to sit back and do nothing is not that easy either—memories of an active self disturb the present, while hands idling under the crushing immensity of time undermine the future. In Stagnant Time, the slightest prospect of change strikes me like the promise of a spectacular escape—change to propel me back to life, change to save me from this slow annihilation.

5. Personal Time

In Personal Time, I sense a clock ticking inside me—a multitude of hands rotating on some universal joint at various speeds. Each hand is wound up to last for a specified duration, each

ticking away the allotted energy to its built-in exhaustion, the clock urging me to pursue the pursuit. Whether during that allotted time the engagement comes to fruition or falls short of it, the clock strikes the appointed hour, and the pursuit stops holding my attention. In this slot of time, I do not fuss with external events; they knock me about anyway. Instead, I look for changes that recommend themselves and use them to hitch a ride. Whatever the results, on the path of least resistance, I gravitate from change to change as from magnet to magnet. In Personal Time, change is the vehicle that takes me into the future. While the past takes care of itself, clocks account for the durations of events that shape my life.

6. Circular Time

I am in Circular Time when days string together like beads on a loop of time. On most days, I slip back to where I have been many times before, repeating the same motions, reshuffling similar thoughts. On other days, I slide forward, getting ahead of myself, yet I am not going anywhere in particular. Routine is where I meet the world head-on, where I confront the changes. My days follow the lunar and solar cycles and the cycles of seasons that bring changes around and leave them behind. Time is the keeper of patterns that repeat themselves in circles large and small. In this loop of time, all things together become something else—either more or less of themselves or part of some other thing. In Circular Time, nothing is ever gained or lost or wasted. A life simply expires, is spent, used up.

7. Timelessness

Once in a while, Timelessness alights with energy spilling forth like a fountain turned on full. If seized by the gush I surrender to the moment, I become the instrument of energy rushing through me. In this fissure of time, energy sprung from within puts me in the Absolute Now. And as awareness hovers in the gap between *before* and *after*, it insists that I spill the energy into something out there—be it shaping people or words, or clay, stone, color, sound, light, or some other material. Unchanged myself, I am now the agent of change. In the changes I make, I receive gifts unasked for.

*

I am most aware of time when I listen to music, when sensations in the wake of sounds set the tempo to my inner state. *Tempo* and *duration* are the elements that make me perceive time itself. But it is neither the melodic tide nor the musical narrative that plumbs my feelings or brings up images and memories. What marks time is the basic beat—the combination of

rhythm and speed that drives the emotional dips and swells that rush me along or slow me down. Add to it the rip of silences when I, holding my breath, suffer a suspension of rhythm, where rhythm—as basic as heartbeat and breathing—is the measure of durations that penetrates the silences where the quick of my being resides and responds. While melodic sound arrangements may play me like a string instrument, the underlying rhythmic pulse tunes the instrument to its measure. This is how it feels when a change in the surroundings *insists* that I respond to it with a matching energy level, that I succumb and act as the occasion demands.

In these minuscule shifts in energy state a few other things happen. When I am listening to music attentively and a distraction diverts my attention, the note last heard breaks away from the one that was to follow. In that break the *now* that was there before moves into the past, while the *now* that comes after the break quivers in the future. The shift in attention, marked by *before* and *after*—is the static snapshot point where one duration breaks off and another duration sets in. What moves on, however, is not time but the sensation of being—the hum uninterrupted spilling across the divide fostering *the illusion* that time is in motion. I suspect that when attention shifts from one thing to another, similar repercussions linger in most sensory events: The eye jumps from here to there and a faint after-image drags along, a sharp change in taste stills the mind and cognition plugs in—awareness of these *now* moments, of the shifts in speed and rhythm, punctuate my perception of time as it changes with them.

What is in motion is duration, inherent in every movement, be it imperceptibly short or unexpectedly long. Whether the durations are taking place in the spaciousness of surroundings or in the mind makes a difference: External events impart the experience of time as being slow or fast in relation to the velocity of my own inner state (rushing or slowing me down), while durations in the mind take place on their own good time, depending on the ebbing energy level I sense within. One other observations: Whether I relate to things near or far affects the pace of my own activities—the near clamoring for immediate attention, distance relaxing the urgency. Take a day in my life: After breakfast with family, I sit down to savor my first sips of coffee. And while enjoying the Absolute Now, I slip into Personal Time for a quick navigational overlook of what needs to be done today. When tackling a problem, I am in Linear Time, but switch to Usable Time when planning ahead. I tend to stagnate in situations that call for a detached overview, experience Timelessness in the heat of work and, back home, unwind in the routines of Circular Time.

Yet ever so often, external events disrupt my rhythms, demanding attention. If the disruption calls for action and I attend to it, all is well, as long as I am not responding automatically, by habit. For then I'm apt to act in the moment—with unfit mental rigging and an unsuitable energy level, the mode of my behavior frustrating the effort. But when intrusions demand action, they force me to respond in kind—with a force equal not to my discomfort or irritation (emotion does that) but to their urgency. In short, intruding events (be they unexpected or repetitive) impose their terms on me. And that is where the seven time facets come in: Each provides a distinct mental setup fixed in a behavioral framework with select faculties and sensibilities already plugged in—time facets fitting me out to handle what kind of attention each situation demands.

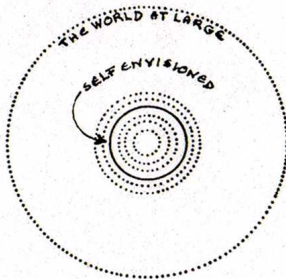
Time, as we know it today, is squarely in the Useable Time frame. But who has not heard of time flowing like a river? Who is not familiar with Personal or Stagnant Time, has not had fast and slow times, or not switched during a day from one time mode to another and back again, hardly noticing the flips in mind-set? Our familiarity with these time frames attests that variations in perception of time are well known to humankind. And that might be the reason why the seven time facets sound antiquated. Yet they extend awareness of time to a point where time itself feels like a built-in compass that navigates the mind through changes that may not pose an immediate threat but disrupt our lives, sometimes severely.

The seven facets of time suggest that time is a linguistic construct: The word *time* a shortcut—one other abstraction distilled from similar but complex human experiences to a single word. With the word came time measures which synchronize human activities and interactions and align significant public and personal events in memory and in thought. The word *timing* may refer to something inherent in all mobile creatures, serving as an instinctual motion-coordinating trigger. But as time, like the word *mathematics*, has no correlate in the physical world, we pass on (make known) our perception of time to every youngster anew so she or he can take part of a world we have shaped on the background of time.

TABLE 4

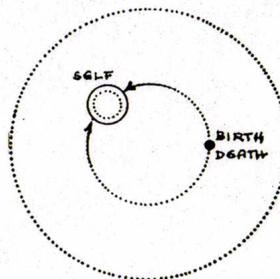
THE SELF IN RELATION TO THE WORLD AT LARGE

1. THE ABSOLUTE NOW



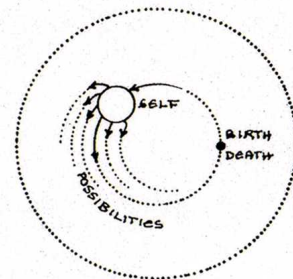
self - metamorphic
time - constant
change - inconsequential
action - impulsive

2. LINEAR TIME



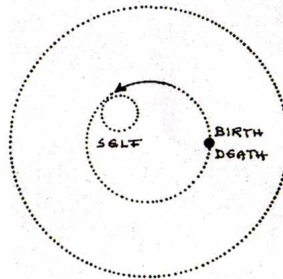
self - insignificant
time - intrusive
change - intrusive
action - ineffective

3. USEABLE TIME



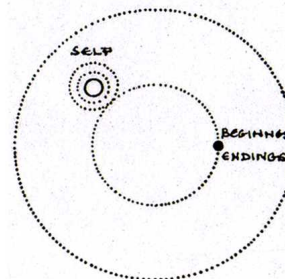
self - consolidated
time - accommodating
change - accessible
action - effective

4. STAGNANT TIME



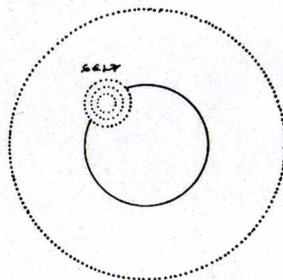
self - disengaged
time - gripping
change - suspended
action - inconsequential

5. PERSONAL TIME



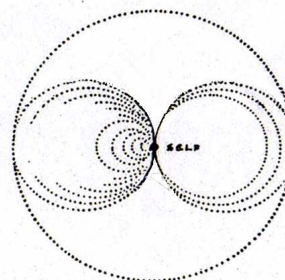
self - elated
time - appointing
change - transforming
action - attentive

6. CIRCULAR TIME



self - resigned
time - unintrusive
change - unintrusive
action - sustaining

7. TIMELESSNESS



self - potent
time - stilled
change - gripping
action - spontaneous

GLOSSARY

abstraction – impressions of a kind coalesced through similarity in feeling and distilled to a single word, symbol, or ideal

assimilation – an energy imprint striking an identical imprint in another entity

association – attraction activating similar energy imprints in different entities

assumption – a word or thought not grounded in sensory experience

attitude – a mode of behavior extracted from related experiences and applied reflexively to similar situations

awareness – the sensing of energy fluctuations in one's state of being

cognition – a process in which incoming sensory impulses align in the mind with existing imprints of the same entity

consciousness – intentional application of verbal meanings to human activities

contemplation – *intuitive*: relates feeling to thought; *rational*: relates thought to fact

disposition – an emotional or rational stance taken in a particular situation for a specific purpose

emotion – a physical expression of an overcharged feeling and originating in the surplus energy expelled through reflexive muscular contractions

experience – impressions that invigorate or counteract the spirit's movements

experience structure – experiences of a kind encoded in a specific repository

Extended System – engages emotion, intellect, and reason in multiple interactions

feeling – the cumulative effect of several sensory impressions surfacing in awareness in one composite sensation

feeling pattern – sensory impressions received from one entity encoded by their intensity in a concentric pattern

image pattern – multiple visual impressions from one entity encoded in a pattern specific to the image

Initial System – receives and organizes sensory information

intellection – intellect (attraction) relating words and thoughts to past experiences

intelligence – the locus in which incoming sensory impressions first gather, then disperse

introspection – sorts out feelings in the context of emotional actions

intuition – a vigilant state that attracts images from the past related to a situation at hand,
the metaphoric scenario assisting orientation

memory – *sensory*: the recall of sensory imprints to the focal point of intelligence;

verbal: the recall of words via image patterns or feelings

mental image – an afterimage reconstituted in intelligence either after its actual imprint or in
its recall from memory

Primal Union – consists of matter and an energy source that activates it, present in all things
in existence

reason – a faculty located outside the routes of sensory activities that receives information via
memory in hindsight

reflection – relates recent impressions to existing feelings

Resolved System – the Initial and the Extended Systems in confluence

retrospection – relates recalled experiences to each other

self – a junction of dynamic inner and outer energy confluences

self-image – a self imagined negotiating the interactions between the inner and outer realities

sensation – a physical or mental reaction to a shift in internal energy level

thought – rational: translates sensory impressions into words arranged by cause and effect

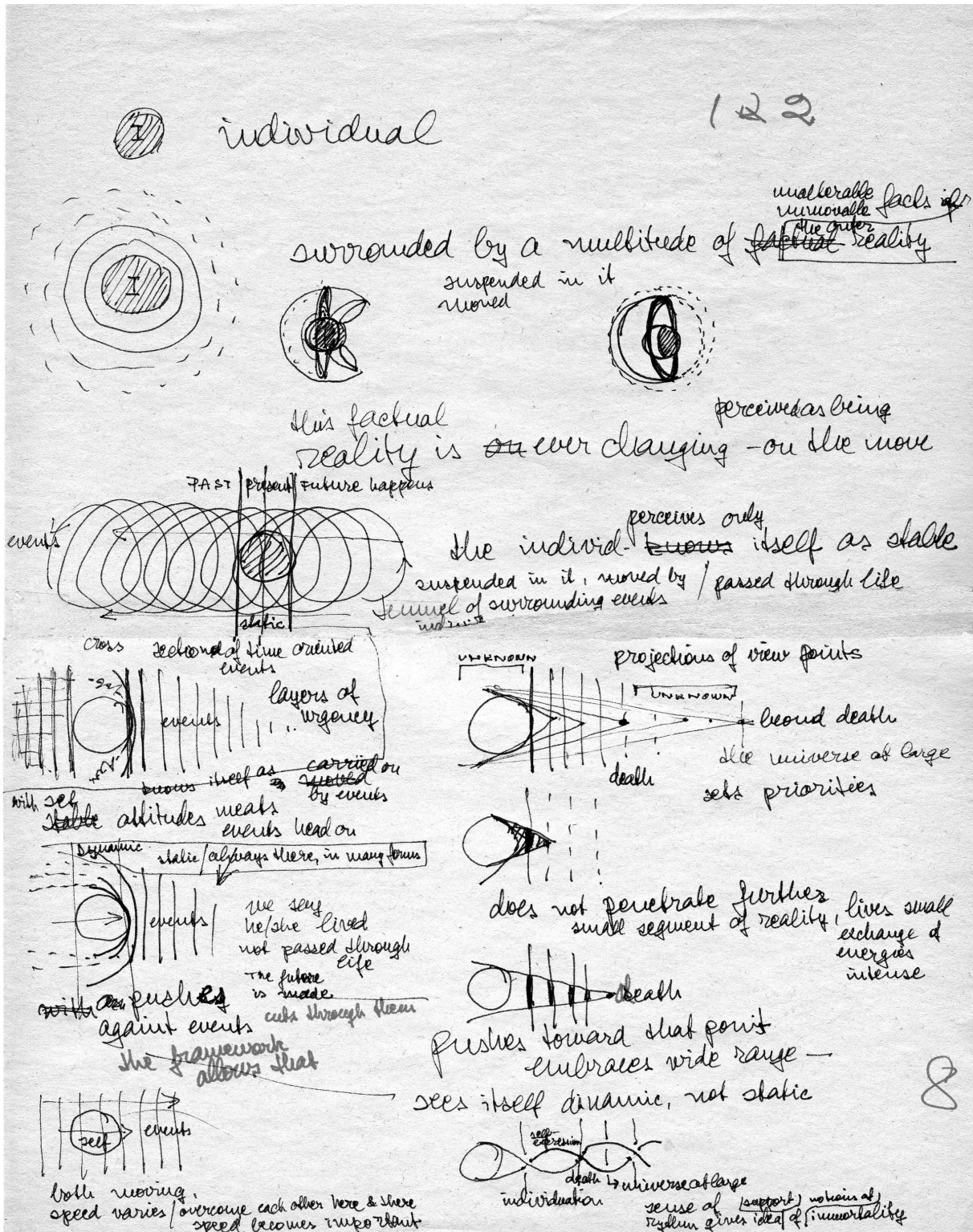
abstract: distills related experiences to a single word, symbol, or idea

analytical: reexamines the implications of cause and effect

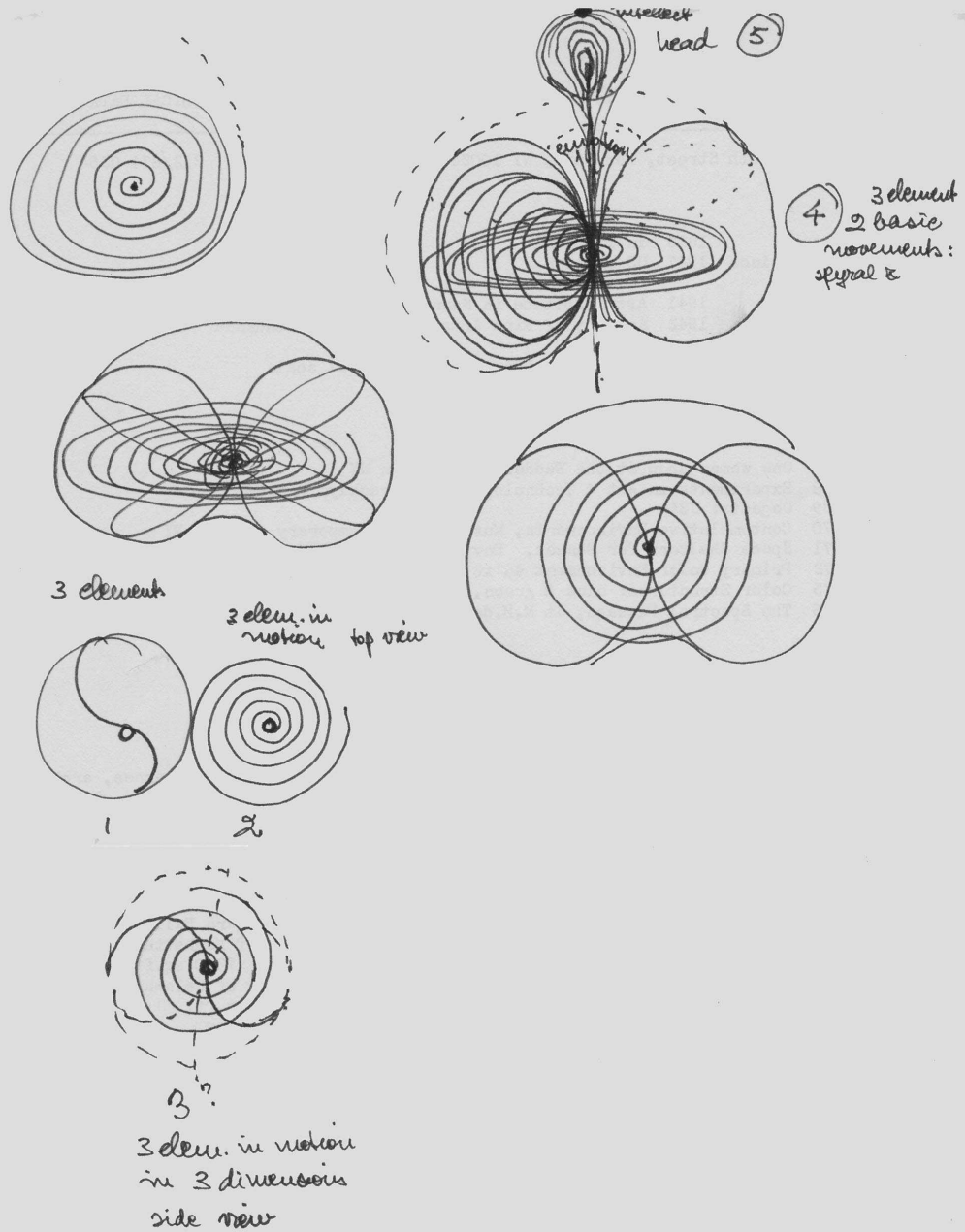
words – sensory impressions translated into vocal sounds

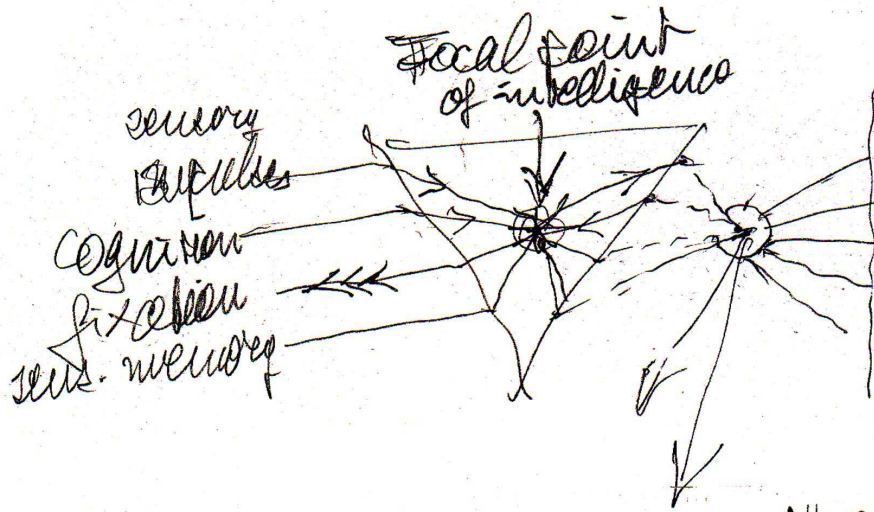
word pattern – the word's sound and image coupled in verbal memory

Addendum

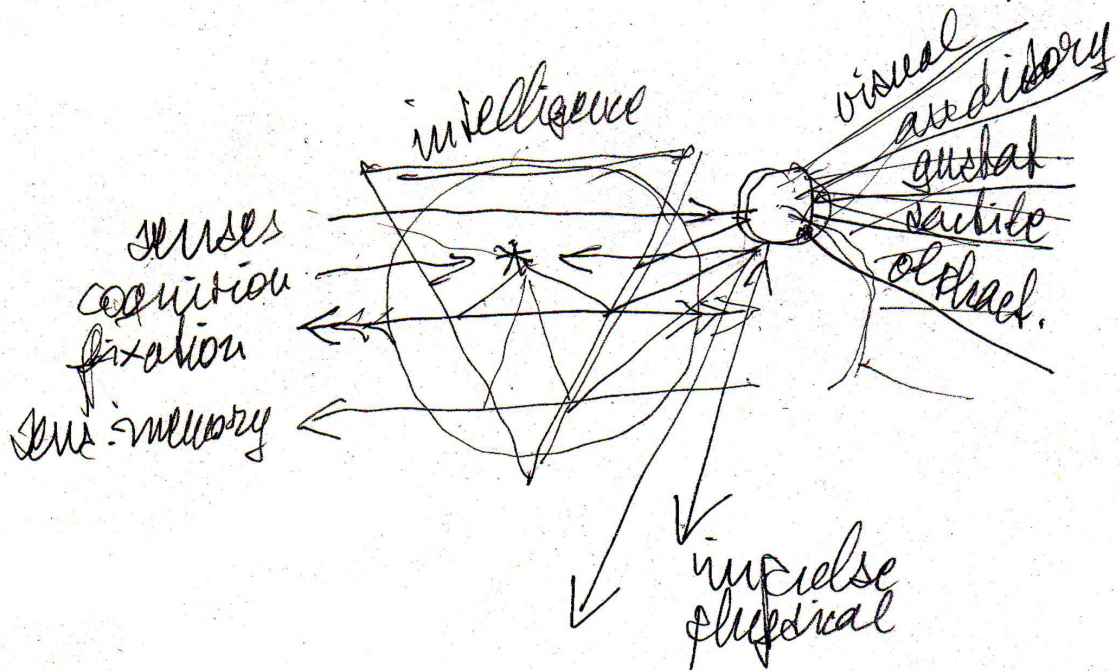


ENERGY FIELDS ?



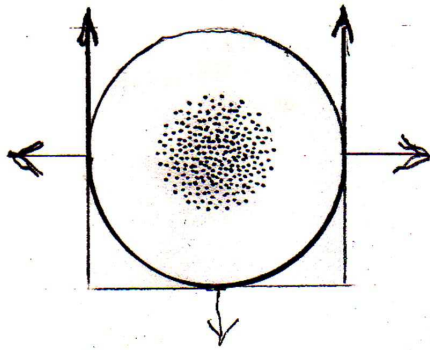
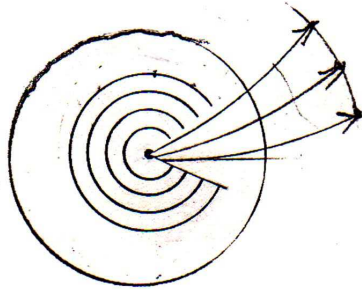
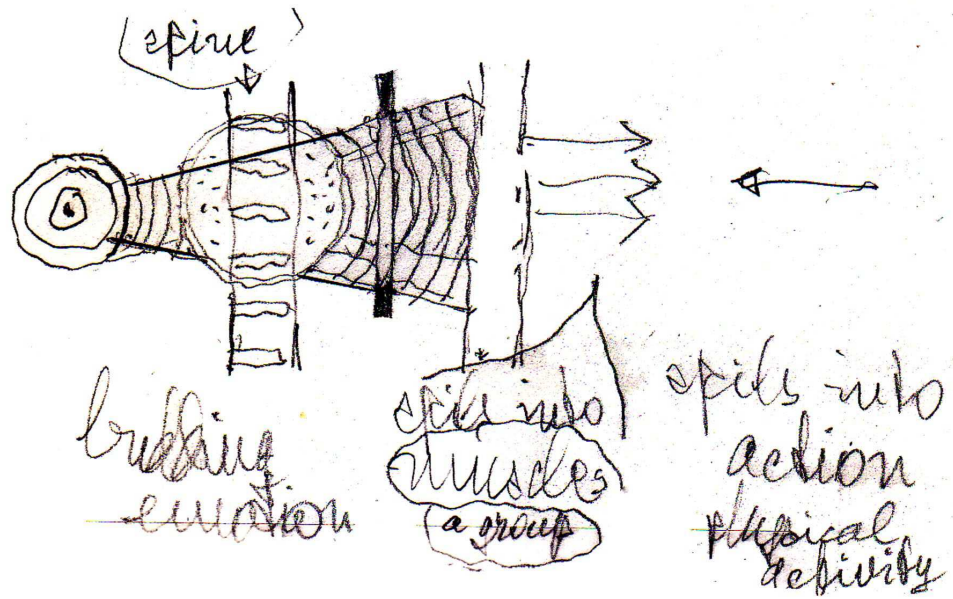


~~Depositories~~
sensory rep.



exp.
structures
Deposit. of coded patterns

Re: feeling & emotion, first symbols



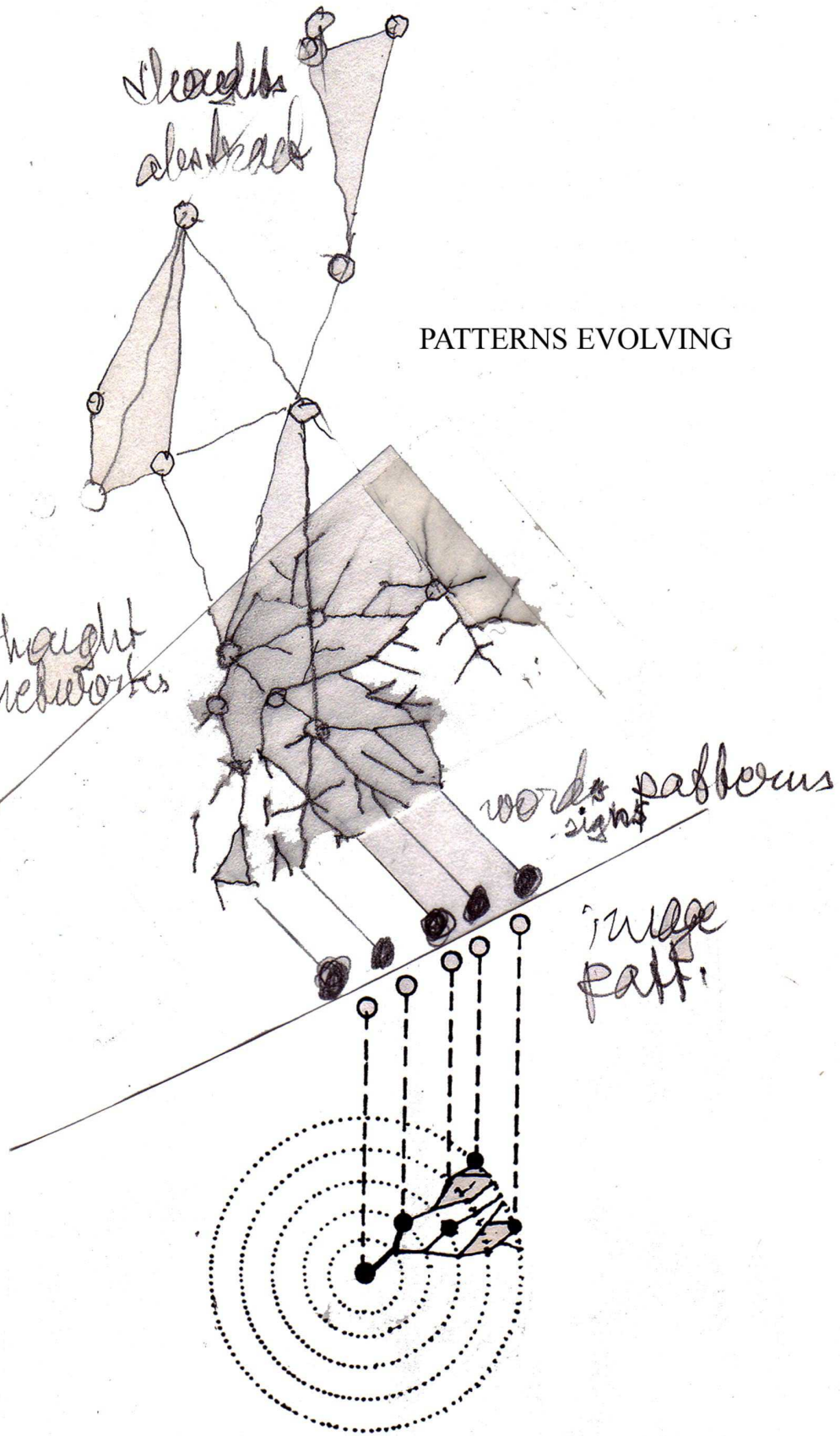
thoughts
abstract

PATTERNS EVOLVING

thought
networks

words patterns
signs

image
path



3-1 The ~~Structure~~ of movements

