

## **A Psycho-spiritual Model for Understanding the Totality of Human Behavior**

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### **Abstract**

Curriculum development for spiritual education to promote religious reconciliation on a global scale must be based upon an understanding of the totality of human behavior. Purely psychological models are deemed inadequate for this purpose.

Human behavior spans from unbounded love and unity in the undifferentiated ultimate domain on one side to extreme hatred and division in the differentiated relative on the other. Psycho-spiritual models from wisdom traditions seem to better reflect the entire spectrum of human cognition, worldviews, concerns, values, and behavior. This article discusses such a model which is based on a synthesis of various wisdom and spiritual traditions.

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## 1 Introduction

We humans are self conscious beings. Our identification with our bodies is but natural; see Figure 1. The skins covering our bodies define the limits in which we seem to be confined. Rocks have bodies as well. Perception of differences from inanimate objects gives rise to a feeling that we are more than mere bodies. We are alive and we are aware. Rocks are not alive and they are not aware as we are. Why are our bodies not like rocks? They do however, become like rocks when we are dead. We surmise there must be something quite different between our bodies and the rocks out there that keeps us alive and aware before we are dead. Thus, we become aware of a source of life and awareness that we share with each other.

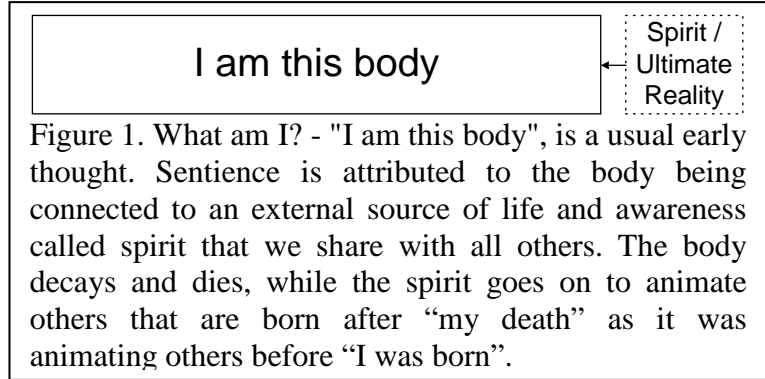


Figure 1. What am I? - "I am this body", is a usual early thought. Sentience is attributed to the body being connected to an external source of life and awareness called spirit that we share with all others. The body decays and dies, while the spirit goes on to animate others that are born after "my death" as it was animating others before "I was born".

We are born and we die. There are people living in the world before we are born and there are people after we die. We come and we go and our shared source of life goes on. It is there for people to share before our bodies arrive and it will be there after they are gone. This way, it is markedly different from the body. Bodies change, decay and die, but the spirit goes on forever.

This duality of our source of life and awareness on one side and our physical identity on the other is a matter of common observation. The source of life is termed spirit to distinguish it from the material nature of the body. Material body has a finite form with well defined contours, while spirit is subtle and all pervasive. Body is separate and individual, but spirit is shared by all beings in the universe.

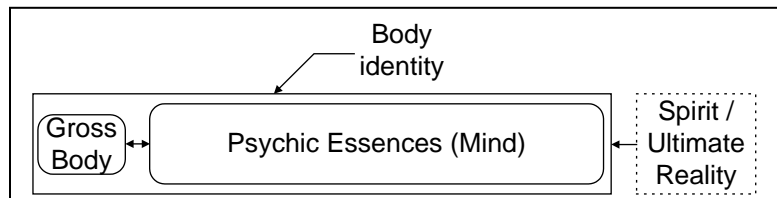


Figure 2. Structural Model of Human Being - It is soon discovered that there is more to the body identity than meets the eye. It is indeed a complex of gross body and psychic essences called mind communicating with each other with mind as the center of command and control.

We realize that the bodily identity is more complex than what initially appears. It soon becomes obvious that it contains our visible external existence which is being controlled by a hidden inner existence; see Figure 2. The external existence is gross and the inner is subtle. It is the law of nature that the subtle is active as compared with the gross which is passive. The active controls the passive. Thus, we develop a body mind identity with mind being the subtle controlling essence of the physical existence.

We notice that the body and the mind both have definite and finite form, although it is more obvious in the case of the body. Minds change just the same as bodies do. In the matter of

change and finitude, the nature of both the body and the mind must fundamentally be the same. They are both in empirical domain and material in nature, although body is within the sensory domain while mind is too subtle to be perceived by the cognitive senses.

## 2 The Approach

Because of his individual background in engineering and technology, the author prefers visual presentation, wherever practical, to communicate ideas. Fortunately, the subject matter of this article lends itself to visual thinking and communication. Copious use of diagrams augments verbal communication in the hope that this hybrid approach will be more effective than a purely verbal one.

## 3 Early Age of Science

With the advent of the age of science, attention began to be focused on the empirical domain narrowly confined within common human experience. Spirit did not fit in this domain. The study and development of social sciences were confined in this zealously defined domain of the empirical to be considered rational and scientific in nature.

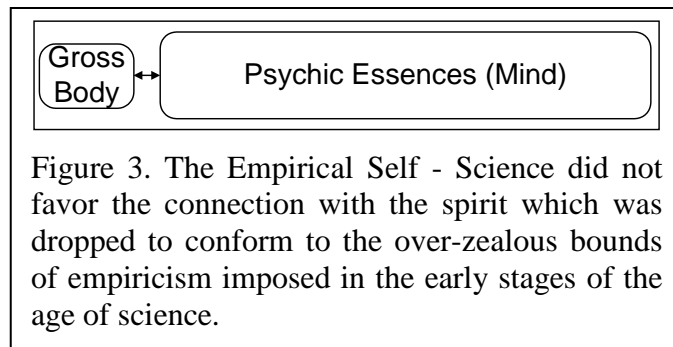


Figure 3. The Empirical Self - Science did not favor the connection with the spirit which was dropped to conform to the over-zealous bounds of empiricism imposed in the early stages of the age of science.

The study of human psychology too was not immune to the onslaught of over-zealous empiricism. This discipline was virtually limited to laboratory experiments on the study of stimulus response as the basis of studying the totality of human behavior until Sigmund Freud proposed his breakthrough theory of the unconscious mind. In keeping with the wave of narrowly defined empiricism sweeping all rational thought, even Freud missed the relationship of the human mind with the underlying spirit. The trend of the times was such that the connection with the spirit in Figures 1 and 2 were dropped in the name of empirical rationality with the resulting psycho-physiological model of human identity as the basis of the totality of human behavior; see Figure 3.

## 4 Psychological Model of the Human Mind

Sigmund Freud was a psychotherapist credited with enunciating a model of human mind that he proposed for the practice of his profession. Freud compared the human mind with an iceberg floating in the ocean. Typically, an iceberg is 90% submerged in water and 10% visible above water. Human mind is divided into two components – the conscious and the unconscious. The conscious component is comparable to the small part of the iceberg above water and the unconscious to the large part of the iceberg submerged below the surface.

The content of the unconscious mind is not easily accessible by the conscious mind, but it certainly affects the way the conscious mind behaves. Mental content from the unconscious passes through a preconscious stage before it is easily accessible by the conscious mind in the waking state. The unconscious being a storehouse of feelings, memories, thoughts, tendencies and desires built upon the sum total of past experiences underpins the conscious human thought,

reason, will, and actions. The unconscious mind has also been called the subconscious or the non-conscious. Freud's model is shown in Figure 4.

Carl Jung extended Freud's concept of the unconscious by suggesting that it consists of two parts: personal unconscious representing the sum total of a person's experiential learning, which was once in the conscious domain, and collective unconscious not connected with conscious personal experience. The collective unconscious represents primordial images common to all humanity. It may include inherited experiences acquired perhaps through biological continuity from the beginning of life. Obviously, personal unconscious is more accessible than the collective unconscious which comprises the deepest layers of human psyche (Palmer 1997, pp. 95-101).

Freud further systematized human mind into three functional components, the ego, the super-ego and id (Munroe, pp. 85-89). Id represents natural inborn instincts and appetites for sense gratification. Id operates automatically and is completely in the domain of the unconscious. The super-ego represents the sum total of all learnt mores of one's family, society and religion that oppose the unchecked instinctive appetites. It acts as our conscience keeping us on the straight and narrow of acceptable social behavior. Ego represents the logic that mediates between id and the super-ego trying to find a balance between the natural instincts and the societal mores. Ego is explained as the skill to survive satisfying "three harsh masters" – external reality, the id, and the super-ego (ibid, p. 86).

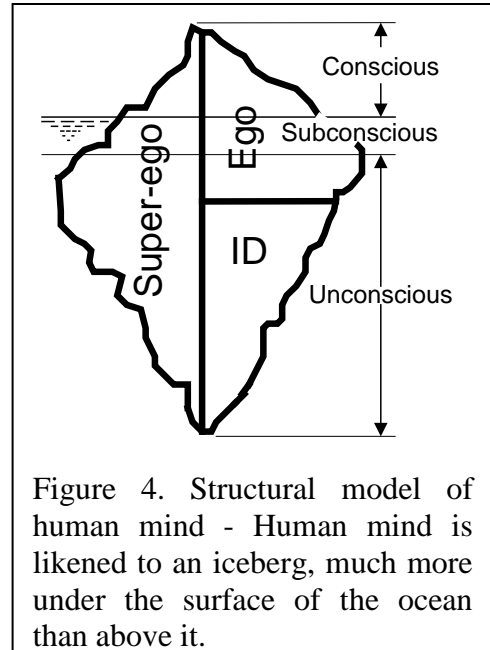


Figure 4. Structural model of human mind - Human mind is likened to an iceberg, much more under the surface of the ocean than above it.

Freud's theory represented a significant advance and a departure from the experimental approaches favored in his times for their deemed objectivity; and it has had an extensive effect on psychological inquiry in fields as varied as anthropology, literature, mythology and religion (Rahman 1977, p. xxi).

## 5 Totality of Human Behavior

The psychological model of human mind in Figure 4 may be acceptable for the purpose of psychotherapy or for the prediction of stimulus response behavior of common people, but it does not fare well in the understanding of the totality of human behavior. It assumes that human mind is totally shackled by the empirical world and it offers no hope for breaking out of its chains. It offers no explanation for the behavior of many human beings in all cultures who have transcended worldly considerations for universal love. It also does not explain behavior based on extreme hatred. Because of its failure to explain human behavior at the two extremes, it proposes no way of human development to achieve the capacity of unbounded universal love and compassion or of preventing utter degradation to extreme hatred, violence and crimes against humanity.

Psycho-spiritual models from wisdom and spiritual traditions seem to better reflect the entire spectrum of human cognition, worldviews, concerns, values, and behavior. They apply equally to common people, those at the zenith of humanity and those at its nadir.

When science matured with the passage of time and growth in understanding the subtle reality of nature, it presumably followed up on the spiritual idea of the underlying unity of all beings in the universe. It grew to widen its perception of the empirical beyond the immediate scope of the cognitive senses. It is time that social sciences and humanities follow its lead.

## **6 The Scientific Method**

Humankind is blessed with five senses of knowledge that hardwire it for curiosity. In addition to these tools of perception, it is blessed with mind, memory and intellect to understand, harmonize and make sense out of a wide variety of sense experiences. Thus, not only the need to know but the need to know the truth is one of the basic human needs.

How do we achieve certainty about the truth? Again there is nothing better than direct sense perception. The degree of certainty through direct sense perception is unmatched by any one of the other tools at our disposal. In science experimental verification takes the place of sense perception.

Inference through human reason is an important tool of validation. We outright reject something that does not withstand the test of reason even if we perceived it through our own senses. At the same time, senses are known to be deceptive. We also regard the testimony of others as a valid tool of certainty. If something we perceive with our senses does not stand to our reason, we at once question whether somebody else perceives the same thing. If so, we start to question our reason. If we see something, others see it too and it withstands the test of our reason, then only we are sure of the certainty of its truth.

Science is a discipline that rigorously applies all the three tests for validation for it to accept a finding to be true. The scope of science then is delimited by the reach of the senses and reason. Science seeks to extend the reach of the senses and of reason in an effort to widen its scope. It does so through the use of sophisticated instrumentation and technology on one hand, and rigorous logic, mathematics, and computational tools on the other. Experimental verification, however, maintains the prime position as the ultimate tool of validation. The experiments must also be repeatable so that they can be independently performed by other parties to invoke testimonial validation as a further tool of establishing the truth. The condition of repeatability imposes a condition of predictability because you can only repeat an observation when the behavior of the object being observed is predictable.

As noted above, experiments are based on sense perception and senses can only perceive particular objects. Experiments are characterized by measurements which mean comparing some attribute of the object being observed with a standard measurement of that attribute. Thus, the scope of science a priori seems limited to those particular objects that can be subjected to measurability and predictability, if its standard of truth validation is to be rigorously applied.

We are well aware of objects that do not lend themselves to precise measurement and do not lend themselves neatly to scientific enquiry. Examples of such objects include human feelings such as pleasure and pain, love and compassion etc., human ethics of virtue and vice, human attributes such as intelligence, sharpness and many others.

We are also aware of abstract objects of varying degrees of abstraction or generality such as objects of a certain type such as Alsatian dogs or Arabian horses, etc. or a universal of all dogs, horses, etc. or a universe of all life forms which has yet a higher degree of generality. Ultimate in

generality is the whole universe which contains all beings, animate and inanimate, in the entire universe. How does science deal with such general objects?

Science has two ways of dealing with abstract objects – generalization from a study of a number of particulars of a certain type and the study of the common essence of all objects of a certain type if such a common essence is identifiable in a definite manner. Both these methods are used extensively. The former method is treated with a certain degree of suspicion as it is fraught with error or incompleteness. Scientific theories based on such an extrapolation have been proven to be incomplete or defective sometimes years later. The latter approach has the merit of a degree of certainty comparable to the study of a particular object since the common essence itself if in objective domain is a particular object. An example of a common essence for all dogs may be a chromosome or a gene that defines an organism as a dog. All observations on that chromosome or the gene will then have equal implications for all dogs.

Although the study of universals through common essence is more reliable than the method of generalization from a study of a number of representative samples, it is not free of its own problems. One major problem is the subtleness of the essence. The deeper you dive, the subtler the essence gets; and the subtler the essence, the greater is the difficulty of devising instrumentation to run experimental observations on it.

## **7 Science and the Material World Today**

Chemistry has reduced the essence of an infinite number of substances to a handful of elements on the periodic table. Atomic physics identifies the essence of the elements on the periodic table further to three particles, namely electrons, protons and neutrons. Electrons and protons exist in equal numbers in an atom of an element, although the number of neutrons may be different. This number is called the atomic number and it determines a particular element. For example, the atomic number of nitrogen is 7; an atom of nitrogen consists of a nucleus with 7 protons and 7 neutrons, and there are 7 electrons orbiting around the nucleus. An atom of oxygen consists of a nucleus with 8 protons and 8 neutrons; and there are 8 electrons orbiting around the nucleus. Chemically, both nitrogen and oxygen are different elements with very different properties whereas from the point of view of atomic physics, the only difference is in the number of the constituent particles in an atom of the elements. The constituent particles do not differ from one element to the other in any recognizable manner. Thus, an infinite number of chemical substances are reduced in essence to merely three constituent particles.

An atom consists of a nucleus containing its protons and neutrons whereas the electrons orbit the nucleus in a probability cloud. Although most people would imagine an atom to be solid, it is in fact mostly space. The ratio of the sizes of the hydrogen atom to its nucleus is about 100,000:1. If an atom were the size of a baseball stadium, the nucleus would be the size of a marble on second base and the electrons would orbit the perimeter. Thus, the volume of solid particles in an atom as compared to its overall volume is insignificantly small.

The energy level of an atom is determined by the number of its constituent particles. Thus, an atom may be thought to consist of the various constituent particles held in equilibrium by a certain amount of energy. Therefore, an atom consists not only of electrons, protons, and neutrons but a certain amount of energy as well. Energy in different levels is needed to keep the sub-atomic particles together, otherwise protons in the nucleus of an atom will fly away from each other as they are all positively charged and we know that like charges repel each other.

Particle physics studies the elementary constituents of matter. According to it, protons and neutrons are actually composite particles, made up of various elementary particles. At this level, the so called particles exist in a wave particle duality displaying particle (matter) like behavior under some conditions and wave (energy) like in others. Determinism no longer applies. Wave particle duality is characterized by innumerable concurrent possibilities studied by a branch of physics called quantum physics.

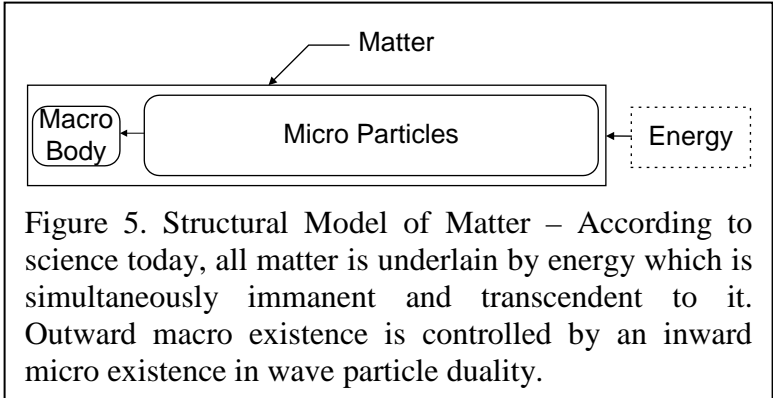


Figure 5. Structural Model of Matter – According to science today, all matter is underlain by energy which is simultaneously immanent and transcendent to it. Outward macro existence is controlled by an inward micro existence in wave particle duality.

Modern science sees matter as a tri-partite system consisting of energy as its shared essence, micro particles and macro form perceptible by the senses; see. Figure 5.

At this time it must be noted that if science was content studying universals by extrapolating generalizations from a study of related particulars only, it would have missed out on the discovery of quantum physics which must be regarded as a result of studying deeper and deeper essence of objects in the universe. It should also be noted that quantum physics is the study of micro objects underlying the macro world. The macro world is characterized by the deterministic laws of cause and effect whereas the micro world is characterized by multiple possibilities.

The current knowledge of particle physics identifies quarks to be the fundamental particle underlying 24 elementary particles that constitute all matter. Diving deeper, according to the theory of relativity, the fundamental quarks appear as the direct result of the coalescence of energy which underlies all of them and is thus the deepest essence of the diverse material world. Thus, modern science tells us that all material beings, including our own bodies, are one in their deepest essence and underneath them all energy is their one common reality.

Different materials interact with each other to result in totally different material(s) if there is compatibility between the micro particles of the interacting materials. If so, the underlying energy initiates the interaction by readjusting its quantity to result in a different configuration of the micro particles; see Figure 6. Thus energy, the underlying essence of matter, drives the relationships in the material world through the micro particles.

Particles themselves are congealed energy. Energy is immanent in every atom, in every nucleus of every atom, and in every electron flying around the nucleus and prevents it from collapsing on the nucleus. Energy is transcendent to every particle. The immanent and the transcendent merge as solidity and continuity in matter is merely an illusion due to large empty inter-particle spaces within atoms. Energy is totally unlike matter. It cannot be defined in terms of any material. Physics defines it as “the capacity to do work”. The material world is relative and differentiated while it’s underlying reality, energy is absolute and undifferentiated. Matter springs forth from energy at the beginning of time as its particles are nothing but congealed energy; energy sustains it as it would not exist without energy continuing to surround all of its constituent particles; and it reverts back into energy at the end of time when the universe dissolves back into energy.

To sum up the above discussion, according to modern science, the following salient points can be made about the material world today:

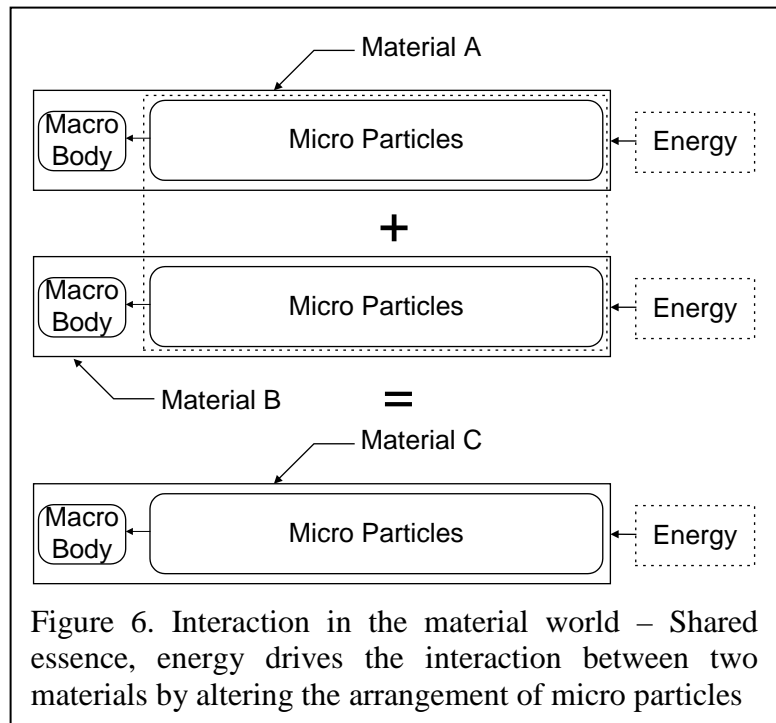


Figure 6. Interaction in the material world – Shared essence, energy drives the interaction between two materials by altering the arrangement of micro particles



1. Infinitely diverse material world is comprised of one fundamental reality, energy.
2. Energy is omnipresent in the material world. It not only comprises the fundamental material particles, but also resides in the large empty spaces between and around them without which there will be no particulate integrity. Thus, energy is both immanent and transcendent to matter which is comprised of energy, sustained by energy and which dissolves back into it at the end of time.
3. Material diversity is simply due to different atomic arrangements of elementary particles.
4. The micro world of atoms and subatomic particles is not subject to deterministic cause and effect, but it is the world of multiple possibilities instead.
5. The macro material world is subject to determinism of strict cause and effect.
6. Material interactions at the macro level are initiated by energy at the micro level to produce different particulate arrangements resulting in further diversity.

It is interesting to note that anybody that suggested a tri-partite structural model of matter such as in Figure 5 in the early age of science might have been ridiculed by the scientific community.

## **8 Spiritual and Wisdom Traditions**

Spiritual and wisdom traditions reason that the existence of the universe points to the existence of an ultimate cause or an absolute ultimate reality underlying all that there is, as everything that exists has a cause. Nothing can come out of nothing. The ultimate reality is considered to be both the efficient and the material cause of the universe. It is the source of all existence. It is defined as that out of which this universe is born at the beginning of time, in which this universe is sustained and into which this universe dissolves at the end of time. Since spirituality and wisdom traditions predate science, it may be speculated whether scientific investigations into one source of all matter followed the lead of these traditions.

The word spirit implies a number of closely related concepts such as the real essence underneath physical appearance, meaning hidden underneath expression, life and consciousness, and the spark of the absolute ultimate reality underlying all existence. On one side of the spectrum, there is matter in the relative domain characterized by finite contours related with all appearances and expression, and on the other side is spirit or the ultimate reality, infinite, undifferentiated and all pervasive totally unlike matter, which imparts existence to all beings animate and inanimate.

The relationship between energy and matter that modern science accepts is analogous to the relationship between the absolute ultimate reality and all beings in the universe which the spiritual and wisdom traditions propose. Spirituality and science converge in the manner of relating the ultimate reality and the universe on one side and energy and matter on the other.

### **8.1 Immediate and the Ultimate Reality**

The reality we perceive with our senses is an immediate reality. It is relational and relative. It is the reality of diversity, finiteness and differentiation where every thing can be positively defined. This reality of names, forms and attributes is conceptually accessible. It is the reality of appearances and not the essence.

The ultimate reality is the underlying reality not perceptible externally with mere senses without the help of inner faculties of deep thought and contemplation. It is absolute in nature. It is the

reality where every being merges into one nameless, formless, undifferentiated unity. It is not finite and therefore ineffable, unlike anything we can perceive, indefinable and conceptually inaccessible. Just like energy, the underlying reality of matter, is manifested and can best be defined as the capacity of doing work, the ultimate reality of all beings in the universe, is manifested and can best be defined as the capacity to know, understand and love. Because of its infinite character, it is capable of multiple perspectives; each one of them or all of them put together would remain incomplete and incapable of total grasp. Each perspective is at best a pointer to it. As the deepest essence of all beings in the universe, it is the real Self of all beings.

## 8.2 Nature of Diversity

In essence, the ultimate reality is seen to exhibit two principles – being and becoming. Becoming is the principle underlying change and evolution; while being is the principle of changelessness and constancy. The principle of becoming is the material principle which changes and evolves into immediate reality or the created universe in the supervision and the presence of the principle of being which primarily breathes life and consciousness. These two principles always coexist and are inseparable – duality is only for linguistic convenience.

In the language of physics, the principle of becoming includes energy that underlies matter. In addition, it includes the principle of subtle matter that is thought to comprise our psychic essences. We all understand that our minds are fickle and subject to constant

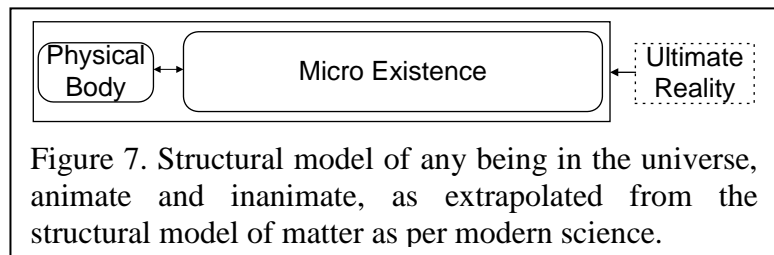


Figure 7. Structural model of any being in the universe, animate and inanimate, as extrapolated from the structural model of matter as per modern science.

change. The principle of becoming thus includes both the principle of gross matter that comprises our bodily existence and the principle of subtle matter comprising our intellectual existence. Thus, Figure 7 presents the structural model of any being, animate or inanimate, as extrapolated from science. It is of interest to note that this model is similar to that of a human being as in Figure 2 on one side and with that of matter in Figure 5 on the other.

The principle of becoming is the material principle that manifests itself in two domains, the macro and the micro. In the macro domain, it is matter that comprises our physical existence and obeys the deterministic laws of cause and effect; while in the micro domain, it is our intellectual existence, abode of spirit, life and consciousness. The material principle in the micro domain displays spirit-matter duality: it behaves deterministically like matter on one side and with multiple possibilities of the ultimate reality on the other.

Change and evolution with which the principle of becoming is associated is not any change in essence but only in appearance such as a wave on the surface of an ocean. In essence, wave is the same water as the water in the ocean. The change is only in configuration as the change in energy congealing into sub-atomic particles in the material world. There is never any change of essence in the ultimate reality, although the change in configuration is very real at the behavioral level and it cannot and must not be ignored. Diversity at the immediate worldly level is real and it must be understood in the light of unity at the level of essence in the ultimate reality.

Science today agrees with spirituality in its story of the material world. At the level of worldly behavior, one material is different from the other and this difference cannot and must not be ignored. But at the level of its deepest essence all matter is energy. Differences at the relative

level are due entirely to the different atomic configurations of the fundamental particles comprised of energy. Oneness underlies diversity in the inanimate material world as well as in the wider world including animate beings.

### **8.3 Various Psycho-spiritual Models**

This section looks at the various spiritual and wisdom traditions in order to present psycho-spiritual models suggested by them. These models form the bases for the psycho-spiritual model proposed in this article.

#### **8.3.1 Samkhya School of Thought**

Samkhya school of thought is Vedic in origin. According to it, the ultimate reality manifests as two principles called prakriti (energy, nature) and purusha (spirit). Prakriti is seen as Shakti, the primordial feminine principle that changes and physically evolves, whereas purusha is seen as Shiva, the causal male principle that does not ever change and is responsible for consciousness and life. Constant gati, movement in space and time, is the nature of prakriti (Sinha 1979, pp. v-vi), whereas purusha is characterized by consciousness, knowledge and understanding. Shiva and Shakti are thought as two primarily for human understanding. In fact, they are inseparable and exist as one in eternal marital embrace. Also prakriti is seen as inanimate whereas purusha as dependent upon prakriti for its manifestation. The former is seen as blind and the latter as lame. They are both interdependent. Prakriti cannot see and purusha cannot go anywhere. Purusha carried by prakriti can go places whereas purusha acts as prakriti's navigator which guides it where to go.

Prakriti, also referred to as divine mother, is responsible for the flesh, blood and mind whereas purusha's contribution is like that of the male sperm. Neither without the other is capable of creation.

Prakriti's evolution gives rise to 23 principles: five gross principle of sense perception and eighteen of them subtle imperceptible by the cognitive senses. Our physical body or outer existence comprises of the former, whereas our mind or subtle existence of the latter (Sinha 1979, pp. 284-286).

Of the eighteen subtle principles, the first and the subtlest product of evolution of prakriti is buddhi, the decisive principle of enlightened discrimination and reasoning like the arithmetic and logic unit of the central processor of a computer. It is of interest to know that further evolution of prakriti begins from this principle of intelligence.

Buddhi in turn evolves into ahamkara, the principle of individual self (ego) that stores the sum total of one's prior learning experiences including likes, dislikes, fears and everything that distinguishes an individual or his/her society and differentiates them from others. It determines one's personal or social agendas. Its general motive is sense gratification as it mediates between individual appetites and the society. It determines human condition. For personal development, one must learn to attenuate, control, and transcend its divisive and selfish tendencies.

There is a rule in nature by which the subtle controls the gross. Buddhi being subtler than ahamkara controls the latter.

Ahamkara in turn evolves into manas on one side and fifteen principles on the other side which are five cognitive senses, five active senses, and five subtle objects of cognitive senses. Manas is the coordinator of senses. If senses are thought of as horses, manas would be like reins

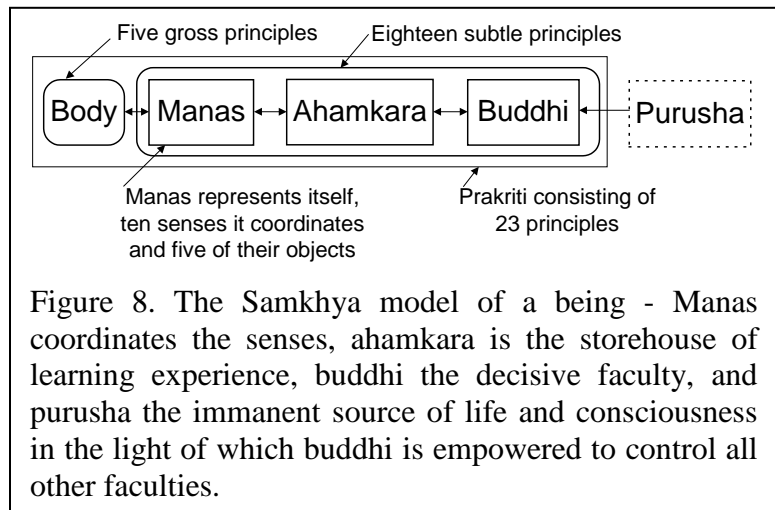
controlling them. Ahamkara being subtler than manas and the other fifteen principles has the power to exercise dominion over them.

Five cognitive senses and five active senses are not bodily organs. They may be likened to the software underlying the operation of the corresponding sense organs.

Five subtle objects of cognitive senses are the sound, touch, sight, taste and smell – they are what cognitive senses seek. They respectively correspond to the senses of hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling. The eighteen subtle principles comprise the intelligence controlling the world of sense perception.

Five subtle objects of cognitive senses in turn evolve into corresponding five gross objects. The names of the five gross objects are akasha (sound or sound like objects such as vibrations) from sound, vayu (air or air like objects) from touch, agni (fire or fire like light giving objects) from sight, jala (water or water like liquids) from taste and bhumi (earth or earth like solids) from smell. Thus, the five gross principles comprise the entire perceptible world.

Thus, Samkhya implies a structural model of a being, animate or inanimate, as shown in Figure 8. The main difference between different beings lies in the composition of the body. Human bodies are considered to be composed perfectly as they have the requisite inner essences to potentially manifest the light of purusha to the maximum. Inanimate objects, on the other hand, are composed in the opposite way with a minimal potential of inner essences to manifest the light



of purusha. Such a difference is attributed to the degree of evolution of prakriti. In human beings, prakriti achieves the highest degree of evolution. Thus, human beings are the most evolved beings; evolution, considered spiritual in nature, is defined as the potential to fully manifest the ultimate reality equally immanent in all beings. Buddhi plays a key role in the actualization of this potential.

The world of prakriti is characterized by incessant gati (motion, change). It is appropriate to use the distinctiveness of motion and change to delineate the defining attributes of a product of prakriti. Samkhya enumerates three such gunas (attributes): satva, rajas, and tamas. The uniqueness of tamas is inertia, resistance to change; that of rajas is mindless and incessant activity; and that of satva is considered and purposeful activity. These gunas apply to all products of evolution of prakriti including subtle mind and gross body. Un-evolved primordial nature, prakriti is defined as a state of perfect equilibrium of the three gunas. Evolution is the result of a disturbance of this perfect equilibrium. It must be noted that only the world of prakriti is subject to attribution; purusha is ineffable, unlimited, undifferentiated and beyond attribution, whatsoever.

At the individual level, ignorance, delusion, contrary knowledge, lack of motivation, lack of ambition, apathy, neglect, sloth, sleepiness, and similar tendencies characterize tamas, which keeps a human being engrossed on the physical body with a narrow worldview and materialistic and values. Rajas is characterized by ambition, greed, sensual appetites, sense gratification, confused thinking, emotional instability and unclear value system that keep the individual involved in mindless activity. Cognition, knowledge, understanding, peace, happiness, emotional stability, clarity of value system and thought, purposeful and considered activity characterize satva. Although an individual has a distinctive and defining guna, one passes regularly from one guna to the other as one leads one's daily life.

Samkhya proposes that personal development lies in moving from tamas to rajas and rajas to satva as one's defining attribute. All gunas are limiting. Listening and reading of enlightened discourses and scriptural material, compassion, generosity, and self control can take one from tamas to rajas and rajas to satva. Moving to satva and staying in satva requires attenuation and control of ahamkara. Only deep meditation has the capacity to enable transcendence of attributes as all attributes howsoever good define and limit an individual and separate him/her personally or as a group from others. Having achieved satva, one should engage in deep meditation to transcend even this guna as it too is limiting. Transcendence of satva is marked by transcendence of limiting ahamkara leading to lack of all differentiation and boundless love as one realizes that one's real self is not limiting ahamkara but the boundless and undifferentiated purusha that is the one source of life and consciousness of all beings in the universe (Talwar 2001).

Samkhya school of thought is shared, in part or fully, by all spiritual traditions with origins in India. Original buddhism was silent about purusha or the ultimate reality as the Buddha, true to their ineffability remained silent when he was asked about them. Later Buddhism talked about sunyata (nothing, void, incomprehensibility) as the underlying ultimate reality of the universe. It must be emphasized that the concept of sunyata does not preclude the presence of an underlying reality. On the contrary, it only means that the underlying reality is incomprehensible since it is unlike any thing in the word. It is not 'nothing' but it is 'no thing'.

### 8.3.2 Book of Genesis

The Book of Genesis opens with the statement, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" and He created them through intellect (Eckhart, Meister 1981, pp. 84-85). "In the beginning" means in principle. The principle of heaven is in the likeness of form in micro domain and is the active principle of inner existence; whereas the principle of earth is the likeness of matter in macro domain and it is the passive principle of physical existence (ibid, pp. 90-91, pp.101-107). They are known as the created principles. In addition, there is the uncreated ultimate reality itself. The created principles of heaven and earth function through the uncreated ultimate reality is the glue that keeps the created principles together just like energy is needed to keep the

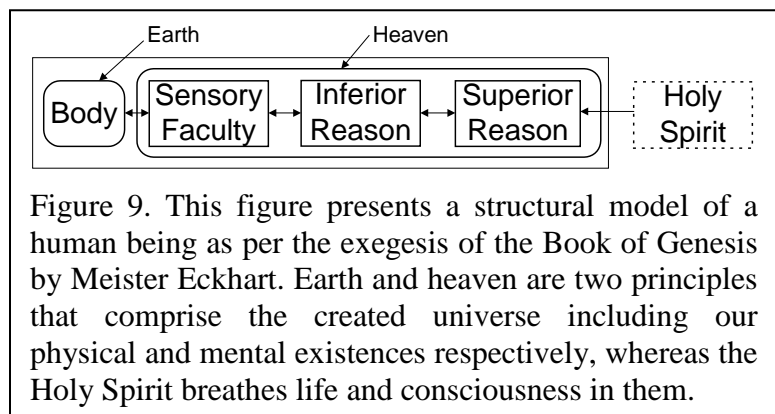


Figure 9. This figure presents a structural model of a human being as per the exegesis of the Book of Genesis by Meister Eckhart. Earth and heaven are two principles that comprise the created universe including our physical and mental existences respectively, whereas the Holy Spirit breathes life and consciousness in them.

constituent particles together in an atom of matter. All universal beings are one through the oneness of the ultimate reality.

The divine Persons, namely God the Father, God the son, and God the Holy Spirit, comprise a unity of trinity in the ultimate reality (ibid, pp. 96-99). Thus, Figure 9 diagrammatically sums up the foregoing exegesis of Genesis in the structural model of a human being.

Our inner mental existence is functionally divided into the sensory faculty which tempts human beings into eating the forbidden fruit, the inferior reason which is the externally oriented and divisive reason to justify the consumption of the forbidden fruit and the superior reason or the noble soul with three types of activities - animal, intellectual and divine (ibid, pp. 108-111). When the superior reason is engaged in the divine activity, it is the unitive reason of love and compassion enabling us to “love thy neighbor as thyself”. We need to see our neighbor as “thyself” in order to love him/her as “thyself”. This is possible only when we realize that our real self is not the body or the mind but the Holy Spirit that breathes life and consciousness in all. We are all one in the oneness of the Holy Spirit. True justice and peace is possible only when we see our neighbor as our self.

Our sensory faculty and its contingent divisive inferior reason that tempts the superior reason into animal activity keep us from seeing our oneness through the Holy Spirit. We must make efforts to order our sensory faculty to the inferior reason, inferior reason to the superior reason and the superior reason to the Holy Spirit. This is the perfect ordering of faculties which is needed to establish the Kingdom of God within, which enables us to “love thy neighbor as thyself” (ibid, p.112-116).

### 8.3.3 La illaha illa’ Allah

“There is no divinity except the (one) Divinity” (Shah-Kazemi 2006, p. 69). There is no existence but Al-Haqq, the Real that only exists in one unity of all existence as the transcendent and the immanent selfhood of all beings. Ibn Arabi says in his Bezels of Wisdom, “The transcendent Reality is the relative creature, even though the creature is distinct from the Creator” (Ibn Arabi 1980, p. 87), and in the Meccan Revelations, “It is He who is revealed in every face, sought in every sign, gazed upon by every eye, worshipped in every object of worship, and pursued in the unseen and the visible. Not a single one of His creatures can fail to find Him in its primordial and original nature” (<http://www.ibnarabisociety.org>). “Wherever you turn, there is the Face of God”, (The Holy Quran, 2:115).

Figure 10 shows the relationship between the ultimate reality, Allah and a human being (Sells 1996, pp.147-149). Nafz is faculty of the self-centered life, the ego that defines our creaturely identity. Ruh, a subtle essence, is the faculty of love and praiseworthy traits. Sirr has been defined as the faculty of witness, enlightened

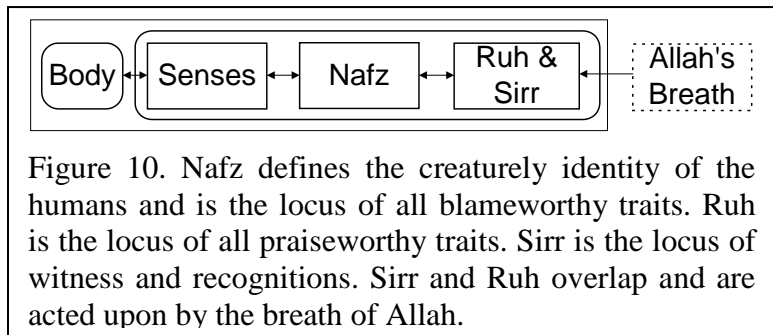


Figure 10. Nafz defines the creaturely identity of the humans and is the locus of all blameworthy traits. Ruh is the locus of all praiseworthy traits. Sirr is the locus of witness and recognitions. Sirr and Ruh overlap and are acted upon by the breath of Allah.

discrimination and recognition. Sirr has been described as subtler than ruh and ruh as subtler than sirr. Ruh and sirr together may then be thought as the faculty responsible for intellectual and divine activities while nafz as the faculty responsible for creaturely activities of humankind.

For human development, one must cultivate habits to strengthen ruh and sirr while attenuating, controlling and extinguishing nafz. Nafz must be finally made extinct for seeing Allah, as according to Ibn Arabi, ‘none can either see or know God but God’ (Shah-Kazemi 2006, p. 94). To become Allah, one has to achieve fana, a state of existence in which the creaturely identity, nafz has totally been transcended and extinguished through the love of the Absolute, Allah and total surrender to its will. Ibn Arabi once again, “Then ... the even and the odd come together, He is and you are not ... He sees Himself through Himself” (ibid, p.101). In the words of Abu Talib al-Makki, “None sees Him ‘to whom nothing is similar’ but him ‘to whom nothing is similar’ (ibid, p.94). In the words of Junayad, “The phenomenal, when it is joined to the Eternal, vanishes and leaves no trace behind. When He is there, thou art not, and if thou art there, He is not” (ibid, p.93).

### 8.3.4 The Kabbalah Tradition

The Kabbalah is a wide ranging tradition in Judaism with a mystic strand which focuses on the perception of the Absolute as the underlying reality of the universe. According to this wisdom tradition, everything in the universe emanates from the Absolute, Ein Sof as rays from the sun. Ein Sof is both immanent in the universe and transcendent to it.

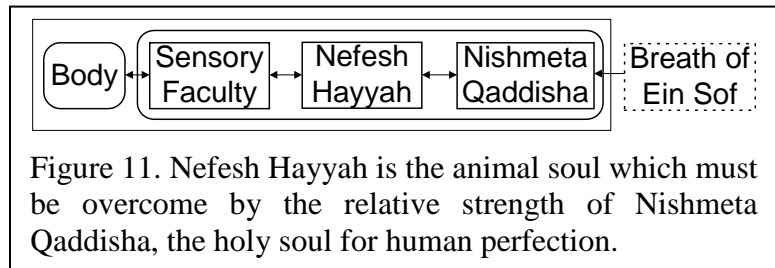


Figure 11. Nefesh Hayyah is the animal soul which must be overcome by the relative strength of Nishmeta Qaddisha, the holy soul for human perfection.

The relationship between Ein Sof and the human being is seen as in Figure 11. Nefesh Hayyah (notice similarity of this term to the Islamic term Nafz) is the animal soul which must be overcome. Nishmeta Qaddisha is the holy soul, the strength of which has the capacity to transcend Nefesh Hayyah uniting the individual with Ein Sof (Rosenberg 1973, pp. 28 and 41).

### 8.3.5 Taoism

Tao is the Absolute ultimate reality manifested as two principles of yin and yang. Yin is the passive female principle and yang is the active male principle similar to the Samkhya principles of prakriti and purusha. Yin and yang are so entwined and inseparable that yin is seen as the seed of yang and yang as the seed of yin. All beings in the universe are tripartite manifestations of the Absolute Tao and its principles, yin and yang (Watts 1989, pp. ???).

## 9 The Proposed Psycho-spiritual Model

Broadly speaking, the suggested model is tri-partite. It includes gross body in the macro domain, subtle psychic essences in the micro domain and the ultimate reality in the spiritual domain. The macro and the micro domains are both manifestations of the ultimate reality which is simultaneously immanent and transcendent to its manifestations. This model harmonizes the spiritual and wisdom traditions with the thought of modern science as it relates diverse material world with its underlying reality, energy.

It is of interest to note that our body-mind complex is the product of energy through intellect kept together by our underlying ultimate reality. Energy being the capacity to do work and the ultimate reality as the capacity to know, understand, and love, we are meant to work in service

using our intellects to know, understand, and love each other in the perception of oneness of our fundamental reality.

## 9.1 Three Psychic Essences

Spiritual and wisdom traditions consider the totality of human experience while enumerating three psychic essences or faculties of the human mind that explain its functionality. The following model is based upon an integration of various spiritual traditions; see Figure 12.

### 9.1.1 Sensory Faculty

The role of this faculty lies in the coordination of the cognitive sense, the active senses, and their appetites. Cognitive senses are hungry for their respective objects, the sense of seeing is looking for beautiful sights, the sense of hearing is hungry for pleasant sounds, that of touch for tender and erotic tactile sensations, taste for delicious food and drink, and smell for pleasant odors. The built-in sense appetites result in human instincts to which Sigmund Freud refers by the term id.

Our bodies are made of matter. Matter is the manifestation of energy. Science defines energy as the capacity to do work. Our desire to do something is fundamental to our physical existence. As long as we have a material body, we need to do something. Some of these bodily actions are autonomous and some are willful. We just cannot live without doing anything. Thus, our physical bodies are always looking for something to do. For this purpose, we are bestowed with five active senses. These senses are associated with speech, hands, feet, sexual organs, and organs of excretion.

Sense gratification, thus, becomes the first and foremost object of bodily action. This faculty represents the logic of sense gratification of the individual body which is its primary focus.

Sense gratification introduces us to experience bodily sensations classified as pleasant and unpleasant. Sensations in turn produce mental feelings of pleasure and pain which are recorded in memory for future use. The process of gathering sensations and feelings is the beginning of experiential knowledge and understanding, which then is another role of the sensory faculty.

All actions of engaging the sensory faculty may not result in the feelings of pleasure and pain born out of sense gratification. At times, the achievement of knowledge and understanding in itself becomes the primary goal of engagement of the senses.

Senses connect the external physical world with the internal mental existence. Senses then are also used to put the mind in a certain desired state.

### 9.1.2 Ego

Human beings exist in families, communities, villages, cities, nations, etc. Their personal appetites must be kept in discipline in order to live together. Thus, begin the efforts of families,

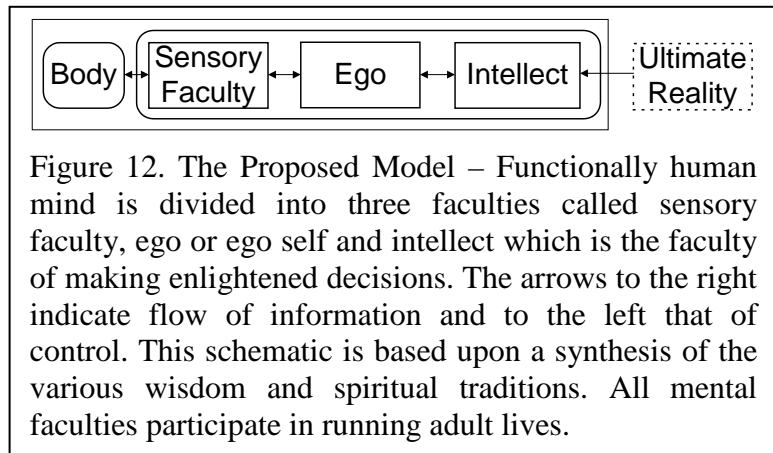


Figure 12. The Proposed Model – Functionally human mind is divided into three faculties called sensory faculty, ego or ego self and intellect which is the faculty of making enlightened decisions. The arrows to the right indicate flow of information and to the left that of control. This schematic is based upon a synthesis of the various wisdom and spiritual traditions. All mental faculties participate in running adult lives.



communities, villages, cities, nations, etc. to help the inbuilt moral compass in taming human appetites so that they are satisfied without causing undue conflict between individuals. These efforts take the form of formal and informal education at various levels to connect the individual with others and expand the individual horizon to include the feelings and rights of others. Additionally, there is use of fear of punishment in this life or hereafter for the violation of acceptable norms of behavior.

Ego, also known as the ego self, thus is the faculty that includes both the Freudian ego and super-ego concepts in addition to the accumulated experiential learning in the conscious and unconscious domains. Its purpose is to expand the human horizon to include others in immediate contact with the individual. Human action for sense gratification must be mediated by the rights and feelings of others with the consequential moral and legal codes. The focus of this faculty is still narrow selfishness and sense gratification but with concern for others in immediate contact with the individual. This faculty, therefore, represents the individual logic for mediation between sense gratification of the individual and moral, social and religious mores of the society.

This faculty is also the store house of all experiential learning which contains the seeds in the form of tendencies for future decision making. It defines our habits, our emotional addictions, our likes, our dislikes, our wants, our repulsions, our fears, our individuality, our distinctiveness etc. that keep us thinking in our specific mould and recreating the same old realities.

Our distinctiveness is also our finitude. It comprises the box in which we are inclined to think and the habitual ruts in which we love to remain for security and comfort.

### **9.1.3 Intellect**

The ultimate reality is immanent in all of us. Recalling that the definition of the ultimate reality is the capacity to know, understand and love, we all are pre-wired with this capacity. The only thing that prevents us is the capacity to perceive the immanent in our early formative years. Intellect is the faculty which has the power to perceive the immanent and the transcendent. We lack it when we start the journey of life and it grows with our growth. At birth, we are equipped with the senses which start accumulating sense experiences immediately. Our senses pull us in the direction of their respective objects and our lives get caught in their pursuits.

Senses are also gateways of knowledge. Just as they seek sense objects, they equip us with the knowledge of the mysteries of the ultimate reality. We are awestruck with the beauty and diversity in the manifestation of the ultimate reality surrounding us. We are drawn to it through the very senses that pull us in the direction of sense objects and self gratification. The very senses that put us in our distinct box and keep us in our own ruts also are the tools of getting us out of them through perception and understanding of the ultimate reality all around us.

Soon the cognitive knowledge of our underlying reality gets deeper into our psyche. The deeper it gets, the more we are drawn by it. We learn the wonders of love and compassion through our experiences with our families, siblings, peers and communities. We are drawn deeper towards it. We develop the power of deep thought and contemplation which takes us deep into our psyches in the deepest folds of which resides ultimate reality in its real ineffable form.

It is unfortunate that our families, communities, villages, cities, nations etc. are content to teach us merely their particular doctrines and perspectives about it without making a serious open minded effort in systematically educating us about its mysteries, infinity, immanence and transcendence and we are left to our own resources to find our ways towards perceiving it. The

effect of these doctrines and perspectives is more divisive in nature than unitive whereas the ultimate reality is undifferentiated realm devoid of all differences.

Our intellect is the decision making faculty. There is the immanent ultimate reality guiding it on one side and the confining ego self comprising of its predetermined habits, ruts, tendencies and in-the-box thinking on the other. The higher its ability to perceive the ultimate reality, the more is its ability to free itself from the confines of the ego and decide in the light of the ultimate reality.

## 9.2 Spiritual Growth

Wisdom and spiritual traditions define spiritual growth as the capacity of the body-mind complex of perceiving the ultimate reality as the deepest essence of all beings in the universe. The deepest manifestation of such a perception lies in the human capacity of unconditional love and compassion. Spiritual development thus is a measure of the capacity of the body-mind complex to perceive their underlying reality deeply enough for unconditional love and compassion to become one's prime nature.

Spiritual traditions consider all beings including humans as tri-partite beings comprising of body, mind and spirit. Whereas body and mind are in the so called 'created world' of the principle of becoming and subject to limitations and finiteness, spirit is the 'uncreated' principle of being, infinite and without any limitations whatsoever. Body-mind complex constitutes and defines an individual being. Spirit, on the other hand, is universal and equally available to all beings. Enclosing the words spirit/ultimate reality in a dotted rectangle in Figure 2 is intended to indicate this major difference. Spirit is not something that can be bounded by definite contours.

Human psychology is rooted in human experience. We begin the journey of our lives in complete spiritual ignorance thinking that we are merely bodies apart and separate from the rest of the universe. At birth, our only facilities are our cognitive senses; see Figure 13. They make us aware of ourselves, our needs and our helplessness in fulfilling them. We have five senses to make us aware

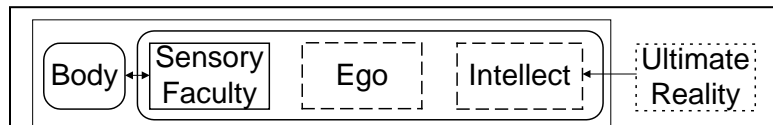


Figure 13. Sensory faculty is the only psychic essence which functions at birth and that too only partially. We can perceive the needs of our body. We can cry to draw attention to our meager needs. That is how we start our journey in life. Life is run primarily by the sensory faculty, while the ego and the intellect are yet to develop.

of the multiple limitations of our finite body to fulfill our needs and our dependence on others for their satisfaction. The finiteness, limitations, and discrete individuality of our bodies with which we identify as our selves lie at the core of our budding psychology.

In the very beginning, we have one of the five active senses (senses of expulsion) that functions, one that of speech functions a bit only in enabling us to cry, while the other three of sex, action and mobility are totally dysfunctional. Our psychological development begins with the growth of the sensory logic needed to coordinate the five cognitive senses, to resolve any contention between them and to fulfill the needs of the former two of the active senses. Our whole life is governed by our bodily needs expressed through our partially functional sensory faculty. The feeling of I appears at the dawn of self consciousness soon after birth. Since senses reign

supreme at this stage, the sense of 'I' is equated with the physical body. Identification with the body gives rise to feelings of finiteness, limitations and individuality.

Plurality and individuation go hand in hand. There I am, there you are, and there they are – all separate, finite, limited beings with individual needs for fulfilment of which we consider our separate existence to be of utmost importance. We indeed are physically finite and intellectually undetermined. Our identification with our limited, individual and finite physicality determines the characteristics of our intellectual growth.

Thus, before we learn to walk and all the senses begin to function, we have started to learn from our collection of sense experiences. We use this learning to interpret life. This early learning determines or at least colors our individual personality for all times to come. The collection of sense experiences gives rise to a system of logic particular to our individual being. We are determined by this infantile and early learning and its incumbent logic which has the capacity to entrap us tightly in its grip, although we have the capacity to transcend it in time with further growth and learning.

This system of logic is augmented by the sensory experience of the unbroken chain of life from the beginning of time inherited biologically through the parents. Carl Jung calls it our collected unconscious. The sum total of all sense-based learning through personal experience and education

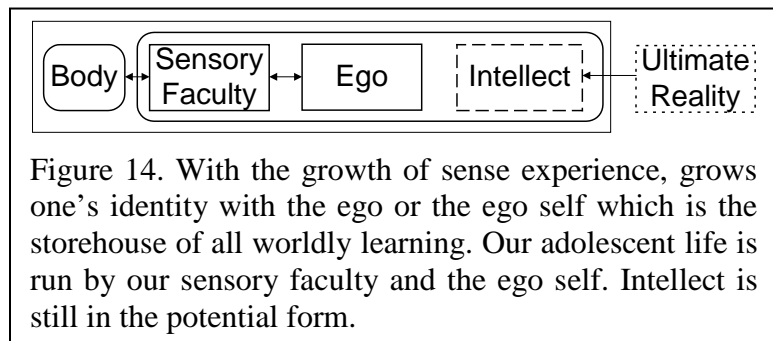


Figure 14. With the growth of sense experience, grows one's identity with the ego or the ego self which is the storehouse of all worldly learning. Our adolescent life is run by our sensory faculty and the ego self. Intellect is still in the potential form.

in the conscious and unconscious domains is called the ego self which now begins to participate along with the sensory faculty in resolving issues of life; see Figure 14. It must be remembered that the ego is that is externally oriented and it enables the individual sometimes to forgo or postpone immediate sense gratification in the hope for greater expectations to follow. Most of the time, the sensory faculty, being closer to the physical body than the ego self, prevails.

What is the position of the social, moral and religious teachings that we receive from our parents and our societies in their attempt to civilize and educate us? Does that become part of our ego self as well? The answer is an unequivocal 'yes'. All this learning too is sense based, cognitive in nature and determines our individual personality. This too is part of the ego self.

It must be remembered that this ego based logic is externally oriented as are the senses which directly gives rise to it. Decisions based on this logic are inherently selfish (self related in the sense of the person or his/her community, religion, society or nation) and they generally tend to strengthen lines of division between people because of the primacy of relative narrowness being the major factor for arriving at them.

Sensory faculty and the ego self impart to our inner intellectual existence a behavior of deterministic predictability based on cause and effect – a behavior which is the characteristic of the material world in the macro domain. Spiritual development lies in overcoming this deterministic pattern by acquiring a degree of freedom from its bondage with the acquisition of a will that is free of it.

With the growth of sensory experience, one begins to form thoughts and mental concepts. An example is the concept of greater good to follow for which ego gratification is forgone or postponed. Another example is the concept of love that grows with sense experience as one observes the love and care received from parents, siblings and others. One learns the importance of feelings and the value of respecting the feelings of others at the cost of relatively narrow gains. It must be noted that genuine concern for others' feelings is a result of unconditional love which also gives rise to genuine compassion, honesty, truth, and such virtues generally considered sublime.

Love is the beginning of the development of intellect or wisdom. This faculty is based on mental constructs which in turn are the result of sense experience. Thus, it is a degree removed from the senses. Once developed, this faculty begins to participate in resolving life issues along with the inferior reason and the sensory faculty; see Figure 12. It is with the development of intellect that we begin to learn that mere sense gratification and our current collection of learning experiences are not enough in settling all the issues of life.

The intellect is a degree removed from the external world, while the ego which, one can say, is a direct result of sense experience. Being so, generally the ego prevails although its dictates may be moderated by the intellect. However, people are known to do some fantastic sacrifices under the guidance of their considered thinking.

Love and life result from the light of the ultimate reality immanent in all of us and which is our real self. When we are young, we are unable to perceive it. Gradually, with the growth of our perception capacity, we can perceive it. The growth of the capacity to perceive the light of the immanent spirit or the ultimate reality is spiritual growth. Holy Spirit is the subtlest of all the principles. As such, it is present everywhere. It acts upon the subtlest of our faculties, i.e. intellect, wisdom or the superior reason. It is considered as the source of love, life and compassion in all beings as it is present to guide the intellect of all without any exception. Love and Holy Spirit connect all beings and make for the unity of all. An act of selfless love unifies as opposed to an act of pure selfishness that does nothing but divide. Intellect in the light of the ultimate reality is called the superior reason as compared to the ego logic which is called the inferior reason, because the former is the unifying faculty and it elevates humankind towards divinity.

### 9.3 Inner Conflicts and Negotiation

The sensory faculty, being closest to the physical body, is charged primarily with looking after its interests. The ego attempts to satisfy the bodily appetites negotiating between the appetites and the individual environment. It serves the selfish interest of the individual on one side while protecting the interest of the society on the other. It must satisfy the legal, moral and religious norms of the society in which the individual lives as it serves the selfish interest of the individual. In so doing it delves into the storehouse of all of the individual's learning experiences which, as noted above, are primarily in

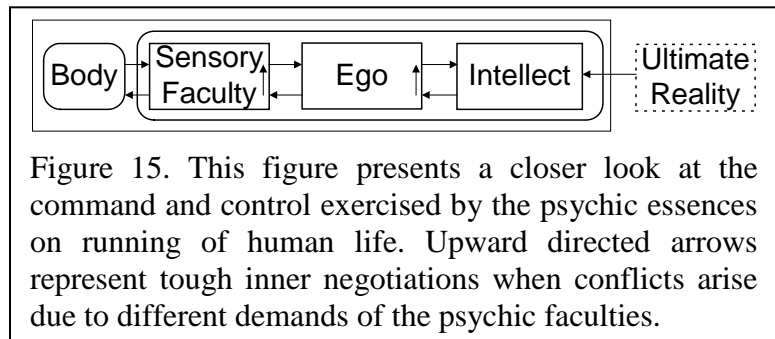


Figure 15. This figure presents a closer look at the command and control exercised by the psychic essences on running of human life. Upward directed arrows represent tough inner negotiations when conflicts arise due to different demands of the psychic faculties.

the unconscious or subconscious domain. The learning experiences define the tendencies, hidden agendas, and conscious desires of the individual that the ego uses to shape the individual will.

The intellect is charged with the responsibility of decision making taking into account the worldly inputs from the senses and the ego on one side and the light of the ultimate reality on the other. The ultimate reality is the only force uniting all beings in the universe. The senses protect the narrow bodily interest of the individual, the ego at best protects the individual's society and the immanent ultimate reality provides the light of love to the intellect to protect humanity and the universe from individuals and societies. The light of the ultimate reality provides the intellect complete freedom to pay heed to it in decision making, or to ignore it completely. In case the intellect is disposed to the light of the ultimate reality, it provides the intellect the strength necessary to make its decision stick in the face of arguments of the ego on its own behalf or on behalf of the sensory faculty.

The conflicting interests give rise to negotiations at the interfaces of the faculties; see Figure 15. In case the ego does not like a decision of the intellect, it sends it back for reconsideration, thus starting a round of negotiations until the negotiated decision is acceptable to the ego. Similarly, in case the senses do not like a decision of presented to them by the ego, they send it back for reconsideration, thus starting a round of negotiations until the negotiated decision is acceptable to the sensory faculty.

These negotiations present a potential of the senses or the ego self virtually taking over the role of the decision maker in running human lives with consequent results. Raw selfishness reigns supreme in the former case, and selfishness under societal covers or genuine but narrow communal concerns in the latter. In either case, humanity and universality suffer.

#### 9.4 Human Conscience

When our senses overpower us and we do something against the learnt mores of the society, we feel an inner voice of conscience telling us we stepped out of the bounds of our ego selves resulting in a sense of guilt. This is voice of human conscience at level 1; see Figure 16 which is a natural system of keeping us within the norms of our societies, religions, families, communities and nations. We have to learn to rethink our behavior and control our appetites to respect social mores of behavior failing which we become slaves of our appetites and habitually violate family values, societal laws, moral codes, etc. turning us into petty criminals or anti-social beings.

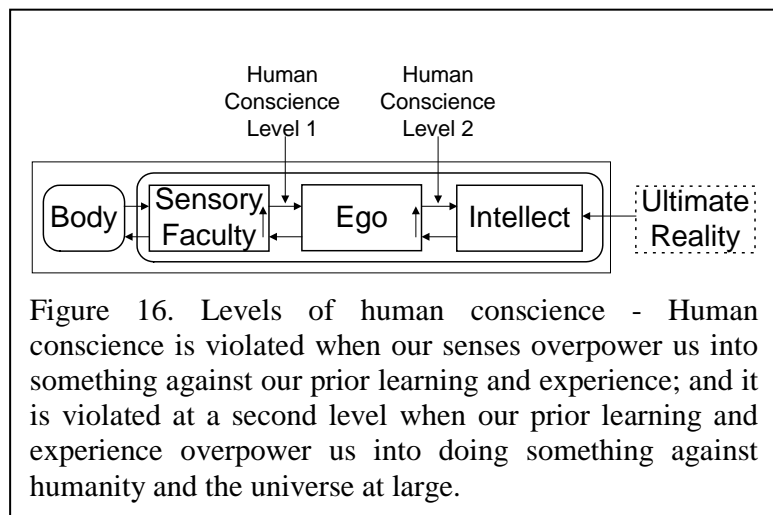


Figure 16. Levels of human conscience - Human conscience is violated when our senses overpower us into something against our prior learning and experience; and it is violated at a second level when our prior learning and experience overpower us into doing something against humanity and the universe at large.

When our prior learning including our beliefs, our learnt mores of morality, our love for our family, community or country, etc. overpowers us into doing something in violation of the oneness of all beings through the oneness of our underlying reality, once again our conscience creates a feeling of guilt in us. This is human conscience at level 2; see Figure 16. We must take

charge of our ego by rethinking our learnt mores of morality, our belief system, the way we understand our religion, or the way we relate with our societies, nation, etc., failing which we engage in selfishness under cover of morality and society at best or crimes against humanity and the universe at large for the sake of our societies, communities, religions, nations, etc. at worst.

### 9.5 Kingdom of God Within

Adult humans are characterized by the three inner mental faculties participating in resolving life issues. The ego self and the sensory faculty invariably question the decisions of the intellect in the light of the immanent reality because of their conflicting standpoints. The tough negotiating and conflicts between them are referred to as inner crusade in

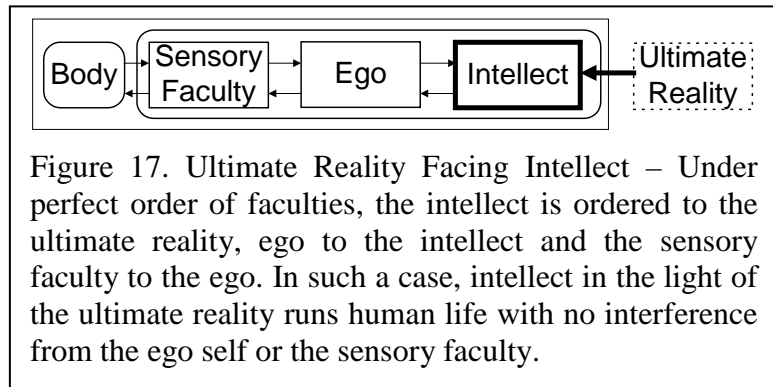


Figure 17. Ultimate Reality Facing Intellect – Under perfect order of faculties, the intellect is ordered to the ultimate reality, ego to the intellect and the sensory faculty to the ego. In such a case, intellect in the light of the ultimate reality runs human life with no interference from the ego self or the sensory faculty.

Christian terminology and *jihad* in Islamic. One has to work constantly to silence the inner conflicts by ordering the sensory faculty to the ego self and the ego self to the intellect which lives naturally in the light of the ultimate reality if left alone by the other two faculties; see Figure 17. That is the perfect ordering of faculties and the maximal spiritual growth achievable by humankind. It requires complete transcendence of human condition to enter a state of a mystical unity of human reason with the reason of love that can be ascribed only to the ultimate reality immanent in all of us. The term *yoga* describes this mystical unity. The three human faculties act in unison in the light of the Holy Spirit. Identification merely with the body as the defining sense of self limits the potential to love. With perfect ordering of the faculties, this body identification is replaced with the realization of the ultimate reality as one’s deepest essence or one’s real self establishing what has been referred to as the kingdom of God within. In the kingdom of God within, only God reigns supreme and looks after the individual interest as it does for the rest of its creation.

Ibn Arabi calls this condition *fana*, the extinction of one’s creaturely self. When the creature exists *Allah* does not, and only *Allah* exists when the creature ceases to exist. You have to become *Allah* to see *Allah* and to become *Allah*, simply kill the creature implying surrender of the ego self and the senses to the will of *Allah* as expressed through the intellect enlightened by the ultimate reality – a condition Buddhists call Buddha-hood.

The person who has achieved this union sees the creation as one as if seen through the eyes of the ultimate reality. The primary motivation and driver for life then is love of all beings in the universe in a unity of existence in the ultimate reality. This behavior of the intellect then is in the realm of multiple possibilities akin to that of the ultimate reality. Currently, this state is known as the state of the likes of accomplished saints, prophets, sheikhs, gurus, and buddhas. It is the state which represents the ideal achievable by all humans because the ultimate reality, being immanent in all of us, is equally accessible to all of us.

Human effort is necessary for the achievement of this ideal. We have to learn to keep our senses sharp and to use them primarily as tools of knowledge and understanding instead of using them primarily as tools of sense gratification. The storehouse of experience we gain as our ego self is

then more receptive to the ideas of oneness, love and compassion that are the hallmarks of our shared reality. Ego then is sublime and offers real freedom of choice instead of enslaving one to sense gratification and narrow self-related pursuits. This kind of ego is more likely to submit to the will of intellect in the light of the ultimate reality. What the humanity needs today is education and training in developing the ability to perceive our oneness through the oneness of our ground of being.

### 9.6 Strong Ego

Ego is comprised of the storehouse of unconscious and conscious worldly experience through the senses. It includes all learning through the civilizing efforts of the society. As a result, it contains all hidden and conscious agendas of the individual and his/her family, society, community, religion and nation.

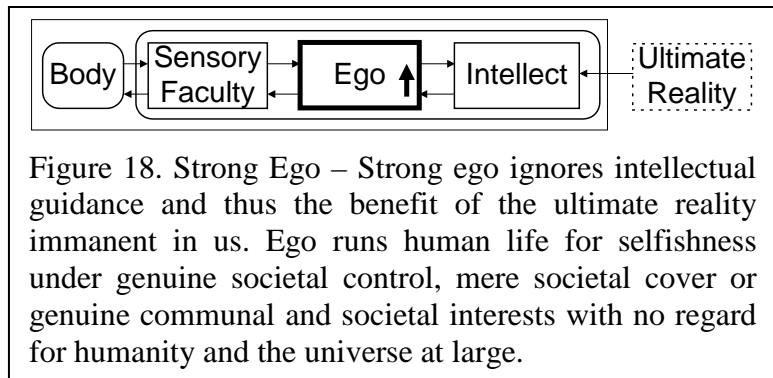


Figure 18. Strong Ego – Strong ego ignores intellectual guidance and thus the benefit of the ultimate reality immanent in us. Ego runs human life for selfishness under genuine societal control, mere societal cover or genuine communal and societal interests with no regard for humanity and the universe at large.

When human ego is too strong, it can take over decision making role of the intellect whose reasoning in the light of the ultimate reality thus becomes unavailable; see Figure 18. Life decisions are then made by the ego for genuine societal values and interests at best or for individual selfishness in this life or the next under societal cover at worst. Humanity at large and the rest of the universe do not figure at all in such decision making for running human lives.

Education in perceiving the oneness of our underlying reality is absolutely necessary for countering the growth of strong and divisive egos. In the past, such an education was perhaps considered irrelevant because most of humanity lived in homogenous societies. Today that is not the case. We live in pluralistic and democratic societies. In addition, we have the benefits of modern transportation and communication that have reduced the whole world to a global village. We need mass education to raise deep human consciousness about celebrating our differences in the light of our underlying oneness or else risk total annihilation of the global village. The urgency of this need cannot be overstated.

### 9.7 Strong Sensory Faculty

Sensory faculty is primarily responsible for sense gratification of the physical body. When it is strong, it is capable of ignoring the moderating effects of any efforts of the family and the society along with similar effects of the light of the intellect; see Figure 19. In that case, one's life is run practically by this faculty alone, turning one into a self-centered person with no regard for others whatsoever.

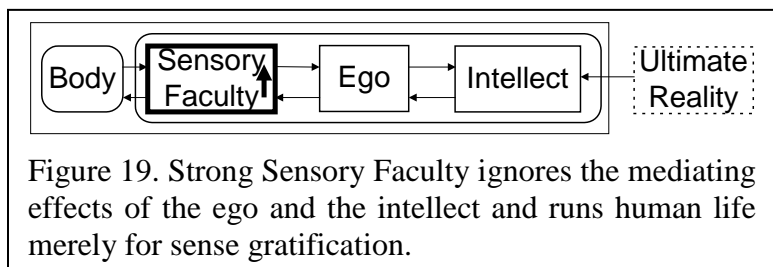


Figure 19. Strong Sensory Faculty ignores the mediating effects of the ego and the intellect and runs human life merely for sense gratification.

A person with this kind of mentality may not be a big danger to humanity. Such a person is limited to being a common criminal working primarily for sense gratification and his/her actions can at most be harmful to some of his/her victims. Is it not ironic that all our educational efforts are focused on the prevention of harmful effects of such a mentality while we do not systematically educate human beings to prevent big crimes against humanity and the universe as a whole?

## **10 Directions in Spiritual Education (Is it necessary?)**

Our tri-partite existence as per the suggested model and the initial limitations of our inner capacities point the following directions in spiritual education:

1. The goal of spiritual education must be to move us from the perception of finite and separate bodily existence at birth to the perception of the underlying unity through the shared ultimate reality that we all manifest.
2. Moral education should be based on the ethic of our underlying unity. Good is what makes for the underlying unity; and that which promotes division negative and evil.
3. Our material and mental existence is held together by the underlying spirit, the source of life and consciousness defined as the capacity to know, understand and love. Our material bodies and our minds are manifestation of energy, the capacity to do work. Meaning and goal of human life lie in service through work with knowledge, understanding and love. The foremost use of the mental and physical energy then is in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding to enable unconditional love and service in the perception of undifferentiated reality.
4. Our bodies are the abode of the spirit. We must learn the importance of keeping them healthy and fit to serve the pursuit of knowledge, understanding and love. Similarly, our senses are the gateways of knowledge. We must learn the importance of keeping them sharp and eager to learn about our underlying unity using direct experience at all times.
5. We must emphasize the pursuit of sense experience and pleasures in a way that is conducive to the perception of our underlying unity and underplay exploitative experience and enjoyment of sensuality as it divisive in nature.
6. Spiritual education must aim to enable us to order our senses to the ego, the ego to the intellect, and the intellect to the light of the ultimate reality. It must strengthen the intellect to perceive our underlying unity and guide our body and mind into service of the undifferentiated unity of existence.
7. Understanding is a lifelong process that works through insight. Cognitive learning must be taken deep into consciousness with insight. We must learn practical methodologies to enable insight into our oneness on a continuous basis. Understanding through such insight is transformative and changes us from insight out.

## **11 Conclusions**

Human behavior spans from unbounded love and unity in the undifferentiated ultimate domain on one side to extreme hatred and division in the differentiated relative on the other. The purpose of this article was to study possible models of the “human command-and-control structures” to understand the whole spectrum of the observed behavior.



A purely psychological model of Sigmund Freud is seen as inadequate since it does not offer freedom to human minds of achieving a transcendent state of unconditioned love and compassion enabling human beings to love their neighbors “as thyself”. Nor does it adequately explain the behavior of an extremist sacrifices his/her life and that of countless others in crimes against humanity in the name of “divine justice”. It may however, adequately explain the behavior of majority of humanity as it mediates between sense appetites and societal norms justifying its use in psychotherapy on statistical grounds, the use for which it was originally intended.

This article proposes a psycho-spiritual model based upon a synthesis of the world wisdom and spiritual traditions. Such a model is in harmony with modern science, and it seems to better reflect the entire spectrum of human cognition, worldviews, concerns, values, and behavior.

This article discusses such a model, looks at its implications, its relationship with scientific thinking and its relationships with the underlying foundations in the different spiritual and wisdom traditions.

The proposed model guides us to define spiritual education to enable us to have the perception of our underlying reality, thus enabling humanity to feel our inherent oneness and to live in harmony with each other in one human family as part of the global community that has now become a global village.

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