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The Way of Being

#### Wide-angle view

Experience and being are the mutual essence of the world.

Experience is conscious awareness in all its higher and elementary forms. The measure of experience is experience; thus, experience is the place of meaning, knowledge, and intrinsic and instrumental realization. Thus Being (that which is) is experiential and has two sides, ‘experience of’ and ‘the experienced’ (pure experience is ‘experience of’ in the case that ‘the experienced’ is empty).

The world is a field of being—of form and change.

Change is necessary to experience; the form of experience is body; and being (body) is always at least primitively experiential—actually, or potentially. The universe is a field of being (and relation and change). That is, no mind without body and no body without mind.

The universe is the greatest possible or ultimate. Individuals inherit the power of the universe. There are paths to realization of the ultimate.

The universe Individual beings (persons, individuals) are elements of the field. The universe has identity and is the greatest possible—all possible beings are realized. Individuals inherit this power, which is realized in individuals merging as the universe in its ultimate power. There are intelligent, effective, enlightened paths to the ultimate. There is a problem of pain. Its resolution is not in eliminating pain but the dual of its therapeutic address and being on a path (being on a path is therapeutic). The path is the destination and the way.

Let us now elaborate the wide-angle view.

#### Our world is part of the one and greatest possible universe

A being is that which exists. Being is existence.

*An account of knowledge of beings*. Experience is phenomenal awareness in all its forms. There is experience of experience and experience as if of a world of self, others, and environment. Two consistent interpretations of the as if side are (i) that the as if is real (ii) that the world is a field of being and experience with individuals in an environment of a lesser degree of experientiality. These interpretations are consistent with experience and one another, the first is a special case of the second which is most inclusive, the first is untenable if it is a strictly material interpretation of our world but tenable as monist. Over and above pure experience, there is ‘experience of’ and ‘the experienced’ (pure experience may be seen as ‘experience of’ the ‘internal’ realm of an organism). It is possible that the experienced is illusory, but when it is not, the experienced is said to exist.

*A more detailed account of being*. A being is that which exists—i.e., to which some form of the verb to be (e.g., ‘is’), temporal or trans-temporal, validly applies. Being is existence. The power of the concept of being begins with the fact that as foundation it does not need to refer to another datum—it avoids the problems of substance and infinite regress. But can it be truly foundational? As developed in the following paragraphs, the concept of being enables clear conceptions of universe and the void and so (i) of the power of the universe and (ii) grounding of knowledge and action in being—and experience.

*The universe and the void*. The universe and the void are all being and the nil being, respectively. The universe and the void exist. There are no laws in the void and therefore every possible being emerges from the void.

*The universe is the greatest possible*.

The italicized assertion above is named ‘the fundamental principle of metaphysics’. It is implied by existence of the void. It says that in the greatest consistent sense of possibility, all possible beings are realized.

The principle implies that the universe contains the good, the best, and enlightened enjoyment; and that there are also evil, and pain. The universe is not entirely good or joyous.

The universe is the only world, for if there were another the universe would not be the greatest possible

#### Consequences—the individual inherits the power of the universe

The universe has identity.

The universe and its identity are limitless in extension, duration, variety, and peak and dissolution of being.

Individuals inherit this power.

*How do individuals realize the power*? They do so in merging with one another, if not in our cosmos, then in the dispositions of the universe and across the limitlessness of extension and duration. Explanation of realization is continued in discussing experience, below.

#### Paths to the ultimate

There are intelligent, effective, and paths of enlightened enjoyment to the ultimate.

The path is the destination and the way.

If enjoyment is a value, it is imperative to be on a path that learns from community but also expresses one’s learning.

#### The problem of pain

There is a critical problem of pain and lack of security.

Their proper address is twofold—the better therapies of society *and* being on a path.

*Path and therapy may overlap and interact*. The best therapy is direct address individually and communally together with being on a path. Being on a path has therapeutic value. In a path, there are good balances between being in, accepting, and learning from the moment and looking beyond the here and now to the world and to the limitlessness of all extension and duration.

#### Experience is the place and instrument of realization

The individual as individual does not get outside their own experience

That is because the measure of an individual’s experience is their further experience.

In merging of individuals, individuals get outside their experience; but still being does not get outside all experience.

*Does the foregoing say that perception creates being*? *Is it asserting a kind of substance idealism*? This not to say that experience creates being but that experience (experiencing) and being are one. Further, this is not an idealism, e.g. “ideas and only ideas are real”.

Rather, that we do not get outside experience does not make the body or the world either not real or really kinds of idea. Instead it has the interpretation, that experience and experienced—mind and body are one and same; there is no mind without body—body is the form of mind, no body without mind—mind is the relationality and processing of body. Can there be a mind without a body or a body without a mind? Body—or part of it—is the form of mind, so no mind without body. Is there body without mind? Clearly, bulk matter as in clay, rocks, and rivers does not have feeling and consciousness as we do. But in a monist world, matter—body—must have a primitive to feeling that, in organisms, is constitutive of higher feeling. In the universe at large, which, from the fundamental principle cannot be substance in the classical sense at all, form need not have an actual primitive to feeling. But there must somewhere be a potential primitive. Where? On general grounds we can say no more than ‘somewhere’. However, from the fundamental principle, we may say ‘everywhere’. Where there is mind, there is form, which is body or matter; in a monist world, form has a primitive to mind; otherwise form has a potential primitive to mind. The universe may be seen to be a field of being and experience.

Therefore, in the immediately following paragraphs one may read ‘experience’ as experience-in-its-most-expansive-sense, or, equally, as mind-body, and as including selves-in-the-world.

A person is a mind-body process and agent in relation with the world which includes the person. It is important that a person is a mind-body and not a mind and body; and mind is not understood in a restrictive sense but in the expansive sense that includes perception, feeling, thought, and intention (and therefore will and choice)—where some people emphasize mind as mind-heart, here heart is already an aspect of mind.

*How may the interpretation above be used to show merging of individuals in and as peak being*? In the greatest interpretation above, the universe is a field of being and experience; individuals are centers of being and experience, and the environment is a region of low to nil but not null experientiality. Merging is a process of transaction in the universe.

Experience is critical and foundational in realization as subject, object, and means.

*How is experience foundational*? Experience is foundational and grounding in two ways. The first was tacit in defining and employing the concepts of universe and void above. A second is in the pragmatic and imprecise human traditions of knowledge and action. Even though imprecise by traditional criteria, they are instrumental in realization. Therefore, the dual system of ideal knowledge from the fundamental principle joined to what is valid in tradition, constitute a system of realization of the ultimate. In terms of the revealed value of realization, the dual system is perfect and named the real metaphysics.

There are two sides to deploying experience. On the subject side, realization occurs within and of experience.

On the object side, realization is of the world—natural, social, and the unknown relative to a civilization.

All these are elements of realization.

#### Dimensions of realization

From the truth of the real metaphysics, it transcends and integrates the conventional secular-universal divide.

Given that the real metaphysics is an ultimate truth—not a speculative or dogmatic belief—it ought to inform all areas of life. It ought to weave together, to cross the divide between the secular, understood conventionally, and the universal (universal’ is preferred to ‘transsecular’ as the latter suggests a divide and a speculative region beyond the immediate).

The real metaphysics will inform the individual in their everyday and universal action and perspective, which will be a balance between living in moment and realization of the ultimate.

#### Path templates

An [everyday template](everyday%20template.pdf) reflects this balance and incorporates some elements of traditional pathways. The template, which is based in experience, is generic and adaptable to particular circumstances. Here is an outline of the template—

1. Rise early, dedicate to, and affirm the way. Morning meal.
2. Meditative review of the way, life, the day—infusion with mindfulness, projects, and tasks.
3. Realization—work, relationships, yoga and meditation practice and action, engagement in the world.
4. Tasks. Daily and long term. Attitude—mindfulness, yoga in action. Midday meal.
5. Physical activity, exploration of nature and culture for experience and inspiration; art, photography.
6. Evening—rest, renewal, review, meditation and realization, network, community, tasks, supper, preparation-dedication for the next day and future. Sleep early

Public life ought to integrate the common or secular world, i.e. as normative and valid, and the universal and ultimate (this will naturally be delicate). The ultimate will inform the common, and the common will serve both common and ultimate ends.

Intrinsic realization, addressed in the [everyday template](everyday%20template.pdf), is that of the individual (mind-body) and their trajectory.

Civilization, too, has a trajectory of realization, which integrates the secular and the ultimate. Immediate life and institutions include persons, groups, society, politics, economics, technology, and the growth and lateral and vertical communication of knowledge; these elements are instrumental. In a larger perspective, civilization may progress from cosmos, to cosmos, with the ultimate universe as a destination along the way.

The dimensions of world or categories of being are real and pragmatic.

1. The real is (i) pure or being itself as being-experience (mind-body) as experience itself (pure concept), ‘experience of’ (concept), and ‘the experienced’ (‘object’) and (ii) real—the universe as a field of being-form informing formation-change experience (via relation, which is part of form).
2. Pragmatic—i.e. instrumental if incomplete and imprecise—nature (elementary or physical, complex including the living, and experiential or mind), civilization ([institutions and technology](#institutions)), [persons](#person) (mind-body agents, individuals), and the universal (lying beyond our experience of the nature, civilization, person, and including the unknown).

A [universal template](universal%20template.pdf) weaves together the intrinsic and the instrumental. The template is generic over the foregoing intrinsic and instrumental elements, and is customizable to particular situations, interests, and personality orientations.

Whereas the everyday template is arranged by phases of a day, the universal template is arranged by phases of personal and social action. Here is an outline of the universal template—

1. Being in the world, community, retreat.
2. Ideas—reflection and investigation of the real metaphysics and its real and pragmatic divisions; experience, reason, and action.
3. Becoming—[nature](../resources/system%20of%20human%20knowledge%2C%20reason%2C%20practice%2C%20and%20action.html#nature_as_ground) as catalyst to the real, [‘Beyul’](../resources/system%20of%20human%20knowledge%2C%20reason%2C%20practice%2C%20and%20action.html#nature_as_ground) (traditional Tibetan term for and practice of nature travel as journey in the real).
4. Becoming—Civilization as vehicle and path to the real. Instrumental and immersive transformation of civilization and its [institutions](#institutions).
5. Becoming—artifact, technology, civilizing-populating the universe, artificial-organic being interaction and syntheses.
6. Becoming—the universal, the common way to peak being, via immersion in and emergence from the [dispositions](#dispositions) of the universe, across cosmological systems.
7. Being in the universe—realizing peak being in this life, which is possible and therefore real (per the real metaphysics); means—the foregoing elements of the universal template.