

Thursday, July 28

Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Individuated entities of knowing: Part VI

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 28, 2005 02:38AM (EDT)

Individuated entities of knowing: Part VII

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[050716 djs] Regarding: **We hear the ring tone; that is our experience of our internal reality, it is our perception, it arises and passes away.** I can understand how it is the physical telephone ring arises and passes away since the physical is but a temporary existence, since the physical had a 'beginning' and thus most probably has 'an end', but I do not understand how it is that the self awareness regarding the experiencing of the telephone ringing also arises and passes away.

If self awareness is non-physical in nature and if time is an innate characteristic of the physical, Einstein, then if and when the physical 'ends' time ends and with the end of the physical, it would appear the non-physical, self awareness, would, by definition, remain and therefore the self awareness of one's experiencing the telephone ring would remain.

This thought process would seem to suggest your statement, '**... it is our perception, it arises and passes away.**' is illogical.

Can you help me understand the error of my thinking?

[050717 cg] **I understand your argument leads you to think that "the self awareness of one's experiencing the telephone ring would remain." I understand you to mean that our perceptions (or memories of perceptions?) exist forever within our selves; i.e., our eternal souls are, like sacks, filled with our experience.**

While I think your argument is flawed, there is a way that I can understand how (without the attribute "eternal") 'our souls are filled with our experience' is an expression of truth. I experience each separate moment and I may name the flow of my experiences my "soul". (Alternatively, I may name that which experiences the present my "soul".)

[050727 djs] Regarding: **'I understand you to mean that our perceptions (or memories of perceptions?) exist forever within our selves; i.e., our eternal souls are, like sacks, filled with our experience.'** You are partially correct. Perhaps it would help for me to use your analogy of the soul being a form of 'sack'. The 'sack'/soul contains the experience, simultaneously the sack is more than just a 'container'. The soul/'sack' is the ability to know, is the ability to summarize the experiences into a unique form of perception defined by 1. the unique summation of experiencing through traveling the physical, which begins at zero and ends with the last experience of the physical journey, and 2. the unique 'personality' of that particular unique 'soul' to process and then form a unique spirit through the process of the mixing of experiencing with the unique ability

to perceive.

In short the soul acts as the ‘sack’ capable of uniquely processing experiencing. In short the ‘sack’ is filled with unique experiencing from which a unique spirit emerges through a processing conducted by the soul. I suppose one could say it is like baking a cake, water is added to the mix forming a unique solution which in turn is baked forming something entirely different from the original mix.

The idea that this ‘spirit’, formed through a unique soul processing a set of unique experiencing, eventually could simply cease to be, is what I perceive to be a loss of great magnitude.

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[050711 djs continues] To state unequivocally, supported by scientific validation - religious history - and philosophical dialectic, that 'multiplicity/individuality exists universally and interacts with the whole' is to state a 'universal absolute truth'.

[050712 cg] So you say.

[050716 djs] It is not 'I' that says it, it is humanity, to the best of its ability, that says it.

[050717 cg] If you are speaking for humanity, then I am outside of humanity.

[050727 djs]Regarding: If you are speaking for humanity, then I am outside of humanity. We are all ‘outside’ humanity yet we are all ‘inside’ humanity. We are all individually unique as opposed to being a ‘colony’ organism. In a society of unique individuals, humanity is simply a ‘color’ of the summation of human action, a historical vector of past action leading to and through present action pointing towards future action.

We cannot control past action nor can we control present action (the present does not exist in the physical universe). We can only control what our future action will be and thus we have the ability to shift the historical vector of human action. This is where our responsibility lies. This is what ‘free will’ is all about.

It is my ‘belief’ that the human historical vector of action cannot be consciously shifted if we do not recognize it, understand where it is pointing, and consciously understand how we can alter the vector’s direction. In addition, it is my ‘belief’ that once we consciously understand how to alter the vector’s direction, the direction will not automatically change, the change will only occur should we take the action needed to make it do so.

It is also my ‘belief’ that this historical vector can only be consciously shifted if we expand our understanding of reality for it is my opinion that humanity, as opposed to the individual, defines

itself in terms of its understanding of Reality.

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[050716 djs] Regarding: What would your soul experience when we shook hands and I said, "Hello,"?

Regarding: Would your soul feel my warm hand in yours?

Regarding: Would your soul see me?

Regarding: Would your soul hear me say, "Hello,"?

Regarding: Would your soul experience these perceptions?

I do not mean to 'avoid' the issues but I am not suggesting that I am an expert in understanding the details which exist regarding the spirit, the soul, the physical body, the physical universe, and total consciousness. There are others who could better answer your specific questions. You might begin by looking to the Theosophy Society, the Rosicrucians, etc.

For me to get into all the minutia is to suggest I am an expert in the subject.

I am simply stating that 'truth' exists and the basic truths are: G-d exists, the individual exists, the physical exists, and nothingness exists. I am stating that 'nothing, that exists, is lost, ceases to be. I am stating that all that exists not only exists but has functionality for if what exists has no functionality/meaning it does not exist. I am stating that all that exists, exists in a symbiotic relationship with all else that exists. I am stating that we are capable of understanding what it is we are capable of purporting or questioning, namely: Where are we? What are we? Why do we exist? From where did I come? To where will I go? Why am I responsible for my actions? Do I have free will? Is G-d powerful enough and knowledgeable enough to 'grow' in Its very power and knowledge? What role do I play in G-d's growth should G-d in fact grow? Etc.

It is these base questions for which I feel I have as much expertise as anyone, as opposed to having an expertise dealing with the questions the details details, intricacies, and minutia which surrounds every aspect of the spirit, soul, mind, and body. I am a metaphysicist not a biologist, physicist, or chemist. I am a metaphysicist not a priest, rabbi, or cleric. I am a metaphysician not an epistemologist, modal logician, or epiphenomenalist.

My apologies, I wish I could be more for you.

[050717 cg] **There is no need to apologize. But I do wonder how you create a metaphysical model of reality that includes an eternal soul yet you find describing the functioning of the soul as "details, intricacies, and minutia". We may or may not have direct experience of G-d, the physical, or "the nothingness of non-existence", but our souls are immediately accessible to us because our souls are us, so we are each 'the expert' regarding our soul.**

[050727 djs] **There are two observational, literally 'observational', extremes one can take when discussing metaphysical issues.**

There is the 'micro' metaphysical discussion emanating from the point of the individual, in such a case, issues regarding the individual, are not spoken of in terms of 'details', 'intricacies', and 'minutia', for the issues are personal in nature since we are each unique individuals and thus unique in our individuality. Issues, once taken personally, are no longer viewed by the individuals as being 'simply' this or 'simply' that for the issues become 'our issues', become, as I said, personal.

Then there is the 'macro' metaphysical discussion emanating from the point of The Whole, in such a case, issues regarding the individual, are spoken of in terms of 'details', 'intricacies', and 'minutia', for the individual, although significant, is 'a minutia', is an 'intricacy', is part of 'the detail'.

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Wednesday, July 27

 **Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Understanding - Step 1**

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 27, 2005 12:06AM (EDT)

Understanding - Step 1

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[050716 djs] **Regarding: Perhaps, we can agree that there is the truth, "G-d exists", that does not depend on us or any thing. I like your process, establishing what it is we can agree upon but I disagree with your supposition. Perhaps we can begin by stepping back a little and simplify what it is we agree upon and then proceed from there.**

May I suggest we begin with your statement, break it down into its fundamental elements, and then discuss each in order:

- 1. Truth exists.**
- 2. G-d exists**
- 3. G-d is that which does not depend on us or anything.**

I have no problems using the three as a beginning point. Seeing your statement dissected into its components would you like to begin here or would you like to reorder and/or change the three? If you have nothing to add, change, or discuss, I have some issues regarding the above but I will await your initiative.

[050717 cg] Let's simplify. I agree:

- 1. G-d exists.**
- 2. G-d is that which does not depend on us or anything.**

If you agree, I'm ready for your issues.

[050726 djs] As I stated 050716: 'I have some issues regarding the above but I will await your initiative.' So now I will say it: I have an issue with both the first and second statements.

Regarding: 'G-d exists.' Although I personally agree with the first statement, I would suggest the statement cannot stand alone if it is to be anything other than a statement of personal belief, a personal religion.

[Personal thoughts: Even Euclid began his establishment of Geometry with understanding that the very first statement of Geometry is based upon a 'common agreement', based upon a consensus if you will, is in fact a consensually agreed upon definition, namely: Definition 1: 'A point is that which has no part.'

It is from a willingness 'to agree' that mathematicians were then able to evolve an interesting and phenomenally useful train of thought which we call 'plane geometry'.

It is from the first statement of definition that Euclid's 13 books, Archimedes' 13 most notorious works of geometry, and Apollonius' three books addressing issues of conics all evolved. If mathematicians had not been willing to agree upon a first statement, no geometry would have evolved.

Having made the above observation, it would appear logical that to begin as Euclid began could potentially produce a broader understanding of reality. As such it would appear we should begin with a definition of 'G-d' upon which we can both agree.

Regarding: 'G-d is that which does not depend on us or anything.' Why is it that humans make the assumption that God does not depend upon us or anything?

The question is simply a rhetorical statement of wonderment.

My thinking leads me to the conclusion that we not forget the statement but rather that we address the statement after we 'define' 'G-d'.

Verbiage, verbiage, verbiage, I apologize for the verbiage.

Let me get back on track.]

Since this site is labeled as, Adding reason to faith', I have no choice but to ask:

1. Regarding your statement, '**G-d exists.**': What possible reason could you have for making such a statement?
2. Regarding your statement, '**G-d exists.**': What do you mean by 'G-d'? Define 'G-d'.

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Tuesday, July 26

 Human Issues - Science: The Universe - Purpose of the Universe

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 26, 2005 12:01AM (EDT)

The Universe – Purpose of the Universe

Question

If symbiotic panentheism is not the model describing reality than what is the model that can do so?

Introduction

However if we do discover a complete theory, it should in time be understandable in broad principle by everyone, not just a few scientists. Then we shall all, philosophers, scientists, and just ordinary people, be able to take part in the discussion of the question of why it is that the universe and we exist. (Hawking, Stephen W. 1988, A Brief History of Time, Bantam Books, p. 175.)

Analysis

Symbiotic panentheism is composed of two parts: Panentheism – a description of the size of reality and Symbiosis – a description of the action taking place within the whole of reality. Until the advent of symbiotic panentheism (Shepard, Daniel J, The War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception, Vol. II, Tractate 12: Symbiotic Panentheism, Global Academic Publishing, Binghamton University SUNY, Binghamton, New York) no rational complete theory regarding the structure of reality has been put forward which provides the rationality necessary to satisfactorily resolve religious variance, philosophical paradoxes, and scientific dilemmas.

Panentheism has been with us for a long time. Panentheism alone, however, describes what reality

is but lacks the description regarding the interactions occurring within reality. Panentheism describes reality as being the whole of itself – everything is ‘within’ the whole. All the parts make up the whole. The ‘one’ is the sum of its parts. Therefore there are two aspects of reality:

The whole: singularity/oneness
The parts: multiplicity/Individuality

Remarks

The symbiosis aspect of symbiotic panentheism provides the understanding regarding the interactivity, which exists within reality. The symbiosis provides the rationality needed to understand the ‘purpose’ of the parts found within the whole of reality to the whole itself as well as the purpose for the whole of reality to the parts found within the itself, found within the whole.

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Monday, July 25

 [Human Issues - Philosophy: Significance - Human](#)

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 25, 2005 01:36AM (EDT)

Significance – Human

Question

If symbiotic panentheism is not the answer to the question: What possible significance could an existence as ‘small’ as the individual have to something as ‘large’ as the whole of reality, then what is the answer?

If a seventh grade mathematics/science teacher working independently from academia is capable of developing a metaphysical system capable of establishing a rational significance regarding the individual, be it human or some other life form located within ‘any’ universe, why do modern day metaphysicists ignore perhaps the most important question facing our specie?

Introduction

The modern condition was that man knew he was the culmination of evolution – science told him so – but also knew that ‘tomorrow he will be surpassed,’ which made life ‘solitary, cold, and frightening. (Watson, Peter, The Modern Mind, Harper Collins Publishers, 2001, p 274.)

Analysis

Man’s, the individual’s, sense of eventually being ‘surpassed’ leads to the sense of depressive submission to fate. Such a state of mind, the state of mind that one is only temporarily important,

is a state of mind, a state of perception, generated by a void placed into society by the shirking of responsibility on the part the metaphysicist.

Past metaphysicists have concluded that understanding the significance of the individual in terms of the whole of existence is beyond the abilities of the/any individual, and as such metaphysicists have either concluded that the individual has no significance ‘within’ the infinite expansiveness of the whole of reality or that the significance of the individual is, ‘relative to’ the ‘size’ of reality, insignificance.

The reasonableness of such arguments, the arguments that relatively speaking we are both too impotent and too small to understand our significance within the whole of reality, and/or relatively too finite to have any infinite impact upon an existence as ‘big’ as reality, appears inconceivably disputable. Having succumbed to appearances, both metaphysics and the metaphysicists have concluded the understanding of individual purpose became an irrational realm of study. As such modern day metaphysicists worldwide abandoned humanity’s holy grail of philosophy, namely: What is the significance of a man’s life. The result has been the subconscious rejection of altruism on the part of the masses.

Modern day philosophy, lead by modern day philosophers, is at fault for such a shameful state of human despair.

Remarks

Appearances, however, are deceiving, and those that succumb to the concept of our being limited are destined to live with such limits. If one rejects the temptation to cling to appearances and instead substitutes reason for appearances, then one eventually realizes that we, reasoning entities, are unlimited in our abilities to understand what it is we are capable of questioning. There is no denying that it may take time to develop an understanding of the questions we ask but the answers are eventually discoverable.

Symbiotic panentheism is a metaphysical model that clearly and simply describes the significance of the individual. The individual is intended to journey unimpeded and through such traveling, develop uniquely as a packet of unique knowing of such traveling.

It is the very process of developing uniquely that ‘adds’ to ‘the whole of knowing’ thus circumventing Nietzsche’s dilemma of ‘eternal recurrence’ and thus nullifying Nietzsche’s perception that ‘God is dead. (See: Shepard, Daniel J, The War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception, Tractate 7 The Error of Hegel, Nietzsche: God is Dead, Global Academic Publishing, Binghamton University SUNY, Binghamton, New York or see the tractate posted in the library at www.panentheism.com)

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Sunday, July 24

Human Issues - Social: Human Violence - Religious

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 24, 2005 12:01AM (EDT)

Human Violence – Religious

Question

Symbiotic panentheism's provides the rational regarding the truly amazing significance of all religions, which in turns allows the individual to become multi-religious. The question becomes: Will the smallness of individual religious leaders be capable of opening themselves up to being 'bigger' than they presently are?

Introduction

A group of about eight to 10 armed men dragged villagers out of their homes in Nadimarg in the disputed Himalayan province and shot them at close range, police and witnesses said. The dead included two children.

The victims, upper-caste Hindus known as Kashmiri Pandits, were lined up and shot outside a temple...

"The global war on terrorism will not be won until such atrocities end against all countries," Blackwell said in a statement...

The Himalayan province of Jammu-Kashmir is India's only Muslim majority state...

Suspected Islamic guerrillas have attacked Hindu villages in the past in an apparent attempt to flush out Hindus from the valley. At least 23 people were killed in a similar attack in 1998 in another Hindu village. (AP-NY-03-24-03 06227EST)

Analysis

Blackwell implies it is 'terrorism' which initiates such atrocities but Blackwell is incorrect for it is not the act of terrorism that lies at the root of the problem but rather the perceptual ideology that one religion is more correct than another.

Perceptual ideologies are an imbedded mechanism found within religions which religions use to expand their numbers in order to gain power over 'other' religions.

Religions have the perception that if other religions are not 'the' religion then they must be a 'false' religion.

Again it is the indecisiveness of philosophers, in particular the cowardly closeting of metaphysicians, which have precipitated the seemingly irresolvability of the problem. Symbiotic pantheism establishes the understanding and the rationality that the core message of all religions

is where the truth of religions lies. (Shepard, Daniel J, *Stepping Up to the Creator, Religion*, Proctor Publications, Ann Arbor, MI, USA, 1998, pp 25 – 149.) (www.panentheism.com)

Remarks

Until the multitude of individual religious factions understands how it is they are all in fact significant independent of each other, religious factions will never relinquish the silent conspiracy towards violence. It is an expanded model of reality that can provide an understanding regarding the rationality of pluralism upon which a global order of peace can be established. Symbiotic panentheism, although in an embryonic state, is a metaphysical model which expands our perception of reality by asking and answering the question? What is it the physical universe lies within? Our physical universe lies within God.

The location of the seedling can be found at www.panentheism.com.

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Saturday, July 23

Human Issues - Social: Knowledge - Facts

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 23, 2005 12:22AM (EDT)

Knowledge: Facts

Question

If a fact is ‘something having ‘real, demonstrable existence’, then where does one look to find universal ‘truths’/facts which transcend our very physical universe?

Introduction

Fact n. 1. {A reliable generality} certainty, truth, appearance, experience, matter, the very thing, not an illusion, what has really happened, something concrete, what is the case, matter of fact, hard evidence, actuality, naked truth, gospel, reality, law, basis, state of being, hard facts 2. {An individual reality} circumstance, detail, factor, case, evidence, event, action, deed, happening, occurrence, creation, conception, manifestation, being, entity, experience, affair, episode, performance, proceeding, phenomenon, incident, thing done, act, plain fact, accomplishment, accomplished fact. (Webster’s New World Thesaurus, Warner Books, revised 1990 Simon and Schuster.)

Fact: 1. Information presented as true and accurate 2. Something having real, demonstrable existence 3. Something done (American Heritage dic-tion-ar-y1973, Houghton Mifflin Company)

Analysis

Our libraries are overflowing with books presenting ‘the facts’. Our museums display humanity’s experiential facts, creative facts, and episodic facts. Our Cosmos is filled with geological, astronomical, biological, physical, mathematical, ... facts written in a form of environmental cosmic history.

In spite of all the recorded ‘facts’, ‘truths’, ‘experiences’, ‘laws’, ‘creations’, ... , which we have discovered, universal truths have as yet to be revealed to us in a manner which we have willingly embraced consensually. Ironically, the reason for our inability to ‘find’ universal truths is due to our immersing ourselves within the endless sinkhole of factual material. Finding ‘universal truths’ requires one to shuck away the awesome quantity of factual material confronting us as opposed to our obsessive attempt to absorb the exponentially increasing factual material. Finding ‘universal truths’ requires one to embrace what it this seemingly endless parade of factual material has to tell us. The whispers spoken by the ‘facts’ are clear and distinct if we are but willing to listen.

In order to ‘hear’ what it is all the ‘facts’ tell us regarding ‘universal truths’ one must recognize how ‘universal truths’ differ from physical truths. Physical truths are truths, which apply to all physical elements located within the fabric of our physical universe. An apple tree, the ocean, your physical body are three examples of just such physical elements. Universal truths are truths, which apply to all elements located within the fabric of the nonphysical. Our physical universe, other universes – physical or otherwise, individual essences are examples of just such elements.

The whispers emanating softly from the myriad of facts confronting us speak of three universal facts, universal truths which will never have a ‘real, demonstrable existence’, which will never be ‘something done (finished), which will never be presentable as ‘true’ and ‘accurate’. These three universal truths are:

You and I/the individual/the parts/the elements of the whole/multiplicity exist within the physical universe

**Our physical universe/other universes/other parts exist within a form of incorporeal fabric
There is a whole to existence/a summation to all**

The examination regarding what it is the nonphysical lies within is the subject of discussion found within The War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception, Volume III, Tractate 17: The Beginning, Introducing the problem of The End.

Remarks

We are so busy gathering the facts that we don’t have time to hear what they have to tell us.

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Friday, July 22

 Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Why build a model of reality: Introduction

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 22, 2005 12:25AM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

[Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.](#)

Why build a model of Reality: Introduction

[deleted materials ...]

[050711 djs] The model is one 'best' described through the cooperative thinking of science, religion, and philosophy. The model is one acknowledging your existing, the physical universe existing, your existing within the physical universe, an outside to the physical universe existing, and the physical universe existing inside whatever it is that lies 'outside' itself. Such an understanding leads to the question: What is it the physical lies within? The discussion would logically move along the line of: The physical must lie within what is not physical, what is not tangible. The physical would appear to lie within what is intangible. Knowing/consciousness is intangible. The physical lies within all knowing/total consciousness. We have consciousness. We therefore are of the same substance and essence as what it is the physical lies within. G-d has knowing/consciousness. We therefore are of the same substance and essence as G-d. We, each of us therefore, are due the respect due G-d.

[050714 cg] I understand your metaphysics as: We exist. The physical universe exists. We exist within the physical universe. The physical universe exists within "something" which is not the physical universe; i.e., consciousness. Therefore, the physical universe exists within the "all knowing/total consciousness". G-d has consciousness. We have consciousness. "We therefore are of the same substance and essence as G-d."

Even if there is "an outside to the physical universe existing," Reality is without an outside. Therefore, I simplify and understand: We exist. Reality exists. We exist within Reality. (Where else could we be?) We experience Reality as two aspects, an internal (mental) reality and an external (physical) reality. We are of the same substance (body) and essence (mind) as Reality. Is there a need to expand and create models and systems? I think not. We need only focus on and realize, "We therefore are of the same substance and essence as G-d."

[050720 djs] Regarding: Even if there is "an outside to the physical universe existing," Reality is without an outside. Therefore, I simplify and understand: We exist. Reality exists. We exist within Reality. (Where else could we be?) I agree.

Regarding: We experience Reality as two aspects, an internal (mental) reality and an external (physical) reality. Here I disagree. I would suggest there is the internal spirit, 'contained with the physical mind and body, contained within the physical universe, contained within total consciousness, ...

The difference in your apparent perception and mine is that you appear to perceive Reality as

being composed of the internal and the external: the ‘mental’/knowing ‘within’ the physical.

The model, symbiotic panentheism, would suggest Reality is composed of three layers, ‘the mental’/knowing ‘within’ the physical which in turn is ‘within’ the ‘mental’/knowing. As such, the physical is as much an ‘internal’ aspect of knowing as are individuated entities of knowing ‘internal’ aspects of the whole of Reality.

Regarding: We are of the same substance (body) and essence (mind) as Reality. If we simply understand reality to be: We exist. Reality exists. We exist within Reality. (Where else could we be?), people will logically/rationally make the assumption that the physical universe is what Reality is for they ‘believe’ what it is they see and they see the physical outside themselves. The product of such an understanding of reality, the resultant ethics of such a model of reality, is the establishment of physical hedonism, nihilism, and the diminished influence of altruism. The reason for such a perceptual development is that the ‘greater’ reality is perceived to be the physical for the individual is perceived to be within the physical and that’s all there is, period.

If we expand our model of reality to: ... there is the internal spirit, ‘contained with the physical mind and body, contained within the physical universe, contained within total consciousness, ..., people will logically/rationally make the assumption that the physical universe is NOT what Reality is for they perceive the physical universe being limited for they would visualize the physical universe as lying within ‘Knowing’/total consciousness and we, our essence being of the same substance and essence as what it is the physical lies within, are not, therefore physical in nature. The product of such an understanding of Reality, the resultant ethics of such a model of reality, is the establishment of altruistic hedonism, meaning/purpose, and the expansive influence of altruism.

Regarding: Is there a need to expand and create models and systems? I think not. We need only focus on and realize, "We therefore are of the same substance and essence as G-d."

To state ‘We are of the same substance and essence as G-d’ is not enough. Our society is leaning towards materialism. Spirituality is being broken asunder by the unanswered questions regarding the rationality of religion. Faith is no longer enough. Spirituality is being rejected by the countless visions of various religions assaulting one another in attempts to commit various forms of atrocities such as the acts of genocide as witnessed in Rwanda, the Congo, Cambodia, Bosnia, Tibet, ...

To state ‘we therefore are of the same substance and essence as G-d’ simply supports the materialists and atheists who profess the whole of reality as being simply the physical since, according to them, science refuses to acknowledge an ‘outside’ to the physical.

I would suggest there is a ‘need to expand and create a model of reality’ which clearly and irrefutable demonstrates knowing/conscious is the ultimate form of reality since the physical is not the outer limit but rather ‘knowing’/the intangible is the outer limit.

We are visual creatures and as such a model is an essential aspect for advancing human understanding.

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Thursday, July 21

Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Re: Self and the lack of self: Part VI

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 21, 2005 01:21PM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Re: Self and the lack of self: Part VI

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[050711 djs] Regarding: **How do you define "evil"?** I am not sure I can 'define' 'evil'. Is it important to do so? I can give what I personally perceive to be 'evil' acts, for example: Joseph E. Duncan abducted Dylan (9 years old) and Shasta (8 years old) Groene, killed their Mother, Father, and older brother and then molested them repeatedly for six weeks. In the process he killed Dylan and buried him in a park. He then continued to abuse Shasta until finally he was apprehended. This, in my opinion, is 'evil'. I could explain why it would be labeled as 'evil' within the scope of symbiotic panentheism if you felt it necessary but doing so would open up a major category of discussion.

[050714 cg] **I understand the concept of "evil" and I understand "evil acts". Does evil exist apart from the concept of "evil" or from "evil acts"; i.e., is there a thing, be it physical, consciousness, or an entity, that is evil, in and of itself?**

[050716 djs] Regarding: **'... is there a thing, be it physical, consciousness, or an entity, that is evil, in and of itself?'** The model of symbiotic panentheism would leave this question to religions to answer. As for myself, well, I do have some personal, and I will admit rather different, thoughts regarding the concept of 'evil' which are not supported by religion, science, and/or philosophy but which fall within the dynamics of symbiotic panentheism.

[deleted materials]

[050711 djs] Regarding: '**Do you really and fully merge, as in become ONE, or do you semi-merge, as in immerse, but maintain a self separated from G-d**' Both, fully merge as in become ONE AND maintain a self separated from G-d but within G-d. The concept of 'semi-merge', is not a position symbiotic panentheism would embrace.

Regarding: '**... by the 'nothingness of non-existence'?**' In terms of the 'nothingness of non-existence', I am not suggesting that this process 'is' the means by which the individual is capable of maintaining its self separate from G-d rather I am suggesting that the existence of 'nothingness of non-existence' goes a long way towards explaining just how it is individuality could maintain its 'selfness'.

[050714 cg] **OK, if this is what you want, you shall be one of the angels. I think you may tire after awhile, relax, and then...once one is fully merged with G-d, there is no 'one', so how would one be "capable of maintaining its self separate from G-d"?**

[050716 djs] Take away the physical, in short, take away time, and one obtains timelessness. In such an existence time only remains 'within' one's self and one's self remains imbedded within timelessness, imbedded within eternity, imbedded within G-d.

Since G-d is 'all knowing'/omniscient, 'our knowing' becomes fully merged with G-d or G-d would not be 'all knowing', simultaneously you remain you, thus nothing is lost.

The result of such a process is not only the existence of you and the simultaneous existence of the summation of all including you but the existence of an omnipresence knowing of both, in short the whole is greater than the sum of its parts for it knows of the whole and it simultaneously knows of the 'you'.

We have now left geometry: 'The whole is equal to the sum of its parts' and entered the realm of metaphysics: The Whole is greater than the sum of its parts. So it is the understanding of G-d expands, and expands, and finally expands into being G-d is the unmanifested.

So it is the aspects of time, past – present – future, are found within G-d as: The past is what is. The past now becomes 'the present'. The future is not to be found for it is within the physical where the future emerges as the 'past' and which then becomes 'the present', becomes the 'is' through the process of transforming the 'future' into the 'past'. It is the process of you and I, by means of traveling through the physical, where we, beings shouldered with the responsibility of free will, turn the future into the past.

One could think of it (traveling through the physical) as our existing in a 'twilight' world where there is no 'present' for as certainly as the 'present is formed' it is past history. In the 'twilight' world within which we exist there is only 'what was' with the potential for creating more 'what was'. You and I have that responsibility of creating more and more of the 'what was'.

In short, the 'what is' is G-d, void the universal fabric of time. And what of our selves? Why we, the 'what was' likewise become what all the 'what was' becomes, we become the 'what is', never to be lost, never to cease, never to tire of being what we are for to tire implies existing within time and in G-d time is not an issue, for G-d simply is. There is nothing to maintain for maintenance is only an issue in a cause and effect existence, is only an issue in an existence imbedded 'within' time, is only an issue in 'a realm of the potential becoming 'what was', is only an issue in a realm more generically called the physical universe.

In short, once within G-d, you live/experience/empathize with 'what is' knowing what, through the use of one's free will, one both accomplished and 'could' have accomplished. In a sense one might look at this as a form of both heaven and hell one is responsible of creating for one's self.

This is what symbiotic panentheism calls the ultimate form of 'the ripple effect' for not only do you become fully aware of your creations but so to do all forms of knowing become fully aware of your creations for it is through such a process that one can fully understand: nothing is lost.

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Monday, July 18

 **Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: The individuated entity of knowing - Part V**

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 18, 2005 12:16AM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

The art of rational thinking: Part V

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[050703 cg] First be free of all beliefs, models and systems, even the belief in 'self', then there will be no placing "self above others."

[050711 djs] I understand and I fully embrace the concept of which you speak, but again, I am not speaking about you and I, I am speaking of the vast sea of humanity within which each individual entity finds themselves immersed.

My concern lies with those that place 'self' above others. Buddhism has a very important role to play in 'changing' society and I would never suggest it be 'replaced' nor would I ever suggest its

role be diminished. What I am suggesting is that its role be augmented, strengthened, made impenetrable and I would suggest to you that the development of a 'universal philosophy' emerging from an expanded view of Reality is the very means of doing so.

[050713 cg] One cannot free others by offering them another belief, concept, model, or system; that merely substitutes one set of chains for another and even Buddhism, taken in this regard, is another set of chains.

This is attributed to the Buddha: "Do not accept what you hear by report; do not accept tradition; do not accept a statement because it is found in your books, not because it is in accord with your belief, nor because it is the saying of your teacher. Be lamps unto yourselves. Those who, either now or after I am dead, shall rely upon themselves only and not look for assistance to anyone besides themselves, it is they who shall reach the topmost height."

[050716 djs] How wise of Buddha. Having said that, who would deny or could ignore the established benefits regarding, as you say: ' ... even Buddhism, taken in this regard, is another set of chains.'

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 Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: The size of G-d: Part V

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 18, 2005 12:09AM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

The size of G-d: Part V

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[050627 cg] To summarize your model: Omnipresence incorporates consciousness and non-consciousness. The Unmanifested incorporates presence and non-presence. The Whole of Reality incorporates The Unmanifested and 'the whole as a non-duality'.

I might re-state that as, G-d transcends duality and non-duality.

[050628 djs] ?????

[050702 cg] Did I mis-summarize your model? Did my restatement not follow; i.e., the Whole of Reality is G-d, which incorporates the Unmanifested, which is all dualities (all that is present, including all lesser dualities, and all that is not present), and 'the whole as a non-duality', which is non-duality?

[050711 djs] You stated it correctly

I was confused by the word 'transcends'. I was not sure if by 'transcends' you incorporate 'all' or if by 'transcends' you meant G-d is 'above it all' and thus G-d does not incorporate 'all', does not incorporate duality as well as non-duality, does not incorporate what is 'evil' as well as incorporate what is 'good'.

The metaphysical model, symbiotic panentheism, incorporates it all and proceeds to lay out the rational understanding as to how this is possible.

[050713 cg] As stated in my previous answer [050702 cg], G-d incorporates all, including duality and non-duality.

[050716 djs] Agreed

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 Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: The individuated entity of knowing - Part IV

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 18, 2005 12:06AM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

The art of rational thinking: Part IV

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[050711 djs] I agree with what it is you are saying in respect to our 'merging with G-d'. We actually are not as far apart as it may first appear.

My perception simply incorporates one more aspect. My perception embraces the concept that since 'we exist' and since 'nothing is lost', not only do we 'merge with G-d' we also remain as we are, unique entities of knowing which have been created through our personal direct experiencing of the physical which we were unable to control combined with our personal direct experiencing

generated by the free will 'given' us.

Now I am not attempting to 'convert' you to this understanding for it does not matter if you embrace it or not for if it is in fact true then it is in fact true and if it is in fact false than it is in fact false and nothing you and I say about it will change the matter. On the other hand I am suggesting the understanding could affect the actions of some and for those who might be changed and for those affected by whom it could 'change', the understanding could have a major impact.

But why isn't it important in terms of yourself? It isn't important in terms of yourself because the understanding would have no impact upon your actions for you already understand the concept of the individual being of the same substance and essence as G-d and thus you already are basing your actions upon such a perception.

[050712 cg] Yes, your "one more aspect" will not impact the actions of those who already understand that we are of G-d. In this regard, the "one more aspect" is a unnecessary concept.

[050716 djs] Agreed

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Sunday, July 17

Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: The soul: Part II

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 17, 2005 12:26AM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

The soul: Part II

[050701 cg] You write that symbiotic panentheism is based on a consensus of science, philosophy, and religion. But is there such a consensus?

For example, you have written that you believe that you are an eternal soul. There is no science that concludes that you are or have an eternal soul. There are some philosophies that conclude that you are or have an eternal soul and some philosophies that conclude that there is not an eternal soul, but there is no consensus among philosophers regarding the existence of an eternal soul. Many religions believe that you are or have an eternal soul, but some religions conclude otherwise. This is not a "globally accepted" doctrine and is not necessarily a consensus position.

So, how have you decided to believe that you are an eternal soul?

[050711 djs] Since I am suggesting that a 'universal truth' be supported by all three: religion, science, and philosophy, let me address each.

Religiously: The vast amount of historical religious texts refer to some form of 'soul' directly or refer to a some form of 'soul' indirectly through the concept of 'reincarnation'. Now I grant you not all religious individuals 'believe' the soul exists but their numbers are far exceeded by those that do 'believe' in an 'after life' and do 'believe' in a 'soul/spirit/'nonphysical consciousness'. I do not know Buddhism's specific position regarding the soul and/or after life but it is my understanding that Buddhism is not a religion but rather a 'way of life'. It is my understanding that one can be a Christian Buddhist or a Buddhist Christian; one can be a Hindu Buddhist or a Buddhist Hindu, etc. Thus it is my understanding that Buddhism does not exclude a 'believer' from its ranks.

Philosophically: The debate taking place between the monist and dualist point of view has been going on for more than twenty-five hundred years. I grant you the debate is by no means resolved but I would also suggest that the dualist is by no means at the edge of defeat. It is quantum physics itself which may, in fact, tip the balance to the dualist.

Scientifically: It is not so much what science says as what science refuses to say. Science, for instance, will not deny the concept of 'spirit', will not deny the concept of a 'creator', will not deny the concept of 'life after death'. Science recognizes it is unable to answer questions such as: Where did 'the primal atom' that exploded into being the physical universe come from? What lies 'outside' space and time, outside the physical universe? Could there be other physical universes? Does universal consciousness exist?

In fact, it is only when science embraces the concept of nonphysical consciousness that one is capable of finding answers to questions such as, If the universe is expanding, what is it expanding into? How does one explain 'SPOOKY' physics? Etc.

Now I grant you, terms such as 'soul', 'heaven', 'after life', ... are not the best terms to use when working with a conclave composed of scientists, philosophers, and religious leaders. I would suggest metaphysical terms such as 'Being' (quotation marks) n. (for the Whole, G-d, etc), 'being' (quotation marks) n. (for the individual entity of self-knowing), being (no italics, no quotation marks) vb - passive (for the state of being), and being (italics no quotation marks) vb (for action), be used so as to avoid personal issues and personal interests from entering the discussions.

[050712 cg] Your response does not refute the claim that there is no clear consensus for an "eternal soul". And you have not answered my question, "So, how have you decided to believe that you are an eternal soul?" Do you believe because it is a consensus? Or do you believe because of authority (scientific, philosophic, and/or religious)? Or do you rely on yourself?

[050716 djs] Regarding: "So, how have you decided to believe that you are an eternal soul?" Do

you believe because it is a consensus? Or do you believe because of authority (scientific, philosophic, and/or religious)? Or do you rely on yourself? I 'believe' because it is a consensus of thousands of years of human observation/science, belief/religions, and reason/philosophies.

I do not rely upon myself for the analysis regarding the legitimacy of my having an eternal soul, since I do not 'believe' I am wiser than all of humanity.

This is not a statement of humility, it is a statement of rationality.

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Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Individuated entities of knowing: Part VI

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 17, 2005 12:19AM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Individuated entities of knowing: Part VI

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[050711 djs] We appear to be far apart here. I understand physical reality to exist. Are you suggesting physical reality does not exist because physical reality is simply a perception?

[050712 cg] No, I did not suggest that "physical reality does not exist because physical reality is simply a perception". I did not equate physical reality with perception. There is one reality, but we experience reality as an internal portion within our selves and the external portion of reality 'outside' our selves. A telephone rings; that is a portion of the external reality outside our selves. We hear the ring tone; that is our experience of our internal reality, it is our perception, it arises and passes away.

[050711 djs continues] As for free will, are you suggesting that one's actions does not affect one's experience and thus free will is not directly connected with experiencing?

[050712 cg] No, I wrote that one cannot control one's perceptions; I did not suggest that one's actions do not affect one's experience. Yes, one's actions affect one's experience as one's experience affects one's actions.

[050716 djs] Regarding: We hear the ring tone; that is our experience of our internal reality, it is our perception, it arises and passes away. I can understand how it is the physical telephone ring arises and passes away since the physical is but a temporary existence, since the physical had a 'beginning' and thus most probably has 'an end', but I do not understand how it is that the self awareness regarding the experiencing of the telephone ringing also arises and passes away.

If self awareness is non-physical in nature and if time is an innate characteristic of the physical, Einstein, then if and when the physical 'ends' time ends and with the end of the physical, it would appear the non-physical, self awareness, would, by definition, remain and therefore the self awareness of one's experiencing the telephone ring would remain.

This thought process would seem to suggest your statement, '... **it is our perception, it arises and passes away.**' is illogical.

Can you help me understand the error of my thinking?

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[050701 cg] ...[Y]ou are far more important than any "universals" or "absolute truths". You are real. The others are mere notions.

[050711 djs] To state emphatically, void scientific validation - religious history - and philosophical dialectic, that 'I am real' is a statement of 'personal faith'.

[050712 cg] We do not require science, philosophy, or religion to validate our existence; one may experience a direct, immediate, and profound knowing of one's existence.

[050711 djs continues] To state emphatically, supported by scientific validation - religious history - and philosophical dialectic, that 'I am real' makes the statement an 'absolute truth'.

[050712 cg] What makes a statement an absolute truth is that it is absolutely true. And an absolute truth needs no support other than it is absolutely true.

[050711 djs continues] To state unequivocally, supported by scientific validation - religious history - and philosophical dialectic, that 'multiplicity/individuality exists universally and interacts with the whole' is to state a 'universal absolute truth'.

[050712 cg] So you say.

[050716 djs] It is not 'I' that says it, it is humanity, to the best of its ability, that says it.

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[050712 cg] You missed this question: "[050701 cg] Are your thoughts the expression of your soul?" What is the relationship of your thoughts to your soul? Does your soul produce the thoughts which your soul experiences or does your body produce the thoughts which your soul experiences or ...? Or are your thoughts identical to your soul?

[050716 djs] Regarding: Are your thoughts the expression of your soul?"

Regarding: What is the relationship of your thoughts to your soul?

Regarding: Does your soul produce the thoughts which your soul experiences or does your body produce the thoughts which your soul experiences or ...?

Regarding: Or are your thoughts identical to your soul?

And regarding: see below

[deleted materials]

[050711 djs continues] Regarding: And if we shook hands, would that be your soul expressing itself by shaking hands with me?

If we shook hands, yes, it would be my soul expressing itself by shaking your hand, however only you would know if it is your soul shaking mine. Having said that I will readily admit that there are instances where the 'soul' is unable to dominate/control the physical body.

[050712 cg] What would your soul experience when we shook hands and I said, "Hello,"? Would your soul feel my warm hand in yours? Would your soul see me? Would your soul hear me say, "Hello,"? Would your soul experience these perceptions?

[050716 djs] Regarding: What would your soul experience when we shook hands and I said, "Hello,"?

Regarding: Would your soul feel my warm hand in yours?

Regarding: Would your soul see me?

Regarding: Would your soul hear me say, "Hello,"?

Regarding: Would your soul experience these perceptions?

I do not mean to 'avoid' the issues but I am not suggesting that I am an expert in understanding

the details which exist regarding the spirit, the soul, the physical body, the physical universe, and total consciousness. There are others who could better answer your specific questions. You might begin by looking to the Theosophy Society, the Rosicrucians, etc.

For me to get into all the minutia is to suggest I am an expert in the subject.

I am simply stating that 'truth' exists and the basic truths are: G-d exists, the individual exists, the physical exists, and nothingness exists. I am stating that 'nothing, that exists, is lost, ceases to be. I am stating that all that exists not only exists but has functionality for if what exists has no functionality/meaning it does not exist. I am stating that all that exists, exists in a symbiotic relationship with all else that exists. I am stating that we are capable of understanding what it is we are capable of purporting or questioning, namely: Where are we? What are we? Why do we exist? From where did I come? To where will I go? Why am I responsible for my actions? Do I have free will? Is G-d powerful enough and knowledgeable enough to 'grow' in Its very power and knowledge? What role do I play in G-d's growth should G-d in fact grow? Etc.

It is these base questions for which I feel I have as much expertise as anyone, as opposed to having an expertise dealing with the questions the details details, intricacies, and minutia which surrounds every aspect of the spirit, soul, mind, and body. I am a metaphysicist not a biologist, physicist, or chemist. I am a metaphysicist not a priest, rabbi, or cleric. I am a metaphysician not an epistemologist, modal logician, or epiphenomenalist.

My apologies, I wish I could be more for you.

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 Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Individuated entities of knowing: Part V

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on July 17, 2005 12:12AM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Individuated entities of knowing: V

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[050702 cg] By "we all claim Truth" I mean: No one thinks that what they believe is not true. This doesn't make what we believe true, but is a statement regarding the human condition. By "we are all true" I mean: Since we are not separate from G-d, we are of G-d and G-d is Truth (the Whole of Reality); therefore, we are true (real). This doesn't make what we believe true (accurate), but is a statement regarding the human condition.

[050711 djs] That is not what I am contesting. I agree we are all 'real'. I agree that our personal perceptions, our personal beliefs, our personal experiences are all 'real' to us personally for they are what comprise our knowing and since we are all 'real', they are 'real'.

What I am suggesting is that there are truths, absolute truths, universal truths which go beyond what it is we personally believe, which exist 'before' we enter and 'after' we depart this existence we call 'the physical'. Examples of such 'truths' which exist regardless of state of mind regarding their very existence: The Whole/G-d exists. The individual exists. The physical universe exists. These truths remain even 'if we do not'.

[050712 cg] Perhaps, we can agree that there is the truth, "G-d exists", that does not depend on us or any thing.

[050716 djs] Regarding: Perhaps, we can agree that there is the truth, "G-d exists", that does not depend on us or any thing. I like your process, establishing what it is we can agree upon but I disagree with your supposition. Perhaps we can begin by stepping back a little and simplify what it is we agree upon and then proceed from there.

May I suggest we begin with your statement, break it down into its fundamental elements, and then discuss each in order:

- 1. Truth exists.**
- 2. G-d exists**
- 3. G-d is that which does not depend on us or anything.**

I have no problems using the three as a beginning point. Seeing your statement dissected into its components would you like to begin here or would you like to reorder and/or change the three? If you have nothing to add, change, or discuss, I have some issues regarding the above but I will await your initiative.

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