

Fractal Levels of Awareness: Authoring our own Story

by JASON ARTHUR BOWMAN

The universe is made up of a feedback between matter and consciousness, between the seen and the unseen. Our experience as human beings lies in the meeting ground between these two realms. Upon close investigation into the realm of matter, the micro and the macro seem to be organized in extremely similar patterns. The veins of a green leaf look strikingly similar to the natural forks and bends of the rivers of Earth. These observable similarities in physical systems appear to solidify the postulate that the division of space happens congruently for the infinitely small as it does for the infinitely big. In other words, all matter takes form based upon an infinite **fractal** scale. Interestingly, it seems as though the unseen world of consciousness mirrors this phenomenon and behaves in a similar scalar fashion. The mind can operate in a number of different perspectives and relational rubrics running the gamut from highly contracted small picture viewing to highly expanded big picture viewing. Awareness can take the shape of the leaf and the river and everything in between and beyond.

As I understand my experiences there exists what I will call a primary level of awareness. It consists of the direct experience of the universal vibration surrounding us and entails complete receptivity independent of thought. This state is accessed through episodes which exist beyond symbolic language and through the absence of thought and the surrendering to direct experience. The primary level of awareness can be accessed in a number of different ways: being enraptured by a piece of art, having your breath taken away by a delightful taste, by staring into the eyes of a loved one or through practices of yoga and meditation. In the primary level the possibilities are infinite because we have given up the game of trying to define a thing or an experience, albeit for a split second, so that we can experience it as it is. This primary and organic level of consciousness forms the foundation for a cascading waterfall of possible states of awareness.

Beyond the realm of complete receptivity, there exists a secondary level which consists of the thinking mind. Thoughts are an evolutionary tool used to frame experience in a way that makes pattern recognition efficient and accurate. The thinking mind serves to create shortcuts in cognition so that we don't have to re-define an apple every time we see or taste one. Mental dialog is very much the result of years of life experience. Thoughts happen instinctually to help make sense of the realm of matter in which we float. Definitions of objects will always vary from person to person because every mind which defines an object has a different set of life experiences on which to relate to the object itself. These thoughts are highly present, based largely on conditioning and determine to an enormous degree the nature of our reality, the way we frame the information containing energy around us. They are the librettos which we constantly write attempting to make sense of our experiences.

On another level, there exists interpretations of the thoughts that arise out of our direct experiences. The practice of being present in the body and mind enables us to take a birds eye view of the thought stream, of the very entity that is defining the seen world and determining our relationship with it. These interpretations are no less real than the secondary level of thought and can lead to new insights and a renewed and intimate relationship with our own mind and with the world itself. We can be mindful of our own thoughts, which is to say make space to understand where they arose from, what stemmed their arising and what significance their origins hold.

Moving to another level of awareness, we can continue to subject awareness itself to further and further pondering through journaling, meditation and active insight. This continued filtering of

cognition and experience hones and focuses the thought stream to a new level and provides a fresh way to gain insight on our surroundings and on conditioning. This practice is an amazing tool to come into an intimate understanding of our disposition and thought stream. From this level, the **fractal** begins to become evident. Through practice, we essentially expand the awareness of our reality creating awareness. New insights can again be put through the same cascade of consciousness to the point where, as I am doing right now, we are writing about writing about thinking about thinking....etc. We can write mental meta-programs for our learned definitions of reality and there by allow room for new rubrics of relationship with reality to flourish. Every moment, every event and every thought can made sense of within the framework of existence by using the infinite hall-of-mirrors known as consciousness. This meta-cognition is highly expandable and extremely useful for getting in touch with the role that conditioning plays in sculpting the subconscious mind.

A focus of meditation practice is to gain insight on the nature of existence, to come into union with the primary information-containing energy passing through us and learn how to relate to it in a mutually advantageous manner. It also teaches us how to be completely present in each moment of our lives. The act of sitting in silence and paying attention to only one object (often times the breath) gives rise to an intimate relationship with the primary level of being. The breath is the only bodily function that is both consciously and subconsciously undertaken, therefore mindfully existing with it provides a bridge to contact the intuitive latent higher self. For most of us though, silencing the secondary level of mind influenced by years of bombarding advertisements, busy lives and constant stimulus is difficult to say the least. Through practice though, we can learn to take the stairwell to the higher self which allows us to observe the mental chatter without attaching to it and in so doing, light it up with the **fractal** levels of awareness.

This practice of letting go of the defining mind effectively allows us to better understand the way in which the internal dialog shapes the story of life. We are able to better understand the manner in which the mind frames each event we experience. Insight arises to aid in the development of our ability to contact and harness the infinite nature of our cognition and its promise in creating a new possibility of conscious evolution.

Our intention holds the ability to overcome some of the physical limitations of life. We have evolved to a point where we are aware of our awareness and can use it as a tool much like our ancestors used modified pieces of nature to descend from the trees and become the beings we are today. Currently, as affluent homo sapiens existing in 21st century life, we have largely overcome our need to exist on a fight or flight basis. Through yogic practices we can actively engage our ability to elude the physical and mental yearning to escape strenuousness in practice and in life. We can begin to learn how to operate from a loving place where the well being of all things is sacrosanct. Our own mental facilities become the next tool to be harnessed in the evolution of our species. In addition to developing new physical ways to adapt to environment, we can mindfully adapt our culture and our cognition to better our ability to relate to each other and to the realm of the seen.

The highly subjective nature of reality enables us to use our intention and awareness to shape our reality. We do away with the multi-generational prescriptions of growth and are able to take quantum leaps in evolutionary change. We can literally adapt our relationship to the natural world through mindful action. We solidify the paradigm of mind over matter and realize the true nature of the interaction between nature and nurture. This direct puppeteering of our evolutionary growth is beyond exciting and paves the way for a new existence when, as Saul Williams foresees, 'sayings like out of the blue will reveal their hidden origin.' When there is less need for a continuing physical adaptation to environment we are able to focus our energy on the evolution of our ability to love and to see ourselves in each other. By framing the thought stream as but one facet within the **fractal** of

consciousness, unexplainable situations, events that transpire outside of our capacity to explain and beauty that exists independent of reason become the dance of life.

The endless and disorganized thoughts of the unexamined secondary level of being beg to keep us slaves to our conditioning, to the past and to the shortfalls we see in ourselves. If we can use conscious insight practices to center ourselves and understand our past experience than we come into touch with the infinite and can make decisions based upon what we want to make of the world instead what the world wants to make of us. When we shine light on the chatter we understand the effect of the conditioning and we do away with the predestined story of our lives that is seemingly outside of our control.

As everyone has experienced, story has an incredible ability to transport its audience into a knowing and understanding role in the discernment of the significance of its events. Clear cognizance is engendered by a captivating book or movie, cognizance about why each event in the story took place and what significance each had on the whole. It sheds divine light on situations and interactions so that the audience gains a heightened state of observation and a greater ability to distinguish the gravity and importance of events. Essentially the viewer/reader is taken directly into the role of the observant godhead.

In our own day to day lives we habitually write the narratives of our existence. Reality and the language of mind are inextricably entangled and often times we exist unaware of the role that consciousness plays in authoring the story of reality. The conditioning of perceived shortcomings, disappointments and fears can easily overwhelm the creative capacity to craft the possibilities of life. When we can observe the different levels of awareness and their relationships with external circumstance we are empowered and our intuition becomes extremely focused. Every uncomfortable thought or situation that we experience and are mindfully able to confront, accept and discern meaning from allows us to further sort through the garbles of our minds which only serve to keep us confused and ignorant of our creative power. Our secondary level of cognition starts to become more and more based upon a deep and holistic comprehension of ourselves and our world. Experiences manifest synchronistically and stem directly from intention. Signals and signs make themselves evident. We gain a prescient big picture perspective from the self that exists above mental dialog and are essentially able to become the authors of our own lives. We cease to exist in the past and the present and begin to shape the eternal moment into an artwork of choice that exists somewhere right in between the seen and the unseen. We are able to execute actions based upon our own free will and in resonance with a great understanding of the nature of our situation and the interconnected relationship we share each other and the entire biosphere. In every moment, in every decision and in every passing thought we know that, without fail, all we do has cosmic significance in the drama of the universe and the collective consciousness that is constantly shaping it. Instead of eternally trying to grasp the fleeting mystery of life we become one with it and flow through it like water flows down a river. We dance, we sing and we smile, all the while enjoying each trickle of time down the cascade of life by allowing the infinitude of the mind to intermingle with the infinitude of the universe.