Playful Flow of Information
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Oneness Is.

- It is not a thing.
- It is Identity and/or Unity.
- Oneness is unified.
- Oneness is indivisible.
- Oneness resides beyond or before distinctions.

Oneness has the nature of identity or being. Oneness is about the way things are the same and the way things are connected, but the essence of oneness is found in unbroken spaces without contents, or an undivided ocean of content without distinct forms. Very young children live in a state of oneness, to some degree, where they do not clearly distinguish between themselves and their surroundings or environment – so they see reality in a more connected way than is the norm for adults. While oneness remains in play; the illusion of separateness dominates the perception of most human adults, who long for the natural state of unity without knowing quite what it is. Oneness has the flavor of agreement or equality, but it exists even when there are not two entities to agree, or where there are not two quantities to be equal, in the sense that self-agreement is the state of being equal, or identical, to oneself.

Openness Admits or Permits.

- Openness is opportunity or possibility.
- Openness allows possibilities or opportunities to arise, but also creates separation.
- Openness is the freedom to vary and explore, and the space to explore in.
- Openness invites observation and permits construction or exploration.
- Openness corresponds to awareness or consciousness on some level.

Openness means acknowledging that there might be something beyond oneself, or beyond the state of being at the outset of observations and prior to deliberate interactions. Observation is an action, of itself, in that it defines a center or point of view. This becomes a point of reference as soon as movement from the point of origin ensues, but an observer's point of view is inherently centric, and it defines a sense of toward and away or near and far – i.e. perspective. Ergo; openness admits or permits the possibility for separateness, in the sense of there being a larger whole of which one observer or entity is a part or portion – the scale of which is undetermined at first. The wide-eyed openness of young children has a sense of awe and wonder, however, bespeaking a view that the universe is inviting, and awaits exploration.
As-Ifness Assumes or Becomes.

- A step in any direction offers a new outlook, and is also a choice, action, or construction.
- Assuming a point of view, or constructing a point of reference, creates a new perspective.
- As-Ifness is the state of being in a new location and treating it as though it is the origin.
- As-Ifness is taking a role as a new identity or functionary entity, as your position or state.
- As-Ifness is the state of being resulting from being one who takes action, makes a choice, or adopts a point of view.

As-Ifness is the state of play, or the hallmark of playful exploration, in its purest form. If the formula is to observe, explore, and compare, as-ifness is the act of exploration or assumption. To assume a new position has a strict geometrical interpretation, but there is a more general meaning, akin to exploring. One can assume a new belief, or come to personify a new identity, and over time exploration of countless positions or orientations becomes possible. The play acting of children is a way to cognize or internalize the awareness of this. Learning involves playfully adopting possibilities or models of reality, and then testing assumptions. Surprising subtlety is displayed by very young children, in this activity, because they will carefully change one thing at a time – when playfully exploring possibilities – just as scientists do in laboratory experiments, in order to isolate variables (as seen in research by Alison Gopnik and others).

Multiplicity Ensues from Repetition.

- Multiplicity represents manyness, or plurality, rather than oneness, and reflects the tendency of number to increase.
- Multiplicity is defined by collections of distinct but similar objects, like eggs, apples, or walnuts.
- Multiplicity is also well-defined by observations from a number of distinct locations, and the comparisons between viewpoints.
- Multiplicity suggests or denotes sets with items numbering larger than a few, or what mathematicians call a large $n$.
- Multiplicity is well-represented by orderly arrangements and the repetition of pattern, as seen in regular tilings.

Multiplicity is the continuation or iteration of 'observe, explore, compare,' but also continues the pattern of 'one, open, as,' which encodes the production of independent topological forms – separate objects. Multiplicity is represented by the coexistence of a large or increasing number of objects, but it is also seen in enumerating distinct types of similar objects, such as seashells, birds, fishes, trees, or flowers – which come in different varieties. Repetitive playful exploration gives way to exploration with variation, such that multiplicity is embodied not only in increasing numbers of actions, objects, and observations, but also in a range of different types.
of actions, objects, and observations – emerging as variations on a theme. Formation at this stage tends to follow an orderly progression of increasingly detailed yet orderly forms, displaying symmetries and regularity of pattern, and moving from simple to complex.

**Formless Nothingness or Chaos Emerges**

- Nothingness represents an alternative to discrete forms, or things.
- Nothingness also represents an alternative to specific or fixed forms.
- Nothingness is seen in the chaotic evolution of systems beyond stable limits.
- Formlessness is seen in the chaotic motion of water in the rapids of a swift stream.
- Chaos is seen to emerge from an over-accumulation of orderly forms.

Nothingness is the face of change moving across the world of form, sweeping away one pattern and making room for others. Nothingness is also the empty space existing in and around or between all objects and patterns of form. It is found in the tendency of complex systems to become chaotic or unpredictable, beyond certain limits – and the threshold for such complexity is fairly low. Ergo; the natural world is full of examples where the chaotic behavior or unpredictability of a system can be observed. This can be seen as a step beyond the orderly progression in the previous stage, or a condition where formlessness asserts a kind of dominance over the specificity of form. This can also be seen as a step beyond the condition where the dimensionality of objects, spaces, or systems, can only have whole-numbered values. This stage is an acknowledgement, on some level, that the actual laws of nature always contain non-linear terms, which await only the right extreme conditions to see their expression.

**In True Relation, the Far Shore of Chaos Appears**

- The far shore of chaos and complexity is seen in unifying principles.
- The far shore is also seen in the re-emergence of order in chaotic systems.
- Sometimes in experiments, orderly regimes and chaotic ones are seen to alternate.
- Recent discoveries in Math show how a vast range of things can all be the same thing.
- Other developments show that formulas for incredible complexity can be very simple.

The far shore of chaos and complexity appears in various guises, both in natural phenomena and in fundamental theory. It is seen in the proof by Grisha Perelman of Poincaré’s conjecture that all 3-manifolds are deformations of the 3-sphere, and in the observation by Edward Witten that the five versions of String theory plus Supergravity form a larger whole called M-theory. It is found in the form of dualities, whereby a problem that is intractable in one context can be solved in a dual construction, once the problem is recast in that new context or seen from that frame of reference. A familiar example of the far shore appearing is learning
scales on the Piano, where fingering complexity builds up to a point, as you add sharps or flats, but then things get simpler because there are only five black keys per octave and you are using them all. The discovery by Michael Barnsley, that complex forms like trees or ferns have a very simple rule of construction, shows that sometimes the underlying pattern for complexity is simplicity itself. Of course; nature provides many examples where orderly patterns emerge out of chaos, forming islands of order even within a roiling sea of disorder (as seen in the research of J. Miguel Rubi and others), which is perhaps the most poignant expression of this dynamic.

**All is Known or Seen as One and as Self**

- All that exists is seen to be part of a unified whole.
- The individual pieces are all seen to be expressions of one thing.
- The unified nature of reality is also seen to extend to the individual self.
- The identity of self expresses the original unity, as a harmony among one’s parts.
- The identity of self is also seen to extend into unity with the cosmos.

To know all as self, in this final stage, is to return home to the unified state – where the story began – and ‘at the end of all our exploring,’ to ‘know the place for the first time.’ The poem by T.S. Eliot exactly captures the mood of this stage or level. Arriving back where we started, in a state of unity – but having the perspective of seeing and knowing the cosmos – gives new meaning to the unified state. It is only to be hoped that we shall not cease exploring, but when we do it sheds the most light on the place where we began. Traveling to distant shores has left me changed, where I will always carry a bit of those places with me, but this experience also informs my perspective of life at home.

So it is with experience in general, as our knowledge of reality is accumulative. Having the knowledge of how and why reality is unified, and how the various pieces interrelate, offers a mature perspective on what we are a part of, which was not available at the outset. If we consider the question of how this stage relates to the form nature has developed, it is clear that it pertains to the emergence of life forms capable of perception, and ultimately of observing or comprehending the universe as a whole. The ability of life forms to exploit the islands of order in a chaotic universe provides the opportunity for creatures to evolve, who can comprehendingly look back at the vast universe at play which is our home. It would appear that this is the ultimate end goal of playful exploration, evolving to be knowingly as one with the universe.