

The Interrupted Self

By Sam Vaknin

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Also read this - Psychophysics

<http://samvak.tripod.com/psychophysics.html>

The fundament of our mind is the mental map we create of our body ("Body Image", or "Body Map"). It is a detailed, psychic, rendition of our corporeal self, based on sensa (sensory input) and above all on proprioception and other kinaesthetic senses. It incorporates representations of other objects and results, at a higher level, in a "World Map" or "World Image". This World Map often does not react to actual changes in the body itself (such as amputation - the "phantom" phenomenon). It is also exclusionary of facts that contradict the paradigm at the basis of the World Map.

This detailed and ever-changing (dynamic) map constitutes the set of outer constraints and threshold conditions for the brain's operations. The triple processes of interaction (endogenous and exogenous), integration (assimilation) and accommodation (see here "Psychophysics") - reconcile the brain's "programmes" (sets of instructions) to these constraints and conditions. In other words, these are processes of solving dynamic, though always partial, equations. The set of all the solutions to all these equations constitutes the "Personal Narrative", or "Personality". Thus, "organic" and "mental" disorders (a dubious distinction at best) have many characteristics in common (confabulation, antisocial behaviour, emotional absence or flatness, indifference, psychotic episodes and so on).

The brain's "Functional Set" is hierarchical and consists of feedback loops. It aspires to equilibrium and homeostasis. The most basic level is mechanical - hardware (neurones, glia, etc.) and operating system software. This software consists of a group of sensory-motor applications. It is separated from the next level by exegetic instructions (the feedback loops and their interpretation). This is the cerebral equivalent of a compiler. Each level of instructions is separated from the next (and connected to it meaningfully and operationally) by such a compiler.

Next follow the "functional instructions" ("How to" type of commands): how to see, how to place visuals in context, how to hear, how to collate and correlate sensory input and so on. Yet, these commands should not be confused with the "real thing", the "final product". "How-to-see" is NOT "seeing". Seeing is a much more complex, multilayered, interactive and versatile "activity" than the simple act of light penetration and its

conveyance to the brain.

Thus - separated by another compiler which generates meanings (a "dictionary") - we reach the realm of "meta-instructions". This is a gigantic classificatory (taxonomic) system. It contains and applies rules of symmetry (left vs. right), physics (light vs. dark, colours), social codes (face recognition, behaviour) and synergetic or correlated activity ("seeing", "music", etc.).

Design principles would yield the application of the following principles:

1. Areas of specialization (dedicated to hearing, reading, smelling, etc.)
2. Redundancy (unutilized over capacity)
3. Holography and Fractalness
(replication of same mechanisms, sets of instructions and some critical content in various locations in the brain).
4. Interchangeability - Higher functions can replace damaged lower ones (seeing can replace damaged proprioception, for instance).

4. Two types of processes:

Rational - discrete, atomistic, syllogistic, theory-constructing, falsifying

Emotional - continuous, fractal, holographic

By "fractal and holographic", we mean:

1. That each part contains the total information about the whole
2. That each unit or part contain a "connector" to all others with sufficient information in such a connector
to reconstruct the other units if lost or unavailable.

Sam Vaknin is the author of Malignant Self Love - Narcissism Revisited and After the Rain - How the West Lost the East. He is a columnist for Central Europe Review, United Press International (UPI) and eBookWeb and the editor of mental health and Central East Europe categories in The Open Directory, Suite101 and searcheurope.com. Visit Sam's Web site at <http://samvak.tripod.com>

I HEAR THE CLOCK TICKING

By Irvin L. Rozier

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The silence of the house was interrupted by a sound
The clock loudly ticked as the second hand moved around
Time was slipping away, minute by minute, day by day
I could do nothing to keep time at bay

Where did those 18,980 days of my 52 years go
I started searching high and low
After many days seeking, I concluded at last
Those days, weeks, months and years were in my past

How many more days do I have to live
It is in God's hands, my breath He does give
The past is behind me, tomorrow I may not see
My future is in Jesus' hands, He holds the key

In heaven there will be no sound of the clock
Jesus holds the key, this door He'll unlock
Trust in Him who holds time in His hand
The hourglass of old will have no sand

My future is certain, this I believe
He offered me a gift, and I did receive
Eternal salvation that didn't cost a dime
Now I no longer worry about the passage of time.

Irvin L. Rozier, author of My Walk with the Lord, www.selahbooks.com

author, preacher, retired military

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