

TITLE OF WORK: **The Art of Learning – Creative Evolution  
& the Re-Creation of the Self**

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# THE ART OF LEARNING

## Creative Evolution & The Re-Creation of the Self

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*Theoretical Definitions:*

ART: Direct Participation with the creative [evolutionary] flow. A 'work of art' is a record or document of one's contact with the flow of creation.

ENVIRONMENT: A space-time localized, description/reflection of awareness.

LEARNING: The re-creation of the Self.

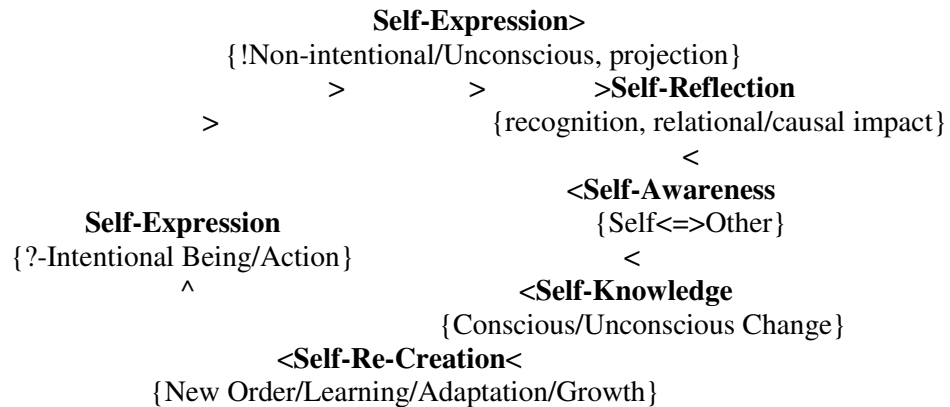
TEACHING: The creation of an environment [a description/reflection of awareness] in which learning [the re-creation of the self] is possible.

EMERGENCE: [emergent phenomenon] That which is produced or brought forth from the present order/environment/state-of-being. The theory of *emergent evolution* asserts that new forms of matter, life, and/or consciousness can come into being through the re-arrangement of pre-existing elements

INFORMATION: literally, a shaping within; to inform is *to give inner shape to*, and thus to transform what is pre-existing. The definition implies an environment external to, or separate from, the thing 'informed'. Information, in its essential existence, transference, perception, and cognition/integration, is a dynamic [fluid] phenomenon.

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Through the act of 'self-expression' the mind becomes engaged in a cycle of reflective awareness, growth, and 'self re-creation'. In the way of illustration, I have constructed an idealized model of this mental-phenomenal activity:



Our model follows an idealized progression. It ends where it begins: Self-Expression. In actuality, the progression does not end, but continues to cycle, potentially, throughout one's existence. However, there are conditions of the environment, and of the consciousness emergent within it, which can alter or inhibit this natural, creative evolution of Mind.

The words in brackets (in the model above) refer to an idealized, primordial state in which consciousness first unfolds; when thought first transcends its primordial, Self/Other-less being. It is the moment of emergent *noesis*; Mind 'leaps from the void.'

At this first moment, self-expression is non-intentional and unconscious. All expressions of the Self are projections of the Self. Projection results in reflection. At some point, Mind recognizes itself [reflects upon itself] in its own activity, in its self-expression. Hence, this recognition/reflection generates an immediate awareness of the Self; the Self becomes conscious of *the Self*. The progressive cascade from Self-Expression to Self-Reflection to Self-Awareness, compelled through experience, generates a new body of knowledge [or an information *event*] about the Self, within the Self. It is necessarily meaningful \*. Such new information is literally a 'forming within'; a reshaping of the Self. This reshaping of the Self most often accompanies a 'phase transition' or period of confusion, uncertainty, and/or disorder.

There is no absolute guarantee that a transition through any given cycle will be successful, nor even totally predictable. New information must be integrated within the Mind's world-view and Self-concept. A new order of complex existence must be achieved. This is the challenge of creative evolution.

*Information means Transformation.*

A change in the self occurs which may or may not be consciously perceived.

It is an odd 'fact' that a change in self-knowledge may be gained which, nonetheless, remains hidden or obscured. Eventually, new knowledge of the Self will/must make itself known [!] to the Self. This change in the Self's knowledge of Itself is what I term the "re-creation of the self" [i.e., its self/world-image]. A new order of Self-Consciousness has been embodied; a new state of being *is*. This recreation and regeneration of 'Self', effected through 'Mind', results in a consequent expression of the Self--an expression which can be conscious [self-aware] and intentional.

Throughout the duration of its existence, Mind may re-enter this cycle a great many times, or perhaps only a requisite few. Its activity while engaged in this evolutionary cycle or 'feedback loop' [often positive or *non-linear*] [1] may be consciously or unconsciously perceived and understood. The conscious awareness of this cyclic activity is strongly correlated with the frequency of "revolutions" through this cycle.

Artists, poets, thinkers, and seekers of truth ["revolutionaries"] are typical of those who consciously and intentionally engage this Self-Recreational activity of Mind. It is both a joyful and fearful endeavor.

You will note that I use the words 'mind' and 'self' in an inter-related manner. The concept of 'Self' is a construct of mental [meta] awareness; it is the natural outcome of Mind's existence becoming known to the *Mind*. The word 'self' is the reference point or object [a "linguistic distinction"] [2] by which conscious Self-awareness [generally, "Mind"] distinguishes [thus, expresses] Itself from what is Other-than-Itself.

Thus, in the moment that Self-Awareness emerges from *anoetic* [3] being, a duality emerges as well. There is the World--and all its constituent phenomena [the total "other"]--and the Self. This duality is viewed by some as an illusion [In Hindu Philosophy: *tat tuam asi* - "thou art that".], but it is a requisite illusion. Mind seeks to know what Mind is, to apprehend its own nature, and so maintains this perceptual "illusion" for the purpose of adaptive self-knowledge.

Creative evolution requires complimentary, *inter-transformative* states/potentials of being [self /other, stability/instability, etc.]. The resultant Self-Knowledge and Self-Recreation is a beneficial [existential] adaptation within a dynamic environment [4].

As the ancient sage has asserted: KNOW THY *SELF*.

Herein emerges the fundamental system of human awareness. Mind may be viewed as a complex-composite-adaptive system emergent from the coupled interaction of brain and world. "Self" and "Other" are emergent constructs of the Mind's awareness/realization of its source [the brain-world matrix] and exist within a continuum of inter-relationship. We are deeply connected to the world. The world is deeply connected to us, and within us. We can not change the world without changing ourselves at the same moment. The patterns perceived "out there" are the reflections/projections of patterns "in here".

'What we see is not Nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning.'  
--Werner Heisenberg

Through its awareness and meta-awareness, Mind can be both "inside" and "outside" [5] of the world. It can express/posit itself as both *Self* and *Other*; subject and object. This remarkable property of the Mind--this ability to *jump outside the system* and view Itself as other-than-itself--is the fundamental behavior/activity underlying all learning, psychological apprehension, scientific understanding, and "self-actualization".

This curious ability--emergent from the organizational structuring of the brain--permits the Mind to [re]create a model/representation of its behavior within itself [6]. *Mind learns how to learn by observing itself in the act of learning*. This self-modeling property of Mind is facilitated by the neural-psychical functions known as Imagination [or Ideation] and Memory [a re-calling of experience or expression]. Without them, learning is impossible.

*POETICS:*

*I am most truly human and alive when I am learning something new. All learning*

*is essentially creative. Learning remakes what I am. Each act of learning changes me as I re-create my awareness and understanding. The Self becomes engaged in its own generation and discovery. Mind is at play with being.*

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## ART OF LEARNING

### END NOTES:

\* What is 'meant' by 'meaningful' is: that which refers to one's existential path, and thus has direct utilitarian [survival-based] value for the perceiving consciousness. 'Meaning' can be understood as an *emergent property* of self-awareness, facilitated by language [or information] in all its forms/modalities.

**1** -Non-linear activity is that in which there is a disproportionate relationship between 'cause' and 'effect'...sometimes a small amount of new self-awareness can initiate a major change in self-knowledge, which may then initiate [through and with the emotional structures of the brain] a dramatic re-creation of the self, what is termed *metanoia*. The "feedback loop" mentioned in the text is not a *true* loop--one that continuously cycles and re-cycles, unchangingly, but rather, akin to a dynamic or "strange" attractor (a stable pattern of approximate values) in that the cycling never repeats itself *exactly*; there is flexibility and variability in the feedback process.

**2** -The existence, cultivation, and selection of language [resulting in a 'domain' of language] necessitates that a distinction be made to indicate the one whom is *recurrently* participating in this process, this on-going event. To coordinate this distinction, we have names. *Me, you, them...*Our names/distinctions [Self/Other] are descriptions which enable the Self's adaptation in this domain of Language. Language demands distinctions, especially as we use language to refer to linguistic behaviors/actions. [see Maturana/Varela, *The Tree Of Knowledge*]

**3** -The 'anoetic' consciousness is that ideal state which does not yet possess a concrete subjective/objective reference, or mode, and hence can not yet achieve meta-awareness.

**4** - This is related to my concept of *chaosmosis* which I describe as an "adaptive strategy in an environment of continuous flux", that strategy being both physical/biological and cognitive/mental. For more information, read the essay at:

[www.chaosmosis.net/Essays/OtherChaosmosis.rtf](http://www.chaosmosis.net/Essays/OtherChaosmosis.rtf)

**5** - Reflective awareness, and its self-referencing *meta*-awareness, may have evolved precisely so as to allow one to break free from an unending "feedback loop", which could have the effect of "paralyzing" the individual, and hence endangering him/her. As R. Buckminster Fuller writes in 'SYNERGETICS II' [pages: 116, 117, notes: 505.70 - .74]: 'All systems have "insiderness" and "outsiderness"...there are four minimum characteristics of a system: the observer, the observed, the line of relationship between them, and the 'background nothingness' against which [or from which] this relationship, or 'somethingness'

occurs [or emerges]’.

6- On the neuro-physiological level, this self-modeling is accomplished by *mirror neurons*, which fire when observing others’ actions and permit the Mind to internally mimic [model] the actions [and reactions] observed in others.

(1993, edited: 1998, 2001, 2005, 2009}