

The Anatomy of Truth

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“The truth is far more powerful than any weapon of mass destruction.”

- Mahatma Gandhi

Introduction

Typically, many philosophical papers are for an academic audience. In effect, the language may come off as verbose and overwhelmingly complicated to the lay reader. One of the biggest aims of this treatise was to focus on the content of my message, rather than bog the reader down in an avalanche of fancy words. In the words of the great Albert Einstein, regarding the art of teaching, he stated, “If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t know it well enough.” By decomposing a complex subject into its essential components, it allows the reader to grasp the deeper meaning of what is being said. It has been my endeavor, to articulate in words, a landscape of truth that we all can relate to through language and personal experience. I have spent a great deal of time ensuring that my diction reflects the depth of my conclusions while also including examples to validate my points. And most importantly, I have designed this essay to serve as a beginning entryway into understanding, seeking, and applying *Personal Truth*.

Socrates pensively stated, “The unexamined life is not worth living.” His rumination on the “examined life” mirrors the central purpose of this text, which involves an exploration of our humanity. At the heart of this paper, we find one of the most important ingredients in discovering who we are, our individuality. The milestone of recognizing our own personal truths, in the context of self-preservation, is a bridge towards *building our own moral structure*, unleashing

the dormant powers within ourselves.

Instead of adopting a rigid and unchanging belief system of how and why to live, I now understand that defining our own system of evolving values, attitudes, and beliefs captures the essence of what it means to live an “examined life”. In a modern context, this thinking greatly stems from the fact that many organized belief structures force their followers to submit to their way of life, rather than allowing each individual the freedom to forge their own way of being. However, when a person is stripped of their basic human rights, they surrender their power. One key idea that unlocks the deeper meaning of this essay lies in the fact that internal happiness is an extension of self-knowledge. Furthermore, one of the best things we can do for ourselves is perceptively choose the beliefs which apply to who we are. As Albert Camus, a hugely influential philosopher stated, an intellectual is a person “whose mind watches over itself.” As we trace the steps of our past into the present, we can begin to understand the thinker behind the veil of our thoughts. However, it is crucial to see that we are an evolving species, and as things evolve, our belief system ought to adjust and reflect any and all internal changes.

Only by much searching and mining, are gold and diamonds obtained, and a person can find every truth connected with their being, if they will dig deep into the mine of their soul

- James Allen (146)

Any discussions about seeking truth is incomplete, without mentioning the untethered spirit of James Allen, a 19th century English writer, who had a profound effect on my transformation of self. Allen stands as one of the great forces that helped me see that deeper truths exist. Astonishingly, his fervent attitude towards truth-seeking stirred him to write nineteen passionate books, over fourteen years, on the topics of “scaling the highest heights of genius...” and

conquering inward oppression. (Allen 420). He had a steadfast interest in the particular foundation which erected the pillars of a person's self-worth and self-love. One majestic subject woven into the tapestry of his writings regards the law of attraction, the interior force which creates, molds, and attracts the outward circumstances of a person's life. It is his well-examined view that "Man is made or unmade by himself..." that our internal conditions of mind establish our external trajectory in life. (Allen 146) Ultimately, one of the most important lessons, espoused by James Allen, comes to life in his soul-penetrating words that a "man can only become who he is by discovering within himself the laws of thought; of which discovery is totally a matter of application, self-analysis, and experience." (Allen 146) While mostly I agree with him, I do not entirely subscribe to his idea that a person's path is entirely forged by their footsteps alone. Surely, a person will interact with others, throughout their lives, and become subjected to society's values, attitudes, and wavering opinions. Largely, but not entirely, a person's external life is the product of their own individual creativity, however, most certainly there are certain forces beyond the psychological which establish a person's sense of self, namely, but not limited to, certain sociological factors. As much as a person is product of their internal environment, they are also the sum of their external environment, their encounters with others.

Identity, Moral Structure, and Computer Antivirus Systems

At the core of this paper, it is a thorough investigation of identity. It is the pursuit to define the very characteristics that cradle how we perceive ourselves as human beings. On the nature of identity, our ideas about ourselves must be adaptive in that they must continually be up to date like the best antivirus software. In the realm of technology, viruses, worms, and spyware hunt for

vulnerable systems to exploit. Antivirus systems use a library of internal definitions or signatures, which identify malicious programs. Simply, signatures allow an antivirus application to distinguish one virus from another. Antivirus definitions can be likened, in the human sense, to the specific ideas we know about ourselves to be self-evident. Only by continually updating our virus definitions are we able to protect our computer systems. Similarly, only by continually updating the information we know about who we are, are we able to protect ourselves against external negative influences. The great importance of this analogy stretches into our livelihood of our humanity and personal power. Symbolically, viruses, worms, and spyware, in the personal sense, are the false ideas which attempt to program our minds and we restructure the way we think about ourselves. We can notice when we are under attack, by the external world, when we are barraged with emotional red flags that cause us internal chaos. Computer systems are immune to attacks insofar that they have patched all areas where they could be attacked. Once a system is up to date it is best able to handle the chaos of life, likewise, once we know about who we are, and we discover the particular attributes or characteristics (internal definitions) which we know to be true, in the deepest sense, that creates a stable and secure system inside of ourselves, similar to our computer system analogy that protects us, that we can retreat too at any given moment. The metaphoric relationship of a computer system, anti-virus software, and truth ultimately relates to our *Personal Moral Structure*. Our *Moral Structure* is the system of thoughts that we hold internally consistent about ourselves. However, only by self-examination, as Socrates discovered, can we come to validate the accuracy of our internal beliefs. To elevate our quality of life, we must persistently update and reconfigure the beliefs in our heads to recognizing evolving truths. Different than a computer system, our *Moral Structure* ought to be flexible like a palm tree with the ability to adapt itself to the changing winds of circumstance.

One of the great virtues of developing a *Moral Structure* not only helps us understand ourselves, it also serves to protect our beingness. For example, the whole enterprise and discipline of marketing prides itself on the foundation of marketing things that a person may not actually need. Marketing aims at redefining what a person wants. However, once a person realizes, for instance, that they do not need a Ferrari to get from point a to b, they can move from one place to another with their Toyota Corolla, they are no longer susceptible to the programming of the outside world. Ultimately, one of the highest stages in a person's growth is when they come to internally define the things that are most meaningful and valuable to them individually.

Joseph Campbell emphasizes, "The greatest privilege in life is to be who you are." By reevaluating every single one of our beliefs, with an eye towards continuous evaluation and development, into a compass of thought which coincides with our own calibrated internal truths, that is the goldmine of what it means to be an individual. Happiness is a byproduct of action, a life that commits itself to seeking greater truths and uprooting weeds of falsity. Most certainly, living in truth is a matter of continuous application. Furthermore, enjoying life is not something that can be prescribed, it is not something predates us, it is something we create with our habits and thought processes. As the transcendent power of my message becomes evident, it will become clear that this is essay is not a prescription of beliefs, rather, it is an entry point into the wormhole of our own reality.

I am driven by the curious question, “**What is Truth?**” Over the course of the last few years, I have found myself increasingly interested in the topic of truth, as I now view myself as a person capable and worthy of giving expression to the ethereal power which has given me to myself. Through the life-defining school of experience, science, and self-realization, I have discovered that *there is an undercurrent of laws, forces, and patterns which govern the nature of life, time, space, and the texture of reality.*

The Coordinates of Truth

This paper acknowledges the existence of objective truths outside our experience of life; however its primary focus narrows in on the scope of truth that is particular to each and every person. Richard De Vere, an intellectual pioneer, serves as the lighthouse for the direction of this paper. It is his carefully examined understanding that **the *Coordinates of Truth* take root in each individual.** Specifically, he begins by stating, “**What is true for one individual is true for them individualistically.**” This concept aligns with a modern day interpretation of literature. For example, when studying literature, in a class room setting, the teacher will often ask the class what a specific text means to them. In a certain sense, literature is a vehicle of self-discovery, where it allows the individual to uncover their own internal meanings about certain areas of thought, which may not, on the surface, be clearly evident. Only by tapping their mind with questions and fresh perspectives are new ideas brought to the forefront of their imagination. When a reader, in a literature class, is asked for their specific interpretation of a poem for instance, they look at it through their lens of thought and experiences. Consequently, their response ushers spawns their truth and emotional reaction. If the teacher does not meet eye to

eye with the student an agreement of meaning, that in no way should invalidate the student's response, because it is individual to them, as both the teacher and the student leverage different grades of experience and learning. Simply, exploring the relationship between literature and truth is meaningful because it shows each person sees the world through their own eyes. Additionally, what is true for one person may not necessarily be true for another person, as in the case of the teacher and student. However, the truth can simultaneously converge or deviate from other people's viewpoints, that is to say, two people can see and have the same idea of a certain truth, while those same two people may see and hold a different idea of the truth at another time. For example, today I may accept the color green as my favorite because it speaks to me. However, tomorrow a different color may become my favorite because of a new experience with the color that reshapes my perception and attitude towards the color green. Ultimately, recognizing the existence of personal truths is a matter of emotional growth and a mutating process that increases our self-awareness.

Defining Truth

This paper explores Truth, as the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it, "Truth, n, Conformity with fact, *agreement with reality*," which is to say, "The truth or falsity of a statement is determined by how it relates to the world and whether it accurately describes that world" (Hanna and Harrison 21). Substantiating this view is William James, one of the founding fathers of modern psychology, who understood that, "Truth is verifiable to the extent that thoughts and statements correspond with actual things, as well as the extent to which they "hang together," or cohere, as pieces of a puzzle might fit together; which are in turn verified by the observed results of the application of an idea to actual practice" (Macmillan 427–428). Additionally, one of the fundamental features of William's epistemological theory of pragmatism

and truth is the fact that, “Truth was dependent upon its use to the person who held it.” (Macmillan 427–428). This construct of truth and its use is further elucidated in the foundation and application of mathematics, which I will examine in greater detail.

Central to understanding Truth is deconstructing the foundation which gives rise to it. Namely, several disciplines in particular will be surveyed, epistemology (the study of knowledge), ontology (the study of existence), semantics (the study of meaning), linguistics (the connection between thought and the structure of language), mathematics, and science. By connecting key concepts in these disciplines, we can see how the construction of language, assigning words to concepts and objects, allows us to develop a mental model of the world for mining truth. Based in our perceptions, we can develop a detailed perspective of truth insofar that it relates to our reality, as we piece together the jigsaw of our experiences. In this sense, Truth becomes a vehicle of clarity; it is the undertaking to distill the fundamental essence of a thing, fact, event, state of affairs, and/or conditions to the best of our ability.

Truth and Mathematics

Building on our highest aim of understanding Truth, it is wise to begin excavating a field of knowledge which is built on sound principles of logic, which scientists determine to be logical, both intrinsically and fundamentally. Mathematics, in a strong sense, is understood as one of the most objective ways of understanding the nature of reality, as it is commonly described as the *language of the universe*. In the words Galileo Galilei, a famous astronomer, depicted as one of the founding fathers of physics, he said that our ability to read into the mystery of the heavens is determined by our ability to “learn the language and become familiar with the characters in which it is written. It is written in a mathematical language, and the letters are triangles, circles

and other geometrical figures, without which means it is humanly impossible to comprehend a single word. Without these, one is wandering about in a dark labyrinth.” By deconstructing the foundation of mathematics into some of its most basic concepts, we can see how Truth, as we are defining it, is that which corresponds to the reality of the universe.

Mathematical axioms, such as $1+1=2$ are based on sound principles of logic. In all reality, mathematics, at its core, is an extension of symbology, which shares an intimate relationship with linguistics and semantics. In our minds, we semantically associate numbers and symbols with values, where we mathematically deduce the results, such as one plus one equals a sum of two. Looking at the fundamental building blocks of basic mathematical concepts, we infer arithmetic relationships between numbers and their associated values. Based on this logic, we also determine a set of precisely defined rules. In a certain sense, algebra, in its entirety, can be defined as a set of rules that governs how mathematical constructs relate to each other.

Examining the operations of algebra allows us to see the internal relationships between numbers, variables, principles, and rules, which allows us to understand the underlying physics of the universe. The significance of exploring abstract mathematical concepts is seen in the fact that we have constructed a reality, which represents and mirrors the behavior of the universe. Precisely, we have discovered a body of laws, a language that speaks to the mechanics of the universe, therein depicting its laws and fundamental structure. Similarly, truth can be understood in the same way. Although there may be a better way to understand the language of cosmos, indeed it may not be mathematics, but the way we have learned to commune and communicate with the universe is through the algebraic and mathematical languages we have developed. Therefore, *understanding the deeper nature of reality hinges upon our ability to develop a language for constructing and responding to the meaning that applies to our perceptions.* In other words,

mathematical conclusions, based on unshakeable principles of logic, mirrors the way we are defining truth, as it exists as an undercurrent of reality. Similarly, we perceive the existence of mathematical constructs, because that is one of the ways that we have learned how to correspond with our immediate reality. Exploring mathematics, semantically, serves as a gateway towards the presence and application of truth. For example, establishing a mission to the moon relies on the mathematical language that we have derived from scientific and mathematical investigations of the cosmos. These mathematical constructs guarantee a tremendous amount of precision, accuracy, and reliability in applying their laws, which provides us with the ability to man a mission that takes our species to the moon. Specifically, these mathematical constructs correspond to the language we have developed. In a strong sense, language is way of tapping into the very power of truth. The next step in dissecting the anatomy of truth is to develop a model that helps us see into our own personal truths, which brings us to the focus of this paper.

The Relationship between Truth and Language

Understanding how language conveys thought is central to the concept of truth, as language is a platform for organizing our ideas about reality as we experience it. Language is an instrument of communication which has helped our species to evolve and become a dominating force in the animal kingdom. Language harnesses the biological engineering of our speech and cognitive faculties, our ability to produce coherent sounds that translates into cohesive ideas. However, sound is just one aspect of verbal communication. Communication mainly derives from an agreement of semantics. When two people choose to speak to each other, with the intention of being understood, they speak the same language. Socially, in a certain sense, they have agreed upon on set of cultural linguistic and/or semantic definitions. Although I am

focusing on verbal communication, non-verbal communication also builds itself on foundation of these fundamental principles. Understanding that truth is a byproduct of language is key to understanding the way I am approaching the task of defining individual truth. In the words of John Searle, a prominent thinker in the philosophy of language, he stated, “Our concepts determine, or at least, shape our experiences” (6:00 – 6:20 Searle). Ultimately, Searle aligns with our momentum that language is a byproduct of how we express truth. Using language, as a way towards accessing truth, it becomes our bridge into understanding and categorizing the world in our internal engine of thinking. However, it is important to mention that is not the fact that language creates the world, rather, reality is the function of the system of thought and representation that we use to depict basic truths. (6:20 – 6:40 Searle)

We can assist our investigation of truth by examining a simple commonplace example that explores our use of language. Regarding the existence of the Sun, we know that the Sun, from a perspective of science, chemically fuses together gaseous molecules of helium and hydrogen, which generates an incredible amount of thermogenic energy. It is this massive collision of vibrating molecules, in part, which allows life to flourish on planet earth. We can see that my linguistic endeavor to describe the sun is defined in my words, “gaseous molecules of helium and hydrogen.” Fundamentally, these words semantically reflect the deeper nature of the sun insofar that they are **accurate, consistent, testable, and applicable** to reality. These characteristics collectively bring together the fundamental properties that distinguish one truth from another. In the context of our example of the sun, my pursuit to define the nature of the sun is semantically dependent upon the scope of facts I have in my lexical resource to build a model of reality that coincides with the actual nature of the sun. Simply, a sentence with coherent semantical meaning, that is accurate, consistent, testable, and applicable, corresponds to our definition of

truth, until more facts are assimilated. Additionally, the more explanatory power a particular explanation has, the more confidently we can agree that we have pinpointed a certain truth about a state of affairs in the world. However, it is important to address that explanatory power is not the only necessary requirement needed to define the essence of a given truth. For example, the ancient civilization of the Mayans believed the sun rose into the sky, each day, because of a sun god. Now, with the advancement of science, we scientifically accept an entirely different explanation, that paints an entirely different picture of the cosmos. Although the explanatory power of their theory appeared to be all-encompassing, we now see a different truth coming into view. However, just because they did not have access to the instruments of science, that in no way invalidates their truth, it just another perspective. As more facts are assimilated, the accuracy of certain truths can be improved.

A Decision Making Model

To take on the empowering task of *developing a moral structure*, we need an efficient *decision making model*, to guide our process of seeking Truth. By converging multiple concepts, several dynamic thought processes, that being some of the best philosophical schools of thought to date, along with the energy of the scientific method, we can create an approach that adjusts itself to our own relative truths. Any doctrine of thought which is inflexible will become a barrier rather a stepping stone towards the success of our development.

Aristotle, arguably one of the greatest philosophers to have ever lived, seized our attention when he unlocked his concept, *Doctrine of the Mean*, which holds that the attainment of virtue, “a disposition to behave in the right manner”, is the accomplishment of finding the mean between two extremes (Book II). Aristotle’s concept of the mean is a great starting point, in our

pursuit to develop a structured decision making model when seeking personal truth. In his concept of virtue, he suggested a framework for logical thinking about intellectual matters, however; I want to expand his concept to take on the context of emotional matters as well. Particularly, in the art of judicious decision making, it is wise that we find the mean between two extremes, namely, intellect on the far left and emotion on the far right. By exercising our will, finding the middle point between two extremes, which takes a great deal of practice and mental reflection, we can begin to orchestrate our lives in way that addresses our personal growth. To build a foundation that mirrors who we are (our moral structure), we must individually determine the specific beliefs that will empower us to make the best decisions. In other words, the best decisions take into deep and calculated consideration, the emotional and intellectual forces which shape the course of our lives.

In many of the most prominent religions and philosophies, such as Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism, we find the concept of the **Golden Mean**, a concept similar to Aristotle's *Doctrine of the Mean*, playing a pivotal role. In particular, analyzing a line of scripture from the Christian bible, "Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes" (Ecclesiastes 7:18). Similarly, there is a verse in the Quran, which equally places a heavy weight of importance on the concept of finding the mean between extremes, "In the same way, We made a community of the middle way, so that you should be witnesses over the people, and the messenger a witness to you." (Verse 143, Chapter 2 Quran). Looking at Buddhism, Buddha, at the dawn of his spiritual awakening, found greater peace in his concept, *The Middle Way*, which can be understood as a path of moderation between extremes. Additionally, Confucius, a sagacious and well-known Chinese philosopher, emphasized that the Superior man is one who maintains a balance of harmony, as one directs their thought process towards a constant state of equilibrium. The most

common train of thought threaded through these thinkers is the proof positive fact the best decisions stem from a sense of balancing our internal forces of intellect and emotion. It is one of our highest duties to determine the mean between extremes, as we define our own Truths. Building on this ideological momentum brings us to a very powerful maxim, in the science of decision making, which reflects the deeper truths within ourselves, which I call *Personal Utilitarianism*.

Personal Utilitarianism

“The best decision is that which satisfies the great number of personal dynamics.”

Utilitarianism, an ethical rudder of thought in the sea of moral philosophy, pinpoints that the best decisions are those that achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of dynamics. However, I want to expand this concept, and place it the context of our personal thinking about Truth-Seeking. Specifically, *Personal Utilitarianism*, suggests an personalized analytical-approach when thinking about life decisions, where we consider all of the ramifications which will affect the consequences of our actions. In the course of rendering decisions, we must address the various departments of our lives and consider the panoramic effects it will have in each domain, particularly, intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, social, and economic. By considering the impact of our decisions, in each of these areas, we can choose the courses of action, which will allow us to maintain a state of psychological and emotional equilibrium, therein, bringing a greater stability into our lives. In essence, when we are faced with tough situations, we must consider all of our personal dynamics to see if the intention, act, and potential consequence aligns with our goals and purpose.

One important objection to be entertained, when applying the approach of Personal

Utilitarianism regards the fact that it may take an unnecessary amount of time to consult each area of our life when making a decision. It is true, that it may take a good deal of time which is why it is important to default to Aristotle's *Doctrine of the Mean*, where we must internally decide the specific length of time, during our decision making process, that should be spent thinking about our personal dynamics.

The Transformative Role of Truth

My focus is on the transformative role of truth as it commands the destiny of experience, to discover and understand the force that breathes life into our lives. The primary threads of thought woven into this paper regards the facts that **1) *Truth is a rudder that steers reality.*** **2) *Truth is relativistic.*** **3) *Through the vehicle of words we can linguistically come close to the ultimate truth of things.*** **4) *Our knowledge of the world is fallible, which limits our quest of identifying a certain Truth to be a best analysis.*** **5) *At the heart of each level of reality, we find different law of truth governing different departments of existence.*** **6) *By harnessing a clear vision of the Truth about ourselves, we can gain greater personal power.***

Science, a Method of Truth-Discovery

If we closely examine the scientific method, as a Truth-Seeking device, we find that a particular *Truth* or *law of nature*, by definition, is a way of understanding cosmic behavior or a certain set of processes that governs the operations of the universe. One of the best ways we can come to elucidate the underlying nature of a "Truth", "scientific law", or "body of laws" occurs

through our ability to recreate the existence of a pattern that has been discerned via empirical investigation. Karl Popper, a man regarded as one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century, a luminary in the advancement of science, championed a mode of Truth-Seeking called *Falsification*, which draws our attention to the boundaries between knowledge, Truth, and that which lies beyond the scope of empirical knowledge. Popper writes that all scientific knowledge, “consists in the search for truth”, but it, “is not the search for certainty...All human knowledge is fallible...” (Popper 1996) His analysis of science and its relationship with truth perfectly aligns with the thrust of this paper. Although we can come to see the internal relations of things, the connection between cause and effect in the sense of science, he avers that certainty is beyond our grasp. Agnostically, we can ascertain the presence of a certain truth, but we may not be able to elucidate it with concrete certainty. Additionally, he brings forth one of the great strengths of the scientific method, which lies in its flexibility and fallibility. His research brings us to a conclusion that we can develop a workable understanding of Truth, in the world, through an exhaustive series of tests and experimentations. The methodology of *Falsification* draws us into a novel way of thinking about Truth. Specifically, it is a detailed process of scrutiny where we can discern and validate, with a great degree of accuracy, the existence of a cosmic pattern, law, or truth. “In so far as a scientific statement speaks about reality, it must be falsifiable; and in so far as it is not falsifiable, it does not speak about reality.” (Kopper) The chief train of thought driving the method of falsification is the scientific undertaking to render a theory, understanding, or law false. In the event that a theory, hypothesis, or understanding is unable to be falsified, it then convincingly leads us to the deductive conclusion that it identifies a particular truth, condition of things, or state of affairs. Simply, the testability of Truth is one of the primal elements needed in unearthing a recipe of truth which connects the nature of our world. In other

words, in the same way science applies the scientific method to discover a body of laws, we can invoke that same approach as we determine our own belief systems.

The Soul-Awakening Effects of Self-Realization

Harnessing the throne of truth in my own life, I have found that accessing our inner source of truth connects us with the ability to take charge and command our lives. As Aristotle stated, “Knowing yourself is the beginning of wisdom.” Examining the concept, *different Truths apply to different departments of reality*, in the perspective of self, we can begin to see the reality that certain internal Truths apply to different individuals. When we merge with our truths, we give birth to an emotional and intellectual metamorphosis in ourselves.

Looking at the absence of truth in my life, regarding my past, I was plagued by certain falsehoods, which destroyed my sense of self. One of the worst things in the world, as I am defining it, is an untruth, a lie, because it leads us away from who we are. In the words of Adolph Hitler, “If you tell a big enough lie and tell it frequently enough, it will be believed.” Hitler’s thinking is important to address, because it shows us how a lie acts as an emotional wrecking ball that destroys everything in its path. One debilitating thing that immobilizes an individual from self-realization and growth is when they are continually injected with the poison of falsehoods. If a person is conditioned to believe they are stupid, they will eventually begin to believe it. Similarly, looking at the inhumane effects of the holocaust, millions were killed in the name of falsehoods, as Hitler brainwashed people to believe that Jews were subhuman, and the fact that they were the causation for the widespread financial misfortune which afflicted the German people. Examining Hitler’s ideology, he forced his truth on people, not giving them the opportunity to think for themselves. It is imperative to recognize the reality of individual truth,

and the additional fact that no person has the right to force someone else to adopt their truth. Acknowledging another person's individuality, along with the pursuit to discover our own internal voice, is one the most significant undertakings of personal development. It is a way of accepting a person's humanity, giving them beingness to act as ends in themselves. By assailing a person with our own truth, we oppress them. On the nature of teaching and seeking truth, any person who subjugates another person with their own doctrine of thought, claiming they have discovered an ultimate truth, and that their way is the only way, is false. As James Allen emphasized, "...it is supremely the office of the true teacher to bring men back to the simple and beautiful realities of their own souls. The false teacher, he who cannot perceive the simple truths of duty and of conduct, and does not see himself and other men as they are, when asked point out the way of truth will declare that it lies entirely in the acceptance of his own particular theology, and will warn the questioner against all other systems of theology" (Allen 384) Allen is speaking to the wisdom of three essential facts; 1) the best teachers are those who lead a person to realize the virtues of their soul, 2) true teachers act out of the truth they practice in their own lives, as words reflect their deeds, and 3) a person's theology, their particular belief system, whether it includes a god or not, is their choice and freedom to believe. Any person who claims holiness, in any sense of the word, but does not allow you to have your own perspective, is not a man of wisdom, or a person with deep insight, they are a false prophet, because they do not see or understand the deeper truth. The real teachers are those awaken and reveal, rather than apply an order of force. One great thing that Allen mentions is the fact that if any truth is to be known and manifested in a person's life, they must understand the simple and inescapable fact that they must apply what they know about themselves; they must believe and develop a wholehearted relationship with their truth.

Our Concept of Self

One of the inspiring reasons I speak vehemently about the debilitating power of a lie is because it destroys our internal image. Harkening back to my days where I accepted the lies that were hard pressed into me; those lies grew to define me, both intellectually and emotionally. In essence, it destroyed my *concept of self*. Not only did it thwart my advancement of self-knowledge and growth, it also prevented me from leveraging my Truth. Even more importantly, the lies demobilized the spirit of my humanity. Once I opened the doors to my own truth, I began to see things in myself, that I always wanted, but had no idea they existed within me. As Rumi, an Islamic Scholar, whose spiritual words have transcended all borders of religion, culture, and ethnicity stated, “I have been a Seeker and still am, but I have stopped asking books and the stars. I have started listening to the teachings of my own Soul.”

Once I tuned into the voice that constructed my *concept of self*, that was the turning point where I began my ascendancy into personal power, the kingdom of self-enlightenment, where I was no longer a victim of circumstances. Discovering my truths became a shield of justice that protected my inner world against the invasion of external negative programming. One of my realizations allowed me to see that internal happiness is cultivated by a growing mind that nurtures a positive awareness towards itself. In other words, our ability to see our truth is dependent upon our ability to clear the clouds of falsity that prevent us from accessing a greater clarity.

“The journey of the mind is the daily journey of life.”

- Anonymous

If our vision of ourselves is emotionally clouded, we will find it increasingly difficult to calibrate our internal sense of direction. An example of a clouded mind can be understood in a

particular situation where we become the object of someone else's misfortune, where they actively burden us with their negativity. In a certain sense, it can be something as simple as a friend giving us their emotional turmoil without that same person wanting to make things better for themselves, or it could be their apathetic attitude towards our personal mental and emotional health. Many times, others who are paving a destructive path rarely recognize the negative effect they are having on the ones that are closest to them, which is why we must assert our will and freedom in a prosurvival way. It is often the case, that instead of that same friend making a commitment to him or herself to improve their circumstances, instead, they may try to involve us in their turbulence, and focus on the problem, rather than working towards a solution. As James Allen stated, "Men are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves" (Allen 149). There is a monumental difference between the person who resolves to improve their situation, and the person who continues to perpetuate their problem without fostering the desire to get better. Ultimately, emotion comes from a place of goodness, but how that emotion is used is an entirely different matter.

The Flexibility of Science

Exploring the scientific department of life, particularly the *scientific method*, we find a highly effective method for dialectically exploring personal reality, which exercises a profound ability, the ability to adopt the mode of reasoning that presents the most compelling evidence. For example, it was long held that the sun revolved around the Earth, instead of the earth orbiting the sun. In the face of more convincing facts, the scientific method accommodated a new view of

the solar system, although, in its initial phases, it was met with heavy theological rebuke. In light of this new truth, a new picture of the cosmos was slowly accepted, a more accurate way of understanding the world, where our perspective of truth underwent a paradigm shift to reflect a greater clarity. In the words of David Hume, a hugely influential contemporary philosopher, “A wise man proportions his beliefs to the evidence.” Personally, I have found that adopting this direction of thinking, where we accommodate new Truths in the face of better evidence is one of the most advantageous avenues for pursuing truth. As Stephen Hawking emphasized, “Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change.” Hawking’s insight reaches deep into our experience, as he captures a profound truth, that our philosophy, which composes our belief structure, must continually adapt itself to new evidence. This brings forth one of the major setbacks of endorsing an organized belief system, namely, that is not examined with a critical eye, since it does not embrace the deeper nature of our identity. It is one of life’s great liberties to take the necessary time to judiciously select the particular beliefs which coincide with who we are. As we develop ourselves in our own image, seeking truth becomes a natural byproduct of self-analysis, where we put each belief under a microscope of reason. Sometimes, we will encounter a truth, or a commonly accepted viewpoint, but we may discover that it does cohere with the nature of our experience, or the fact that it does not shed light into our lives. Keeping our truth-seeking attitude consistent with the way science searches for new laws that govern the universe, we must willingly and courageously adopt the truth that best describes and corresponds to our experience of reality.

Looking at the ontology of Truth, that is to say, in its application, it is scientifically accepted that “gravity” is one of the great forces of nature, which permeates the universe, as it plays an active role in stretching, shaping, and warping the geometry of space-time. However scientists

have unsuccessfully been able to wrap their minds around the subatomic particles of gravity, although we are certain the widespread effect of gravity exists. To this day, scientists have been unsuccessful in their endeavor to identify the particular subatomic particles which are believed to give life to the force of gravity. It has been proposed that a “graviton” may be the leading subatomic particle that sparks the force of gravity; however, this supposition has yet to be substantiated scientifically (Lightman). This example plays a noteworthy role in helping us understand, that as we search for truth, we may not be able to grasp the concrete nature of something, however, we can, to a great degree, pinpoint the presence of a certain truth, and understand how its properties relate to us as individuals. This is what Karl Popper meant about accessing truth, but not certainty. In particular, we know that gravity, as a force acting on heavenly bodies exists, but our best attempt to define and understand it is still limited. Additionally, this area of thought also reveals us to the limitations of language when describing reality. Language serves as means towards truth, identifying certain characteristics in the world, but in terms of elucidating the core essence of a certain truth, it may run into certain complications. However, the important thought to take away here is the fact that just because we cannot perfectly describe or understand the ultimate nature of something, that in no way detracts from the existence of a thing. In this case, we are aware of the presence of gravity, as we are subject to its effects, however, it would be entirely irrational to suppose that the force of gravity, has no presence in the physics of existence.

Understanding, “**Truth, as a core element of existence**” comes to life when we consider fact that *different truths apply to different departments of reality*. This idea is furthered when scientists attempt to merge the strange world of quantum mechanics with Einstein’s theory of Relativity. Interestingly, both areas of knowledge have been scientifically supported, but when

we try to connect the two theories into a cohesive picture of the universe, the theories run into certain mathematical incompatibilities (Carlip 885). The importance of this seeming-contradiction opens our eyes to the possibilities that there is a 1) misconstrual in our scientific logic about these theories, 2) our knowledge of these departments of reality has reached a temporary ending point or 3) that *different laws of truths, may indeed, exist in different departments of reality*. In the microscopic world, we have a set of subatomic laws, while in the macroscopic world we have a different set of laws, which controls the behavior of planets, stars, and galaxy clusters. Although these theories have been corroborated, in a courtroom of science, as countless experiments have attested to our knowledge of these disparate worlds, there still remains a certain air of mystery in our understanding. It may very well be that scientists have been led astray in their understanding of exactly how these cosmic process work, which may explain why these two theories do not fit together, however, it seems must more plausible, that, from our current perception of the universe, *that different truths apply to different areas of reality*. Similarly, in the fields of psychology, chemistry, biology, physics, and mathematics we find an independent set of laws that managing these domains of reality. For example, if we consider a definition of the word “human” through the lens of each of these different disciplines, we will get very different answers. Psychology might define a person a stream of consciousness whereas chemistry might define as person as a collection of chemical reactions. Depending on the context used to analyze something, that determines the nature of the definition that will be revealed, which again taps into how language serves as a landscape that maps reality.

Helpful to our pursuit, when unpacking the question, “What is Truth?” is looking at the concept of time, in the Einsteinian sense, which speaks to the thrust of our investigation, namely, the conception that *Truth is relativistic*. Understanding reality in *relativistic terms* is one of

Albert Einstein's greatest contributions to the advancement of human knowledge, and one of the most important ideas surfaced in this treatise.

When exploring the concept of truth, in the context of science, we find that our most accurate notion of time varies throughout the universe. In Einstein's theory of relativity, he discovered that time is a function of speed, that is to say, time, space, and speed participate in a causal relationship (Tinder 10). Basically, one central thing Einstein understood is that the faster we move through space, the slower we experience time, and vice versa, the slower we move through space, the faster we experience time. Basically, at the heart of his understanding, is the principal idea that depending on how fast an object travels, it will experience time differently. If we have multiple objects traveling at different speeds, there will be different "experiences of the concept of time and space for each object. As Supurna Sinha, a doctor in physics stated in her published journal, *Einstein and the Special Theory of Relativity*, "...events which are simultaneous according to an observer appear to be occurring at distinct times from another observer's point of view." (Sinha 100) In other words, based on the mechanical motion of moving objects, they will experience time in their own way, thereby creating their own unique spatiotemporal properties, separate from other objects. This relativistic conception of time was validated, using precise scientific measurements when a space shuttle, with an atomic clock, was launched into outer space at a fraction of the speed of light. When the shuttle arrived back at Earth, its onboard atomic clock time was then compared to an atomic clock on earth, which revealed that the atomic clock on the space shuttle was several nanoseconds slower than the atomic clock on Earth (Tinder 10-13). For reference, the atomic clock is one of our best and most accurate ways of measuring time. Similarly, the *General Theory of Relativity*, hence beginning with a g, think gravity, also brings into the effects of time-dilation. At the core of General

Relativity, is the fact that time is manipulated by the strength or weakness of a gravitational pull (Feynman Lecture 5). Similarly, on the time bending effects of gravity, in the paraphrased words of Doctor James Chin-Wen Chou, who orchestrated an important scientific experiment to confirm Einstein's thinking on General Relativity, he stated that it is "... true that you will grow old marginally faster if you stand just one step higher on a staircase." (Chou) Although the effects of time-dilation may seem negligible, they are nonetheless a product of universe's laws, and must be evaluated when analyzing any conception of reality, especially our own.

The fundamental connection between Einstein's theory of relativity and personal truth brings us to some of the foremost credibility of this paper. As we unwind Einstein's thought process on the nature of time, space, and existence, we begin to see that Einstein's perspective of a relativistic universe perfectly aligns with one of our leading ideas that *Truth is a rudder which steers reality*, and the additional fact that *Truth is relativistic*. Truth plays a pivotal role in Einstein's blueprints of the universe, insofar that he has discovered a particular way nature acts, which is accurate, consistent, testable, and reliable. Additionally, Einstein understood that the geometry of space-time adjusts itself, relativistically, which in the same way, corresponds to our leading thesis that truth is individual, it is contained in the perception of the object doing the perceiving.

Moral Truth, Circumstances, and Responsibility

One potential objection to our arsenal of reasoning, when defining truth, may be considered in the context of moral truths, that is to say, multiple viewpoints that contradict each other. However, this paper does not consider morality, as having a clearly set of defined

boundaries, other than what the individual personally decides for him or herself.

It has been argued, according to the empiricism camp, by influential thinkers such as John Locke, that a person is a complete product of their environment (Psillos 129-138). However, this paper does not fall into alignment with that perspective, because, to a certain degree, it robs the individual of certain responsibilities. I wish to address the strength of each individual, as a person who commands their experience, by an inward force. By examining this compass, we can direct our attention towards the evolving fact, that a person is not just a victim of circumstances, they are also a creator of circumstances. At its heart, the individual, although bombarded with a myriad of perspectives, decides the waves of thoughts he chooses to surf. Largely, man is responsible for his own freedom. As Peter Parker from Spider Man states, “With great freedom comes great responsibility.” Although, each person may not be able to live up to the noble task of taking control of their life, as certain debilities, physical and/or psychological may hinder our capacities and sensibilities, it is the nonetheless a great and noble aim for those who are able.

*“If the doors of perception were cleansed,
everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.”*

- William Blake

As we heighten our ability to see things in our own way, new doors of opportunity will open. Throughout the course of history, especially since the birth of the Enlightenment Age, we have seen great strides in intellectual growth, where new models of the universe have replaced old ones. With time, as our methods improve, a keener eye, for refining our theories, will develop, thus accommodating deeper truths. Summoning the schools of thought, outlined in this paper, by expanding the horizons of our self-awareness, we can begin to choose the particular truths that correspond with our beingness. Fredrick Nietzsche brilliantly said “And those who

were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music. “ In this quote the music and dancing symbolizes “Truth”, alluding to the fact that just because we cannot perceive someone else’s Truth, that in no way detracts from their truth. Similarly, Gandhi stated, “When you remove the cobwebs of ignorance, the Truth shines clear.”

The gift of merging with our truth is strengthened by our ability to accurately define the very beliefs which structure our *concept of self*. We can increase our perception of reality by collecting more facts, and sorting through the facts with some, but not limited to, the approaches mentioned in this treatise. Standing on the shoulders of intellectual giants of the past show us how we are all connected, but also how we are different. Right beneath the surface of our perceptions, there remains an elusive universe waiting to be awakened.

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