
UNIT 1 HUMAN NEED FOR SELF-ACTUALIZATION

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

- To explore the human need for self-actualization.
 - To deepen the self-actual through love.
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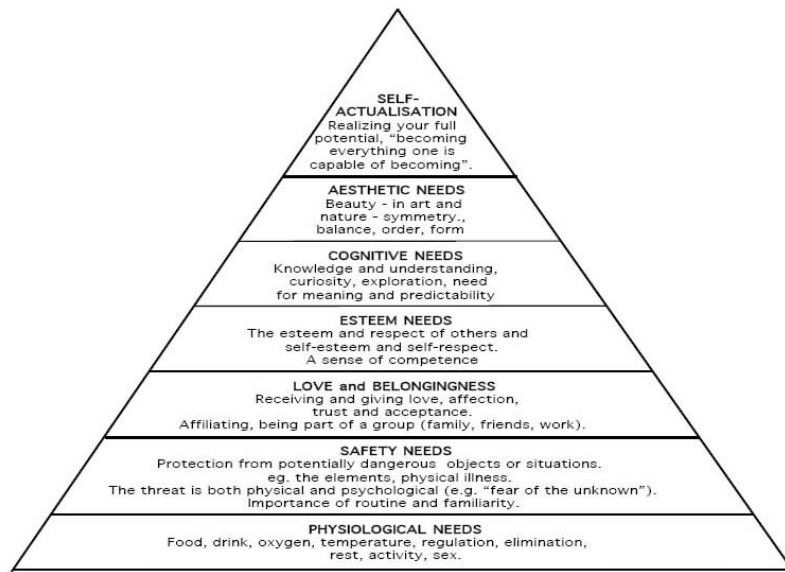
1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit that deals with self-actualisation we first begin with some explorative notes on self-actualization as developed by Abraham Maslow. Then we take a philosophical turn and see how such a self-actualization can be furthered and complemented by love, understood philosophically.

1.2 THE HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Abraham Maslow (1970) stated that human motivation is based on people seeking fulfilment and change through personal growth. Maslow described self-actualized people as those who were fulfilled and doing all they were capable of. By studying people he considered to be self-actualised (including Abraham Lincoln, Albert Einstein and William James)

Maslow identified 15 characteristics of a self-actualised person (illustrated as a pyramid as shown below). For example: enjoyment of new experiences, sense of humour, close friendships, creativity etc. It is not necessary to display all 15 characteristics to become self-actualised, and not only self-actualised people will display them. Maslow did not equate self-actualization with perfection. Self-actualization merely involves achieving ones potential. Thus someone can be silly, wasteful, vain and impolite, and still self-actualise. Less than one percent of the population achieve self-actualisation.



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The basic principles of Maslow, on which he bases his humanistic psychology, may be summed up as follows:

1. The normal personality is characterized by unity, integration, consistency, and coherence. Organization is the natural state, and disorganization is pathological.
2. The organism can be analyzed by differentiating its parts, but no part can be studied in isolation. The whole functions according to laws that cannot be found in the parts.
3. The organism has one sovereign drive, that of self-actualization. People strive continuously to realize their inherent potential by whatever avenues are open to them.
4. The influence of the external environment on normal development is minimal. The organism's potential, if allowed to unfold by an appropriate environment, will produce a healthy, integrated personality.
5. The comprehensive study of one person is more useful than the extensive investigation, in many people, of an isolated psychological function.
6. The salvation of the human being is not to be found in either behaviorism or in psychoanalysis, (which deals with only the darker, meaner half of the individual). We must deal with the questions of value, individuality, consciousness, purpose, ethics and the higher reaches of human nature.
7. Human being is basically good not evil.
8. Psychopathology generally results from the denial, frustration or twisting of our essential nature.
9. Therapy of any sort, is a means of restoring a person to the path of self-actualization and development along the lines dictated by their inner nature.
10. When the four basic needs have been satisfied, the growth need or self-actualization need arises: A new discontent and restlessness will develop unless the individual is doing what he individually is fitted for. A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write--in short, what people can be they must be (Byrne2005).

1.4 SELF ACTUALIZATION

Maslow believed that a human being has a natural drive to healthiness, or self actualization. He believed that human being has basic, biological and psychological needs that have to be fulfilled in order to be free enough to feel the desire for the higher levels of realization. He also believed that the organism has the natural, unconscious and innate capacity to seek its needs (Maslow 1968). In other words, human beings have an internal, natural, drive to become the best possible person they can be. To quote him: we have within ourselves "a pressure toward unity of personality, toward spontaneous expressiveness, toward full individuality and identity, toward seeing the truth rather than being blind, toward being creative, toward being good, and a lot else. That is, the human being is so constructed that he presses toward what most people would call good values, toward serenity, kindness, courage, honesty, love, unselfishness, and goodness." (Maslow, 1968)

Maslow believed that not only does the organism know what it needs to eat to maintain itself healthy, but also man knows intuitively what he needs to become the best possible, mentally healthy and happy "being". I use the word "being" because Maslow goes far beyond what the average person considers good physical and mental health. He talked about higher consciousness, esthetical and peak experiences, and Being. He stressed the importance of moral and ethical behaviour that will lead man naturally to discovering, becoming himself (Byrne 2005).

"The state of being without a system of values is psycho pathogenic, we are learning. The human being needs a framework of values, a philosophy of life, a religion or religion-surrogate to live by and understand by; in about the same sense he needs sunlight, calcium or love. This I have called the "cognitive need to understand." The value- illnesses which result from value-lessness are called variously anhedonia, anomie, apathy, amorality, hopelessness, cynicism, etc., and can become somatic illness as well. Historically, we are in a value interregnum in which all externally given value systems have proven failures (political, economic, religious, etc.) e.g., nothing is worth dying for. What man needs but doesn't have, he seeks for unceasingly, and he becomes dangerously ready to jump at any hope, good or bad. The cure for this disease is obvious. We need a validated, usable system of human values that we can believe in and devote ourselves to (be willing to die for), because they are true rather than because we are exhorted to "believe and have faith." Such an empirically based Weltanschauung seems now to be a real possibility, at least in theoretical outline."

Morality occurs naturally in such a situation. If we use our capacity to think, are honest, sincere and open, we arrive at moral and ethical behaviour naturally. The problem is to not destroy our ability to become ourselves. According to him, "Pure spontaneity consists of free, uninhibited uncontrolled, trusting, unpremeditated expression of the self, i.e., of the psychic forces, with minimal interference by consciousness. Control, will, caution, self-criticism, measure, deliberateness are the brakes upon this expression made intrinsically necessary by the laws of the social and natural world, and secondarily, made necessary by the fear of the psyche itself" (Maslow).

This means listening to the inner self, the unconscious, the spirit. "This ability of healthier people is to dip into the unconscious and preconscious, to use and value their primary processes instead of fearing them, to accept their impulses instead of always controlling them, to be able to regress voluntarily without fear, turns out to be one of the main conditions of creativity." "This development toward the concept of a healthy unconscious and of a healthy irrationality sharpens our awareness of the limitations of purely abstract thinking, of verbal thinking and of analytic thinking. If our hope is to describe the world fully, a place is necessary for preverbal, ineffable, metaphorical, primary process, concrete-experience, intuitive and esthetical types of cognition, for there are certain aspects of reality which can be cognized in no other way."

Meditation, self-hypnosis, imagery and the like are sources of discovering our inner being. To become self-actualized, Maslow said we need two things, inner exploration and action. "An important existential problem is posed by the fact that self-actualizing persons (and all people in

their peak- experiences) occasionally live out-of-time and out-of-the- world (a-temporal and a-spatial) even though mostly they must live in the outer world. Living in the inner psychic world (which is ruled by psychic laws and not by the laws of outer-reality), i.e., the world of experience, of emotion, of wishes and fears and hopes, of love of poetry, art and fantasy, is different from living in and adapting to the non-psychic reality which runs by laws he never made and which are not essential to his nature even though he has to live by them. (He could, after all, live in other kinds of worlds, as any science fiction fan knows.) The person who is not afraid of this inner, psychic world, can enjoy it to such an extent that it may be called Heaven by contrast with the more effortful, fatiguing, externally responsible world of "reality," of striving and coping, of right and wrong, of truth and falsehood. This is true even though the healthier person can also adapt more easily and enjoyably to the "real" world, and has better "reality testing," i.e., doesn't confuse it with his inner psychic world." Maslow has made a case for natural, human goodness. Human beings are basically good, not evil; they have the capacity to be an efficient, healthy and happy person. But they must nurture the capacity with awareness, honesty, and introspection and maintain his freedom: to freely respond to internal and external events (values), to be them at all costs.

The knowledge that man has this capacity motivates him to realize it. It also obliges him to actively work toward self realization. We cannot not respond to the call that a value makes on us. This whole discussion shows the importance of studying Values and Ethics. We are obliged to discover the range of our possible moral behaviour. If we are capable of being healthy and happy, then we are obliged to work toward that goal.

1.5 SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF SELF-ACTUALISED PEOPLE

Although we are all, theoretically, capable of self-actualising, most of us will not do so, or only to a limited degree. Maslow was particularly interested in the characteristics of people whom he considered to have achieved their potential as persons: his list included Albert Einstein, William James, Eleanor Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson. Some of the characteristics of self-actualizers and some of the behaviours leading to self-actualisation are shown in the table below. Although individuals achieve self-actualisation in their own unique way, they tend to share certain characteristics. However, self-actualization is a matter of degree, since 'There are no perfect human beings' (Maslow), but we can all be tending to perfect and self-actualised persons.

Behaviour leading to self-actualisation

1. Experiencing life like a child, with full absorption and concentration;
2. Trying new things instead of sticking to safe paths;
3. Listening to your own feelings in evaluating experiences instead of the voice of tradition or authority or the majority;
4. Avoiding pretence ('game playing') and being honest;
5. Being prepared to be unpopular if your views do not coincide with those of the majority;
6. Taking responsibility and working hard;
7. Trying to identify your defences and having the courage to give them up (Maslow 2010).

Characteristics of self-actualised people

1. They perceive reality efficiently and can tolerate uncertainty;
2. Accept themselves and others for what they are;
3. Spontaneous in thought and action;
4. Problem-centred (not self-centred);
5. Unusual sense of humour;
6. Able to look at life objectively;
7. Highly creative;
8. Resistant to enculturation, but not purposely unconventional;
9. Concerned for the welfare of humanity;
10. Capable of deep appreciation of basic life-experience;
11. Establish deep satisfying interpersonal relationships with a few people;
12. Peak experiences;
13. Need for privacy;
14. Democratic attitudes;
15. Strong moral/ethical standards (Menon 2010).

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. Is self-actualization attaining perfection?

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2. What are some characteristics of self-actualised persons?

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1.6 LOVE AS THE SELF-ACTUALIZING PHENOMENON

In this section, we see mutually enriching love as the most self actualizing phenomenon. The fundamental vision of human beings towards humanity and the human situation could be generally categorized as “appropriativeness” and “abandonment (or “opening-up”). From the category of appropriativeness we can reflect upon the wars, injustice, and exploitation between human beings and also in the animal kingdom and conclude that all forms of life are fundamentally grasping and self-seeking. In this view, human life and endeavors could be seen to be a continual striving to overcome, consume, assimilate and master the other. Here Sartre’s words would sometimes find an echo in us: “While I attempt to free myself from the hold of the Other, the Other is trying to free himself from the hold of mine; while I seek to enslave the other, the Other seeks to enslave me”(Sartre 1946). Viewed thus, human life emerges as a constant tug-of-war between oneself and the other for possession, control, assimilation and mastery. And even morality could be reduced to a means for this very purpose of dominion over others.

On the other hand, from the category of “abandonment,” or opening-up, we also encounter a series of events in our lives pointing to the direction that life is a process of unfolding to (and for) the others. Even within struggles and conflicts, people reach out to each other, promoting the growth and fulfillment of others. Sacrificial gifts of individual creativity constantly emerge in spite of excruciating situations. From this point of view, the whole human society and cosmos could be viewed as the growth of the sacrificial offering of the preceding generations. According to this perspective, people achieve their greatest self-actualization not in conflict, not in appropriating to themselves but in mutual, critical encouragement and interaction. In this chapter we hope to elaborate this latter category leading us to a philosophical understanding of human interrelatedness and human love. Our attempt will lead us to understand that only human can so interact with one another; only they can love (See Kavanaugh 1971).

Human beings, just like any other animals, have an internal dynamism as a unified organism towards its fullest realization. We need to validate our existence. We need to question ourselves and our identity. As questioners, knowers and wanters, our basic identity involves an openness and direction to the other. Consequently “our identity as [human beings] - our nature - involves the unique situation that self-fulfillment and actualization occur only when the self is directed outward from itself to the world of things and persons.” (Kavanaugh 1971) Thus we attain our self-realization not by collecting and adding things (or talents or persons) to ourselves but by being genuine to the basic outward dynamism in us. The primary need of every organism to fulfill its finality and purpose finds its fulfillment in human beings, but in a unique and other-oriented manner.

We can understand this aspect from our intellectual faculty of knowledge. Knowing thrusts me, in an act of intentionality, towards the other - not in order to appropriate it or control it, but in order that I might be invaded by its presence and brought out of my own encapsulation by the other. The drive emerging from this type of knowing is not one of grasping, but of wanting the other to be just the way he or she is because of the basic goodness in the other. I do not want to

make the other part of me. I would rather become part of it (or him or her), but primarily not by changing it, but by being with it and in it.

Such a union cannot be enforced. It can only “happen” by a free gift of the self to the other. This gift-nature is the foundation of any loving relationship. The other cannot buy me, collect me, force me or coerce me. I must freely accept the invitation in an act of self-giving and self-receiving. Thus the only thing that another cannot take by force from me is love. That is the greatest thing about human love. Precisely because of this unique nature, love is the only thing a human being can give – giving the only thing a person can fully possess, i.e., one’s own self.

Thus we can rightly assert that we do not operate only out of a need for self-fulfillment. Paradoxically, for us authentic self-fulfillment is achieved through self-divestment. Thus our greatest need is not to operate out of our needs, but rather to operate because of our drive to go out. Thus the dilemma between ego-centrism and altruism. It can be resolved when we realize that for human beings, self-fulfillment entails radical openness to the other, because of the basic outward drives of the intellect and the will. In our awareness of contingency and “need” for self-validation, the most immediate solution often appears to be in terms of “appropriation” and power. But in reality, self-fulfillment is achieved not in power, but in love, not in isolation but in communion. Therefore Erich Fromm is right when he asserts (Fromm 1956): “In contrast to symbiotic union, mature love is a union under the condition of preserving one’s integrity, one’s individuality. Love is an active power in [us]; a power which breaks through the walls which separate [us] from [fellow beings], which unites [us] with others; love makes [us] overcome the sense of isolation and separateness, yet it permits [us] to be [ourselves], to retain [our] integrity. In love the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two.” Thus for human beings, self-actualization and love of the other are not opposites, rather “mutually related necessities” (Kavanaugh 1971) for fulfillment. Such is the phenomenon of love that we observe in and among ourselves. We proceed to study briefly this significant aspect in our life including the sexual dimension of it, after having seen some philosophical views.

1.7 SOME VIEWS ON HUMAN LOVE

Victor Frankl, whom we have seen earlier in this book, is overwhelmed by the power and potential of human love. To let him speak: “In love, the beloved is comprehended in his very essence, as the unique and singular being that he is; he is comprehended as a Thou, and as such is taken into the self. As a person he becomes for the one who loves him indispensable and irreplaceable without having done anything to bring this about. The person who is loved “can’t help” having the uniqueness and singularity of his self - that is, the value of his personality - realized. Love is not deserved, is unmerited - it is simply grace.” (Frankl 1973) Thus the other person is seen not as an instrument but as another unique creative project. The other has a value independent of me. So the other presents to me as an “invitation”. By responding to this invitation, the horizon of my possibilities is enlarged.

Enchantment of Love

Love is not only grace as we mentioned above; it is also enchantment. For the lover casts a spell upon the world envelops the world in added worth. Love enormously increases receptivity to the fullness of values. The gates to the whole universe of values are, as it were, thrown open. Thus in

his[her] surrender to the Thou the lover experiences an enrichment which goes beyond that Thou. For him [her] the whole cosmos broadens and deepens in worth, glows in the radiance of these values which only the lover sees. For it is well known that love does not make one blind but see - able to see values. Loves thus enables me to open to a warmth, sensitivity, tenderness, goodness, beauty, sincerity and hence to a new openness in the beloved. The loved seem to possess the fullness of these values in her/him. But on later reflection I realize that she is also a finite limited being like myself. The loved becomes an incarnation of values which I never before responded or cherished.

When a lover opens up to the loved, he/she is opening to the world of all values that he sees in the beloved but cannot be reduced to her. She will be the first to claim so. In loving he expands his capacity to respond to the universe; what is even more surprising is that “the beloved, well knowing that she is not the source of all that he ascribes to her, that she does not exhaust the values which the lover sees in her, wants to grow in those values to which he responds and sees in her.” (Kavanaugh104). This is the creative aspect of human love. In love persons are enhanced by the free response of the other, and thereby give birth to broader and deeper values. So a human being who is loved changes just as much as the one who loves.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. How can we generally characterise the fundamental human vision?

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2. How does Frankl see love as a creative project?

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1.8 LOVE AS HUMANING AND SELF-ACTUALIZING

Integrated Love

The ways and potentialities of human love follow those of human knowledge. As we know the modes of human knowledge are inextricably united to the senses, to animals' ways of knowing. At the same time human knowledge transcends the limitations and boundaries of sense

knowledge. As a consequence, our loving potentialities will be composed - if they operate in an integrated manner - of both sensory and trans-sensory elements. I am a unity; as an integrated unity I love. So in human love by definition involves sensual elements. I love bodily, experiencing warmth, physical attraction, appealing scents, evocative sounds. So it is natural that I experience a physical resonance, change of pulse and physical well being in the love of another.

Love also includes elements which transcend the sheer physical level. I experience the drive to bestow myself to the other or open myself in communication or sacrifice. I find myself responding to the gift of the other to me, valuing the other's goodness, uniqueness and irreplaceability. Thus it would be disintegrating to my total identity if I reduce my love either to angelism or animalism. I am both: an animal which transcends its animality; an angel rooted on animality. Thus 'I love' is an integrated way, just as 'I live.' So the physical expression of love is an expression of the totality of human love - if it is to be an authentic act of the total person. The physical action without the integral intention of love thus causes a bifurcation in the person's identity. Then my body says something which my person does not mean. It is precisely because I can say something with my body that my bodily actions achieve dignity and meaning beyond the mere functioning of a physical organism.

On the other hand, pure "intellectual" love becomes barren and desiccated if it is not exhibited by the symbol of the total person: be it a gift, a word, a letter, a smile or sexual intercourse. The intention of love without its manifestation in action is close to being not love at all, but rather an "empty velleity". Thus the "spiritual" and the sexual are both aspects of human love. One without the other can result not only in disintegration but also in alienation from one's very identity. As soon as the body is reduced to something other than the symbol of the person, the body becomes a thing and the person loses his/her uniqueness and irreplaceability. Prostitution, promiscuity, and sex-without-the-meaning-of-self-gift are examples of this alienation and reduction.

In such cases the fact that human sexuality derives its fundamental significance from its meaning as a symbol (of a self-transcending gift to a unique, irreplaceable person,) is forgotten. Sex then becomes a banal vacuity. The deepest meaning of eroticism - which is enhanced and enriched by the fact that one's partner is the one who is fully beloved - is missed. Then sex becomes something to do when you run out of conversation "Which happens often when the partners have not developed enough in their own right to be interesting very long to each other as persons? It is a strange fact in our society that what goes into building relationships - the sharing of taste, fantasies, dreams, hopes for the future and fears from the past - seems to make people more shy and vulnerable than going to bed with each other. They are more wary of the tenderness that goes with psychological and spiritual nakedness than they are of the physical nakedness of sexual intimacy." (Desbruslais 1997):

Thus we see the possibility of degrading the unique human sex and love. Such degradation is all the more tragic because of the unique positive value that sex is capable of achieving and so capable of contributing to human life and destiny: "Sex begins in ecstasy, momentarily fusing two separate egos into union with one another and with all life; it ends with a total separation of one ego exclusively occupied with its own orgasm. Sex as a window into eternity is a beginning and it ends in a dark cellar, self-enclosed and boarded with time. Sex begins as the sap rises in a tree to make buds and blossom and leaves and fruit; it ends in Dr. Master's Sex Report. Sex

begins as a mystery out of which comes the art, the poetry, the religious delight of successive civilizations; it ends in a trivial dream of passion which itself soon dissolves into the secrecy of despair and self-gratification. If this indeed be Sex, Down with Sex.” (Cited in Desbruslais 1997).

The Resolution between the two is Holistic Love: The realization of one’s potentialities for human love can only come with the recognition that one is neither an angel nor an animal. So one has to accept lovingly the body as one’s presence to the world. At the same time love cannot be reduced to his sexuality, although sexuality can enhance it. Further, loving does not appropriate the beloved, nor does love finds its exhaustion in the beloved alone. So love is an open transference to the beloved, a response to the horizons of values seen in the beloved and a free gift to the beloved (and through her to the whole humanity). Thus, loving authentically is affirming the ultimate value of personhood in the cosmos. For it is only because, we are persons that we are able to love. In our personhood we are driven outside of ourselves, so that we can give of ourselves and thus be united with the other. “Only love can bring individual beings to their perfect completion, as individuals, by uniting them one with another, because only love takes possession of them and unites them by what lies deepest within them. This is simply a fact of our everyday experience. For indeed, at what moment do lovers come into the most complete possession of themselves if not when they say they are lost in one another?” (Teilhard de Chardin 1961).

Thus human beings’ identity as a volitional and intellectual agent comes to its fullest meaning when one loves. Then one fulfills oneself by dying to himself and going out of oneself into the world of value and persons. This could lead to a resolution of the problem of egoism or altruism. Thus, to repeat, self-fulfillment is achieved only in self-divestment. When one loves, one affirms the very values for which one is striving with his whole humanity: the fullness of knowledge, of love and of communion. When one loves, one testifies to one’s own identity and one’s demand to transcend oneself, to possess oneself, to give oneself away. This is the root of human dignity, uniqueness and irreplaceability. Only I can give myself to another.

Human Personhood

What makes me “want” to love is the dynamism of personhood and unconditional drive to know and give (or want to give). I am prompted by the presence of the other persons and the horizon of values which I see in them, in which I partake and which not one of them, nor all of them can exhaust. Personhood thus drives me outside of myself towards the fuller realization of and union with the other. So when one loves, we may claim, that one sees the absolute value of person in the beloved, and it is one’s own participation in personhood which induces one to affirm the value of the other. This leads certainly to the affirmation of the larger horizon of the whole universe. This “planetary” awareness of love is affirmed by Teilhard (1961): “If [human beings] on earth, all over the earth, are ever to love one another, it is not enough for them to recognize in one another the elements of a single something; they must also, be developing a “planetary” consciousness, become aware of the fact that without loss of their individual identities, they are

becoming a single somebody. For there is no total love - and this is writ large in the gospel - save that which is in and of the personal." Human beings in our animality, in our contingency, in our need for self-validation, often think what "must be done" is to appropriate, to saturate themselves with things and people added on to themselves. However because of our unique (transcending) human nature, such attempts will only serve to intensify the real drive further, rather than still it.

To sum up, we can follow Kavanaugh's observations on an integrated human approach to love (1971). On deeper questioning, human beings realize that their identity actually entails a demand to know themselves, to possess themselves, and transcend themselves in an act of free self-gift. Sexuality, if it is to be integrated with personality, must be a symbol of such a free gift and only then can sexuality have human significance. Experientially, if we truly love, we are brought out of ourselves in a response to the other and the world of values to which the other - in his/her personhood signifies.

The horizon of values and the ability to love are not exhausted by the beloved. There is a self-transcendence demanded of the couple. This is similar to the self-transcendence in knowledge, in love and in personhood. The couple too must be open to the other and cannot afford to remain closed in on them if their love is not to retrogress in encapsulation. Thus the couple is invited to a self-transcendence and this self-transcendence is implied in Rilke when he complements the lovers: "Lovers ... I know you touch each other ... because you feel pure permanence underneath" (Rainer Marie Rilke). Thus it is obvious that only humans can truly and freely love. In love he/she can divest him/herself and actualize oneself. That is a profound paradox of being human. And it is the unique and precious gift of a human being as a human person. It would be tragic if this preciousness is misused and idolized. It is self-actualisation (Pandikattu 2011).

1.9 SOME RELATED QUOTES

"There is no need for red-hot pokers. Hell is - other people." - Garcin, in Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit*

"The truth is that love the ultimate and the highest goal to which [human being] can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: The salvation of [human being] is through love and in love." - Victor Frankl

"Buytendijk thinks that the knowledge [of the strictly personal] is really attainable. "This knowledge of man," he says, "can never be acquired unless it is of someone for whom we care." This definition of the correct attitude and relationship to the person whom we want to know is considered correct and wholly uncontested outside the realm of science. ... Even in psychology knowledge of a human being is possible only by means the objectivity of love - which is nothing else than what in daily life is called 'heart-to-heart' knowledge." - William A. Luipen

"If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know

only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.” - The Bible

1.10 LET US SUM UP

In this chapter we studied first the rich and humanistic understanding of self-actualisation proposed first by Abraham Maslow and how it is beneficial for our human growth. Then we looked at love as a self-actualising phenomenon.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. How do I relate love to angelism or animalism?

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2. What is the root of human dignity?

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1.11 KEY WORDS

Angelism: the belief that humans are pure spirit and that love is purely an idea. This view ignores the body of human beings.

Peak Experiences: “Feelings of limitless horizons opening up to the vision, the feeling of being simultaneously more powerful and also more helpless than one ever was before, the feeling of ecstasy and wonder and awe, the loss of placement in time and space with, finally, the conviction that something extremely important and valuable had happened, so that the subject was to some extent transformed and strengthened even in his daily life by such experiences.”

Self-actualisation: It refers to the need for personal growth that is present throughout a person’s life.

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UNIT 2 HUMAN'S RELATION TO THE REST OF THE UNIVERSE

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

- To explore the relationship of humans beings to the rest of the universe.
- To study different modes of living exemplified by the lifestyles of leavers and takers
- To offer possibility for a viable lifestyle based on a healthy respect for others.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit an attempt is made to show the relationship of human beings to nature. This unit is based on a distinction that Daniel Quinn, author of "Ishmael", makes between Takers and Leavers. According to Quinn, Takers are the exploiters who use the world to their advantage. The Leavers on the other hand, live in this world and leave it for future generations. They are ones who have abandoned themselves to life and who befriend the earth.

2.2 THE BASIC PREMISE: HUMANS ARE MADE FOR THE WORLD

The Takers have been enacting a story for the past ten thousand years, based on the premise, "the world was made for man to conquer and rule, and under human rule it was meant to become a Paradise." Even before the Takers came to the scene, the Leavers had been enacting many similar stories, but all based on a different premise: "Man was made for the world." This implies that right from the beginning, everything that ever lived belonged to the world, including human beings. And that's how it was possible that things came to be this way. And when we belong to the world and live according to this premise, we carry on the process of evolution. Or more

correctly, we let evolution evolve in and through us. It may be noted that in the case of the Leavers there is a reversal in the vision of the fundamental premise of the story. Can we as Takers, or in general as living beings, ever claim that the world is made for us human beings – implying indirectly that it is created for us alone. Obviously, we have been told so many times that everything else is meant for humans. Today's world-view is based on it. But the question is can it be really true? Does evolution stop with humans? Does it possible that millions and millions of galaxies were created for the sake of the tiny humans inhabit in one unknown corner of the Milky Way galaxy?

2.3 THE HOLY COMMAND: SHEPHERD AND GUARD THE WORLD

The Story that the Leavers have been enacting here for the past three million years, that is right from the beginning of humanity, is not a story of conquering and conquest. The command given to the Leavers is to shepherd and guard the world, to help the world blossom forth in its own way. Enacting it does not give them power to subjugate the others; instead it provides them with lives that are satisfying and meaningful to them. This is what we will find if we were to go to the People like the Bushmen of Africa, the Alwana of Australia, the Santals of Jharkhand, the Uraons of Chota Nagpur, the Kreen-Akrose of Brazil, and Navajo of the U.S. etc. Unlike the Takers, they are not seething with discontent and rebellion, not incessantly wrangling over what should be allowed and what is forbidden, not for ever accusing each other of not living the right way, not living in terror of each other, not going crazy because their lives are perceived empty and pointless, not having to stupefy themselves with drugs to get through the day, not inventing a new religion every week to give them something to hold on to, not for ever searching for something to do or something to believe in that will make their lives worth living.

Here the author emphasises an important point. The Leavers live this way not because they live close to the nature or have no formal government or because they are innately noble. This is simply because they are enacting a story that works well for people -a story that worked well for three million years and that still works wherever the Takers haven't yet managed to stamp it out. So the holy command entrusted to the Leavers is that of guiding the destiny of the world along with all other creatures in it. Humans do have a special role to play, but that is definitely not one of domination or power. That is one of channelling and directing the life on the planet earth in its own course. They are called to be the stewards of the world, who are ultimately responsible to life itself.

2.4 THE PROFOUND DISCOVERY: THE MYSTERY OF THE WORLD

In this process of guiding the creation and themselves humans discover the profound mystery in the world. They are fascinated by the world. The world is truly a marvellous place. They are not masters of the mysterious universe, but stewards who have recognised the spontaneity, beauty, creativity and abundance of life in the world. They are the ones who feel one with the forces of nature, who wonder at the tiniest creatures of the world and who respond spontaneously to the glory of life. So they are truly open to the mystery of life and of the world. As mystery humans themselves are part of it. The search for deeper significance of the mysterious goes on and on, without ever exhausting the depth dimension of it. Unlike a problem which may be solved and a satisfactory answer found, the mystery of the universe invites, cajoles and reveals, without in any way enflaming the mystery itself. The mystery opens itself ever more and more to the magnificent beauty of being, without being defined away.

2.5 THE HUMAN TASK: LIVE THE PARADISE HERE ON EARTH

The call of the Leavers is not to make the earth a paradise. To some extent at least, the earth is, they assume, already a paradise. Even within the limitations imposed by the earth, they are called to live according to the law of life. To follow the law of life does not mean that we need to be slavishly obeying the laws of life; it means that we understand and act accordingly, not against it and not even totally bound by it. The law of nature or the law of life enables them to make life on earth a truly human one: a paradise on earth. To live the paradise **Error! Reference source not found.** on earth, what is needed is not to struggle to improve the world, but to discover spontaneously and playfully the beauty of it. It is not to deny the “sufferings” or even “evils” in our daily life. They are intrinsically part of the world and of nature. And as humans we need to “face” these sufferings. But the way to face these sufferings is not to revolt against the world. Revolting against life will only aggravate the sufferings that humans face. The way to face and reduce (if not to eliminate) is to follow the rules of life and to live accordingly and creatively, just like we can fly by following the laws of aerodynamics, creatively. Therefore as humans, the Leavers are called on to realise and live the paradise here on earth. They are not called to create the paradise on earth but to accept it: creatively, critically and constructively.

The Takers’ world-view is quite different. According to them in the world of the Leavers it is always twilight. We can visualise the following imagery from the Takers’ perspective. A man is scrabbling along the ridge at twilight. The man is short, thin, dark, and naked. He is running in a half crouch, looking for tracks. He is hunting and he is desperate. Night is falling and he has got nothing to eat. He is running, running and running, as if he were on a treadmill. It’s a treadmill because tomorrow at twilight he will be there running still – or running again, we do not really know. But there’s more than hunger and desperation driving him. He is terrified as well. Behind him on the ridge just out of sight, his enemies are in pursuit to tear him to pieces – the lion, the wolves, and the tigers. And so he has to stay on that treadmill forever. Forever one step behind his prey and one step ahead of his enemies. So the world now is not a paradise for the Takers.

The ridge represents the knife-edge of survival. The Leavers, according to the Takers, live on the knife-edge of survival and have to struggle perpetually to keep from falling off. Actually it’s as though the ridge and the sky are in motion instead of him. He is running in place, trapped, going nowhere. In other words hunter-gatherers lead a very grim life. It is grim because it’s a struggle just to stay alive. The Leavers or the hunter-gatherers no more live on the knife-edge of survival than wolves or lions or parrots or rabbits. Man was as well adapted to life on this planet as any other species and the idea that he lived on the knife-edge of survival is simply biological nonsense. As an omnivore, his dietary range is immense. Thousands of species will go hungry before he does. His intelligence and dexterity enable him to live comfortably that would utterly defeat any other primate. Far from scrabbling endlessly for food, hunter-gatherers are among the best-fed people on earth, and they manage this with only two or three hours a day of what you would call work – which makes them among the most leisured people on earth as well. In his book on Stone Age economics, Marshall Sahlins described them as ‘the original affluent society.’ And incidentally, predation on man is practically nonexistent.

2.6 THE PRACTICAL CONCLUSION: DISCOVER THE LAWS OF LIFE

Since there is something basically wrong with us humans, we cannot work out our own “salvation.” We cannot save ourselves from this mad rush to death. So the Takers suggest that the only way to get out of it – if at all it is practical – is to seek some prophets who have been blessed with supernatural wisdom. Since humans cannot find true wisdom from anywhere else, the only ones who have special access to it are the prophets. So the only (one) way to save the world is, according to the Takers, to follow a prophet.

The Leavers do not understand this logic. They do not have prophets in their culture. They live in the hands of nature; they live according to and beyond (not against) the laws of nature. So according to them the remedy from the malaise of our human situation is to discover the laws governing life. That can be done not necessarily by prophets, but by searching for it in the community of life. If the law of aeronautics can be searched for by experts (scientists) and discovered by them, the laws of life should also be discovered by the proper experts (that is, by prophets or priests) and discovered by them. How we should live should not be based on some exotic precepts given to us by some weird cult heroes, but on the general principles of life discoverable from the community of life.

If we go to a tribal community, which is wretched, inhuman and lawless according to the Takers, we ask them: ‘How can you live in this lawless manner? But the tribals object ‘What do you mean lawless? We have a law, we follow it invariably and because we follow it invariably we have a highly successful society.’ According to them following this law has made them a society that works very well. To devise a method for the discovery of the law we have to look at it from two sides. From one side of ‘What is it that makes this society work?’ and from other side I would be asking, ‘What is it they don’t do that makes this society work?’

These are the guides we have, to find the law we are looking for. The community of life on this planet has worked well for three billion years, but the Takers moved away from them. There is a law that is followed invariably within the community and without this law the community would be indeed in chaos and would very quickly disintegrate and disappear. Man owes his very existence to this law. It is a law that protects not only the community as a whole but also the species within the community and even individuals. Leavers are more interested in what works well for *people* and Takers in what works well for *things*. So the Leavers accumulate knowledge preferably of people and of living beings rather than that of things and workability. While the Leavers seek wisdom the Takers are satisfied with functionality.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. If Takers want to conquer the world, what is the task given to the Leavers?

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2. Are the Leavers underfed and hungry?

2.7 THE TYPICAL ATTITUDE: TO BE IN THE WORLD

Takers take their role to stand against the world (*ek-sistence*) seriously. They find their identity in comparing themselves to the world and to the “lower” animals. Leavers on the other hand find themselves in the world, in the vast history of life and in its tradition. They find themselves primarily in the flow of life, in the process of evolution. Their characteristic attitude is not one of standing out; but one of standing along; or better walking along with. Therefore, they are first of all at home in the environment, in nature and in the community of life. Once they are at home in the world, they realise themselves as part of the world. They do grow and develop in the world and through the world. Unlike the Takers who pride themselves in standing out of the world, the Leavers are happy to be living in the rhythm (*rta*) of the world. They are tuned to the chirping of the birds, the wiggle of the waves and to the fondling of the breeze. They vibrate with nature and are elevated by nature (not from it). It is like sleeping soundly and calmly in the background noise of a heavy traffic. In the beginning one will find it extremely difficult. After few days, one gets used to it so much so that one cannot sleep without the background of the traffic. Similarly the Leavers are not distracted by the activities of life, but are enabled by them. At the same time they do realise that they are not fully in and of the world. There is something in their spirit that makes them transcend the “material.” But this is not the primary aspect of their living. They see the “transcending” nature of themselves as the dance of life into the ever unfathomable mystery of being alive, human and divine.

2.8 THE EVIDENT CONSEQUENCE: VIABLE LIFE

Thus while they swim along with the flow of life, deviating from the course at times and directing the course at other times, they have demonstrated beyond doubt that theirs is a viable life style. The simple fact that they have lived as humans for about three million years and life still goes on in its full swing indicate the viability of their life style. It is true that sometimes some of the Leavers’ stories have disappeared. Some of the Leavers’ culture has been wiped out. But Leavers flourish in diverse ways. Disappearance of any one story does not lead to the disappearance of other stories, let alone that of the life in community in general.

This accumulation started when cultures began. Human culture began with human life which is to say with *Homo habilis*. All what they have accumulated passed to *Homo erectus* who were the heirs to this accumulation. They passed it to *Homo sapiens*. And of course heirs of *Homo sapiens* were *Homo sapiens*. The heirs of this accumulation were not the Takers, but the Leavers. Obviously because the Takers had a total break with the past at the time of the agricultural revolution. But there was no break with the past in the various people among the Leavers. The Leavers are still passing that accumulation along in whatever form it came to them. But then about ten thousands of years ago the founders of Takers’ culture said, “This is all shit. This is not

the way people should live.” Leavers are always conscious of having a tradition but the Takers are cut off from the past with every generation.

Takers’ Mother Culture says that there is nothing in the past for us. ‘The past is squalid and dirty. The past is something to be put behind us, something to be escaped from’. This is how the Takers came to have cultural amnesia. It was assumed in your culture that the birth of man and the birth of your culture were simultaneous events. It was assumed that farming is just as instinctive to man as honey production is to bees. The people of the Taker’s culture thought by seeing the hunter-gatherers that they had degenerated from the natural life. The Takers forgot what they had been before they became agriculturalists. As far as the Takers knew, there was no ‘before’; Creation had occurred just a few thousand years ago and man the agriculturalist had immediately set about the task of building civilisation.

But, sometimes ancientness is a great validator among the Takers. But it is only for preservation sake. They esteemed the values and tradition of wiser, nobler ancestors and deplore their disappearance, but they have no interest in living the way those wiser, nobler ancestors lived. In short, Takers don’t want to adopt them for everyday living. But of course it was not Mother Culture’s teaching that everything from the past was to be discarded. Anything related to production was saved and that is why things came to be this way. Leavers also save information about production, but they save whatever works well for them. And this is what they teach their children. But Takers teach their children how to make things. How to make more things and better things. They don’t teach them what works well for people.

As for the Leavers, each culture is an accumulation of knowledge that reaches back in an unbroken chain to the beginning of human life. Each of them is a way that works well. Each has been tested and refined over thousands of generations. After 5 or 8 thousand years of collective amnesia the Takers really didn’t know how to live. But in that very same time period, the Leavers of the world had not forgotten how to live. Hence, the Takers and Leavers accumulate entirely different kinds of knowledge. The Takers accumulate knowledge about what works well for *things*. The Leavers accumulate knowledge what works well for *people*. But it is not for *all* people. Each Leaver tradition has a system that works well for them because it evolved among them: It was suited to their locality, climate, biological community, peculiar taste, preferences and vision of the world. And someone who knows what works well for the people has wisdom. We must note that the knowledge of what works well for production is what is valued in the Takers’ culture. In the same way, the knowledge of what works well for people is what is valued in Leaver culture. What works well for production is the law of things, of matter. What works well for life is the law of the community of living beings.

2.9 THE MAIN GOAL: TO PROSPER WITHIN LIMITS

To hold that the Leavers live in harmony with nature does not imply that they are at the mercy of nature. They flourish much more than any other known species of animal kingdom. They have adapted to life on earth much more efficiently than most other species. In a natural catastrophe if humans were to disappear, many other species would have disappeared earlier. Though they are one of the best suited creatures to the environmental conditions of today, they do realise that theirs is still a limited existence. The hubris which has driven the Takers on the road to self

destruction is absent among the Leavers. The Leavers realise their limit, though they may not submit to it all the time. At the same time they are not paranoid that the limit imposes some restrictions on them. The Leavers can give themselves to the gods, when their turn is over, when their energy is used up, when their role is played. They know very well that they are part of the play of life. They know very well that life is more important than they themselves.

That does not make them torpid and lethargic. While dancing with the rhythm of life, they go forward and exert themselves to excel in life. But unlike the Takers who are depressively paranoid, the Leavers can ultimately leave everything to destiny, since they are ultimately part of that same destiny (which is the divine). So they do prosper. They do excel. They do challenge life. They also know the general laws of life which limits them. They are aware that the only way to prosper in life is not to yield blindly to its laws, but to know the laws and live creatively within the larger laws of life.

2.10 THE RELIGION: TO LIVE IN THE HANDS OF GODS

Thus they know that they are not their own masters. They know that they are not responsible for the world. They know that they can afford to make some mistakes. They know that their destiny is dependent on the world, but not exclusively. So they can afford to relax themselves and live in the hands of gods. Since they themselves do not want to become gods, they are comfortable in the lap of a loving god, just as a child in the womb of her mother. They can also take risks and afford to be creative since basically they live within the general laws of life.

They do not feel the burden of the whole world on their shoulders. They do not have the “saviour complex” to save everything. They know that some things may be wrong with the world and they can afford to laugh about it. But they know ultimately everything lives (or dies) according to the laws of life, which they basically accept as part of their own existence. They realise that in the process of evolution, they became human by living in the hands of the gods. So they are far less anxiety-ridden than the Takers are. As people living in the hands of gods, the Takers believe, they do not have the knowledge of good and evil; they do not decide who should die and who should live. They do not determine the flow of life, though at times they do influence it. So they do not force all others to live the way they live.

The Leavers know that creation has not come to an end with *Homo sapiens*. They do know that the whole world will not come to an end even if they – unfortunately – come to an (unforeseeable) end. Such a view of the Leavers is intimately opposed to the Takers. According to the Takers’ Mother Culture, the agricultural revolution has a far deeper meaning than a mere technological event. The revolution is still in progress. Adam is still chewing the fruit of that forbidden Tree and wherever Abel is found Cain is there to kick him out. Our Mother Culture also teaches that before the revolution human life was devoid of meaning, it was stupid, empty and worthless. Pre-revolutionary life was ugly. It is very evident how thoroughly effective Mother Culture’s teachings are on this issue.

The question is, “Why was the agricultural revolution necessary? Takers believe in the revolution even when they enjoy none of its benefits. Hundreds of millions of people live in a most pitiable situation. Many are left homeless. Even then they believe profoundly in this revolution. Mother Culture teaches that there are many differences between Takers and hunter-gatherers. Seeing the life of hunter-gatherers Takers said, ‘This life of yours is not only wretched

but its wrong. Man was not meant to be this way. So don't give up. Join our revolution and help us and the world to transform into a paradise for man'."

But our question still stands: How the life of hunter gatherers became wretched and shameful?" Takers would normally hold that, like animals, the Leavers have no control over the food supply, the most basic necessity of all. Takers firmly believe, "Unless we control our own food supply, we live at the mercy of the world. We cannot live at the whim of the gods, because that is not a human way to live. Though the world is full of food, there is no guarantee that the world is always going to be full of food. Without food we will die. Therefore we have to trust ourselves with our lives and that is the human way to live."

Moreover, in the hands of gods there is no distinction between humans and animals. If we live in the hands of gods they give you what you need to live as animals, but not what you need beyond that, i.e., to live as humans. But how can that be? How can it be that the gods are wise enough to shape the universe and the world and the life of the world but lack wisdom to give humans what they need to be human? The assumption behind this way of thinking is: "These gods are incompetent gods. This is why we have got to take our lives out of their hands entirely. We have to take our lives into our hands. And therefore we have to plant our own food. Thus when we have more food than we need, then the gods have no power over us."

2.11 THE MAIN CHARACTERISTIC: LIMITED COMPETITION

The world in this story is not a place of perfect peace and harmony. The Leavers cannot imagine this world to be a place of "peaceful co-existence," where no harm is caused to anyone else. There is need and scope for the law of limited competition, which is the law of furthering of life. There would be general laws guiding the growth of life, laws derived from the community of living beings. Here humans will not play the role of annihilators but of fair competitors. True, humans are much better equipped than other animals in this competition for survival. But that does not give humans the absolute right to eliminate other animals or other human cultures. There could be sometimes scope for "erratic retaliation" to make the other aware of one's own existence. Such a strategy of "erratic retaliatory" has been found to be viable and community sustaining from the beginning of life.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What is the religion of the Leavers?

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2. Is there competition in the Leaver's world?

2.12 THE UNIQUENESS OF MAN: TRAILBLAZERS

The Leavers affirm that the gods made human beings just the way they made “salmon and sparrows and rabbits for the world.” Apparently, this seems to have worked pretty well so far and there is no reason why it should not work for humans as well. Life is tremendously fascinating. After originating in the ocean it evolved and gradually became more complex. All sorts of creatures appeared on this planet. Some of them seem to be on the verge of attaining self-awareness and intelligence. So it’s definitely not just humans that gods are after. We were never meant to be the only players on the stage of life. Gods, it seems, intended to make a planet filled with creatures of different colour and size and various degrees of awareness.

And there is absolutely no evidence that things have come to an end with the arrival of man. The evolution proceeds naturally after the emergence of humans. Amazingly, humans are the first of these to realise themselves and to be aware of the process of evolution. Therefore his role is that of the trailblazer, the pathfinder. His uniqueness lies in the fact that he is the first to learn that creatures like humans have a choice: they can make the greatest choice of suicide: for themselves and for the whole living community. So human being’s role is to be the first. To be the first, without being the last. Our place is to figure out how it is possible to do that and to make room for all the rest who are capable of becoming what he’s become. So humans are called trailblazers for the rest of the living world. So the primary role of humans is to let the flow of life go forward and lead to its natural fulfilment.

2.13 THE MANY WAYS: DIVERSITY AS SURVIVAL VALUE

In the Leavers’ tradition the exclusive claim is not made that there is only one right way of living. Since other ways are acknowledged, space is given for other stories to be enacted and their communities can flourish in their own ways. Respect for diversity is encouraged. Diversity is seen as a survival factor for the community and is therefore prized highly. The problems emerging from plurality and diversity are tackled honestly and not denied and allowed to explode. Each society is encouraged to live in the way it prefers without canonising one particular way of life as the way for the rest of humanity. Each community discovers for itself that way of life which works best. The success of this way of life is affirmed by the existence of human beings for three millions of years without leading the whole community of life to doom.

The Leavers are never obsessed by the delusion that what they were doing was right and that everyone in the entire world had to practice agriculture and that every inch of the planet had to be cultivated. They said to the other Leavers who were leading a different story: “You want to be different from us? That is fine with us. That’s great. We wish to remain as we are. You be as you are, growing as you wish. We do not pretend to know which way is right. We just know what way has worked well for us. It would be nice if we both could help each other, when need arises.”

2.14 THE SIGNIFICANT CHOICE: LIFE

The crucial difference in the plot of the story takes Takers to death and the Leavers to life. Based on the above mentioned experiences we find that the Takers and the Leavers accumulate two entirely different kinds of knowledge. The Takers accumulate knowledge about what works well for *things* while the Leavers accumulate knowledge about what works well for *people*. But not for *all* people. Each Leavers culture has a system that works well for itself because it was evolved among them, it was suited to the terrain they inhabited, fit for the climate in which they lived, adapted to the biological community in which they lived, and was apt to their own peculiar tastes, preferences and vision of the world. And such a kind of knowledge is what is known as *wisdom*. And every time the Takers stamp out a Leavers' culture, wisdom ultimately tested since the birth of mankind disappears from the world beyond recall, just as every time they stamp out a species of life, a life form ultimately tested since the birth of life disappears from the world beyond recall.

3.2.15 THE DESTINY OF LEAVERS: TO REMAIN HUMAN

The Leavers have a modest destiny. They do not hope to become gods. They intend to leave the gods where they are, with the power over life and death. Since they flow with the stream of life, they do realise that one day they may be eliminated in the evolutionary process. They also understand that their role is to be the first, but not to be the last. So the clear implication is that Leavers will remain to be human: human to the last. So they may even vanish from the face of the earth, lending a helping hand to the process of evolution. So they have no ambitions to conquer the whole world; they do not even have the ambition of conquering themselves. Since they live in the hands of gods, they realise that gods have better knowledge of their destiny. They may totally be wiped out of the universe although they will defend against it, without surrendering meekly and passively to such a possibility. In this process, they are called to be humans.

2.16 THE MODE OF LIFE: A CELEBRATION

As time went on Leavers who were once hunter-gatherers slowly evolved and become herders. These pastors or herders come alive in the story of Cain and Abel. Daniel Quinn uses the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis to show the nature of the Takers and Leavers cultures respectively. What was happening along that border between the Takers and Leavers area was that Cain was killing Abel. The tillers of the soil were watering their fields with the blood of the Semitic herders. The Leavers were being killed off so that more land could be put under cultivation. This explains the mystery as to why God accepted Abel and his offering and rejected Cain and his offering. With this story, the Semites (the Leavers) were telling their children God is on our side. He loves us herders but hates those murderous tillers of the soil. To make it short, as a result of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge that took the place of gods, however due to this misdeed the tiller people made the gods withhold from them the bounty that enables them live carefree lives which the Leavers continue to enjoy till today. Life as celebration was robbed from the Takers' culture.

One of the important reasons as to why and how the Takers came to be this way is that there was a total break with the past at the time of agricultural revolution. In the Takers' culture there was no more the transmission of that cultural accumulation that mankind made during the first three million years of human life. But the Leavers are still passing that accumulation along in whatever form it came to them. For example, the Leavers save information about production- though production for its own sake is rarely a feature of their life. Among the Leavers, people don't have

weekly quotas of pots to make or arrow heads to turn out. They are not pre-occupied with stepping up their production of hand-axes. So, although they save information about production most of the information they save is about what works well for them. And this information they teach their children as part of their living tradition. Thus the Leavers peoples are always conscious of having a tradition that goes back to very ancient times. Thus the Leavers always have the sense of a past extending back to the dawn of time, while we see that the Takers that have the sense of history extending back to few hundreds of years only.

Thus among the Leavers, the Mother Culture explains and preserves a lifestyle that is healthy and self-sustaining. Among the Takers Mother Culture explains and preserves a lifestyle that has proven to be unhealthy and self-destructive. Therefore, when the Takers see life as a struggle, the Leavers see life primarily as a celebration. That is evident in the festivities and dances that are found in their culture. That is evident from the creative and spontaneous nature of them. That is apparent from the calm and serene way in which they face life and enjoy it. They are part of the flow of life. And life is the most splendid celebration ever.

2.17 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have idealized the lifestyle of the leavers and portrayed it as the ideal type of relating to the rest of the universe. We have seen the uniqueness of humans is that of a trailblazer.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. How do you understand the unique role of human being according to the Leavers?

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2. Is life a struggle?

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2.18 KEY WORDS

Erratic retaliation: The act of retaliation or counter-attacking, which cannot be predicted. So there is an element of surprise and Quinn thinks that such a strategy will preserve peace among groups of cultures.

Leavers: Unlike the Takers, leavers are the majority of human beings who have existed right from the beginning of history, enabling a viable life-style and leading a more peaceful way of life, if not a technologically successful one.

Takers: A special term coined and used by Daniel Quinn, who symbolises the exploitative type of human beings, which harm the earth and destroy the future of humanity. They may symbolise the present humans whose life-style is non-sustainable.

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UNIT 3 FOUNDATIONS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

- To explore the philosophical foundations of interpersonal relationship.
- To appreciate the uniqueness of person to person relationship.
- To formulate some of the philosophical foundations for healthy interpersonal relationship.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal relationship is something we experience daily. That is what keeps us moving forward. That is what makes us humans. In this unit we ask ourselves: What is the philosophical basis for interpersonal relationship? How is person to person relationship different from person to things? To what extent can we enhance respectful human relationship so that we build a society that is more egalitarian, free and healthy? As response to these questions we take up three philosophers: Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel and Immanuel Kant.

3.2 MARTIN BUBER'S *I AND THOU*

Martin Buber's *I and Thou* (*Ich und Du*) presents a philosophy of personal dialogue, in that it describes how interpersonal relationship can define the nature of reality. Buber's major theme is that human existence may be defined by the way in which we engage in dialogue with each other, with the world, and with God. According to Buber, human beings may adopt two attitudes toward the world: 'I-Thou' or *I-It*. 'I-Thou' is a relation of subject-to-subject, while 'I-It' is a relation of subject-to-object. In the 'I-Thou' relationship, human beings are aware of each other as having a unity of being. In the 'I-Thou' relationship, human beings do not perceive each other as consisting of specific, isolated qualities, but engage in a dialogue involving each other's whole being. In the 'I-It' relationship, on the other hand, human beings perceive each other as consisting of specific, isolated qualities, and view themselves as part of a world which consists

of things. 'I-Thou' is a relationship of mutuality and reciprocity, while 'I-It' is a relationship of separateness and detachment.

Buber explains that human beings may try to convert the subject-to-subject relation to a subject-to-object relation, or vice versa. However, the being of a subject is a unity which cannot be analyzed as an object. When a subject is analyzed as an object, the subject is no longer a subject, but becomes an object. When a subject is analyzed as an object, the subject is no longer a *Thou*, but becomes an *It*. The being which is analyzed as an object is the *It* in an 'I-It' relation (Iweadighi 1992). The subject-to-subject relation affirms each subject as having a unity of being. When a subject chooses, or is chosen by, the 'I-Thou' relation, this act involves the subject's whole being. Thus, the 'I-Thou' relation is an act of choosing, or being chosen, to become the subject of a subject-to-subject relation. The subject becomes a subject through the 'I-Thou' relation, and the act of choosing this relation affirms the subject's whole being (Buber 1958).

Buber says that the 'I-Thou' relation is a direct interpersonal relation which is not mediated by any intervening system of ideas. No objects of thought intervene between *I* and *Thou*.¹ 'I-Thou' is a direct relation of subject-to-subject, which is not mediated by any other relation. Thus, 'I-Thou' is not a means to some object or goal, but is an ultimate relation involving the whole being of each subject. Love, as a relation between *I* and *Thou*, is a subject-to-subject relation. Buber claims that love is not a relation of subject-to-object. In the 'I-Thou' relation, subjects do not perceive each other as objects, but perceive each other's unity of being. Love is an 'I-Thou' relation in which subjects share this unity of being. Love is also a relation in which *I* and *Thou* share a sense of caring, respect, commitment, and responsibility (Buber 1958).

Buber argues that, although the 'I-Thou' relation is an ideal relation, the 'I-It' relation is an inescapable relation by which the world is viewed as consisting of knowable objects or things. The 'I-It' relation is the means by which the world is analyzed and described. However, the 'I-It' relation may become an 'I-Thou' relation, and in the 'I-Thou' relation we can interact with the world in its whole being. In the 'I-Thou' relation, the *I* is unified with the *Thou*, but in the 'I-It' relation, the *I* is detached or separated from the *It*. In the 'I-Thou' relation, the being of the *I* belongs both to *I* and to *Thou*. In the 'I-It' relation, the being of the *I* belongs to *I*, but not to *It* (Iweadighi 1992).

'I-Thou' is a relation in which *I* and *Thou* have a shared reality. Buber contends that the *I* which has no *Thou* has a reality which is less complete than that of the *I* in the *I-and-Thou*. The more that *I-and-Thou* share their reality, the more complete is their reality. According to Buber, God is the eternal *Thou*. God is the *Thou* who sustains the 'I-Thou' relation eternally. In the 'I-Thou' relation between the individual and God, there is a unity of being in which the individual can always find God. In the 'I-Thou' relation, there is no barrier of other relations which separate the individual from God, and thus the individual can speak directly to God (Scott 2010).

The eternal *Thou* is not an object of experience, and is not an object of thought. The eternal *Thou* is not something which can be investigated or examined. The eternal *Thou* is not a knowable object. However, the eternal *Thou* can be known as the absolute Person who gives unity to all being. Buber also explains that the 'I-Thou' relation may have either potential being or actual being. When the 'I-It' relation becomes an 'I-Thou' relation, the potential being of the 'I-Thou' relation becomes the actual being of the 'I-Thou' relation. However, the 'I-Thou' relation between the individual and God does not become, or evolve from, an 'I-It' relation, because God, as the eternal *Thou*, is eternally present as actual Being (Buber 1958).

Buber contends that the 'I-Thou' relation between the individual and God is a universal relation which is the foundation for all other relations. If the individual has a real 'I-Thou' relation with God, then the individual must have a real 'I-Thou' relation with the world. If the individual has a real 'I-Thou' relation with God, then the individual's actions in the world must be guided by that 'I-Thou' relation. Thus, the philosophy of personal dialogue may be an instructive method of ethical inquiry and of defining the nature of personal responsibility.

3.3 GABRIEL MARCEL'S AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIP

Gabriel Marcel rejected the Cartesian dualism of mind and body by his doctrine of incarnation. Marcel extolled the primacy of existence and sought to restore the ontological weight of concrete human experience. Thus he objects to any type of thought that would remove man from the real, concrete lived experience (Marcel 1948). In this enthusiasm, existence become for Marcel a signification of experience when he writes, "The assertion 'I exist' is valid only if it signifies ... an Original datum which is not "I think" or even 'I am alive' but rather 'I experience'" (Iweadighi 1992). Following this, Marcel held as false and trickery the celebrated "Cogito, ergo sum" (I think therefore I am) of Descartes and any such attempt to leap from thought to existence. For Marcel, on the other hand, existence is an affirmation of experience and thought a product of experience. This is why philosophy for Marcel is "experience transmitted into thought".

Consequently, because experience is signified in existence, then the assurance of existence becomes the result of our direct participation in the world through our Incarnation. Hence Marcel holds that: "The central datum of existence is incarnate being, i.e. the affective unity I have with my body." Incarnation in Marcel is understood not in the theological sense of the word, but as a sign of our bodylines in relation to other beings in the world. Incarnation is according to Marcel: "the infinitely mysterious act by which an essence assumes a body" (Iweadighi 1992) It is the situation of a being that appears to him to be bound to his or her body. It is the notion of our non - instrumental communion with our bodies (Marcel 1948).

Human being then is essentially incarnate and the only way he can exist in the world and think about the world is by being incarnate, that is to appear to him as a body, as this particular body. My incarnation makes me a being present in the World but does not make my body an object, a tool or an instrument for use or manipulation. It is not an object for the satisfaction of our instinctual cravings. I cannot be distinguished from my body as Descartes erroneously holds. For Marcel, there does not exist any gap between myself and my body. In fact, I am my body. Marcel therefore warned against any objectification of this body when he says: "I am my body insofar as I succeed in recognizing that this body of mine cannot be brought down to the level of being this object, an object, a something or other." (Iweadighi 1992) It therefore becomes evident that it is only through my incarnation that I become present to the world and to others. The awareness of my body becomes the awareness of my being with others. Thus, the incarnate being is not a self-isolated self, for according to Marcel: "It is a property of my body that it does not and cannot exist alone." (Marcel 1948)

Therefore, the awareness of my incarnation consequently becomes the awareness of my inter-

subjective existence. This is because I transfer to the world and to others the sense of being and presence that I experience when I become aware of my body. Through my incarnation therefore, I encounter others and enter into a loving relationship with them because according to Marcel, I regard them as prolongations of my body. However, my relationship with others is determined by the type of relationship that exists between us. In other words, as a human being I can exist or act in one or two ways. I can exist and relate lovingly and authentically with others. This is the level of the authentic inter-subjective, dyadic type of relationship, this is what he calls the 'I-Thou' relationship. On the other hand, I can relate inauthentically to others as I would relate to any object, tool or instrument. This is the triadic or I – it or he or she relationship.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. According to Buber is a subject-to-object relationship possible in love?

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2. What is philosophy for Marcel?

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3.4 MARCEL'S I – THOU RELATIONSHIP

The I-thou relationship in Marcel discovered under the-plane of secondary reflection and mystery is both horizontal as well as vertical. On the horizontal plane, I.-thou relationship is the relationship of the finite "I" to a finite 'thou'. On the vertical, it is a relationship of a finite being to the Absolute Thou - God. The "thou" for Marcel is the other, who can be invoked by me. He is the being with whom I can enter into a loving relationship. This is the plane of the authentic inter-subjectivity. Here, we are no longer two isolated or self-enclosed entities, two strangers struggling to possess and objectify each other. Rather I become present to the thou in Mutual openness and self-giving. Thus I discover thou in a genuine meeting in love, friendship and spiritual availability. In the I-thou relationship, I cease to regard the other as an object, an item in my mind, or merely as a function, a freedom to be appropriated. The other becomes for me a real person, a thou with whom I commune in the most intimate way. He becomes my other self not a he a she or it.

When I address the other as "thou" in a relationship of love, I become completely involved in all his or her affairs and whatever affects him, affects me also. Thus I - Thou relationship is an invocation, an appeal to being, a call intended to be listened to, heard and as well responded to. Through this invocation of the other, the 'I' moves out to encounter the other in a meeting of love and spiritual availability. It is an address - and - response type of relationship, a dialogical relationship of the 'I' to a 'Thou' as opposed to the dialectical, question - and - answer (information) type of relation between the subject and object. It involves a "witness" of real being. It may be noted that the love of the thou does not stem from love of certain basic qualities in the person neither physical, physiological nor psychological. It involves the "Global wholeness", the complete person of the I directed to the unlimited, unspecified being of the thou. Thus: "The I does not love the other because he has certain good qualities, or because the I - has judged the other. To - possess specific intellectual, moral and religious virtues."

Both the I and the Thou discover their freedom by entering into loving relation and becoming available to each other, as they shatter their self- enclosed egocentric prisons to open up to others. The mutual communion of I - Thou affirms my freedom as opposed to Jean Paul Sartre's negative inter-subjectivity, where the other engulfs my freedom, and where the look and presence of the other erodes my personality. Also on the vertical plane, I encounter God who becomes the Absolute Thou for me. I thereby enter into a mutual, reciprocal and dialogical relationship with the Absolute Thou. The Absolute Thou cannot be reduced to an object, a he or it, He can only be addressed as "Thou". Thus the I - Absolute Thou relation becomes a dialogical and responsive relation in which the I becomes a 'Thou' for God. In this case then, belief in God for Marcel becomes "a thou-address meant to be heard" and responded to. Thus Marcel Observes: "A God whom my belief did not interest would not be God but a simple Metaphysical entity."

Therefore, the religious experiences of Prayer, faith, contemplation etc., becomes a dialogical relationship with the Thou, a mode of participation between the finite thou and the Absolute. This dialogical, responsive and mutual or reciprocal relationship of the I and the Thou Marcel described as a "dyadic" relationship. It is a dyadic relation because it involves participation, presence and availability. Basically the I-Thou relationship is "dyadic" because it contains some measure of "exclusiveness". It is exclusive of a third party beside the I and the thou, who may either try to verify or describe our experience of the communion. As Cain would say: "Three is, a crowd here, as in any I - Thou relationships. Rather, I -thou relations is personal, a relation between me and the thou and as such defies any verification from outside as is characteristic of all ontological participations.

3.5 MARCEL'S PRESENCE, PARTICIPATION AND AVAILABILITY

It is only the I-Absolute Thou relationship that possesses the lone character of the "all - inclusiveness". In this case, my relationship with the Absolute Thou necessarily entails my willing others to be 'thou' for God alongside with me. This is because I exist, only when other beings exist with me, as Marcel will say "*esse est co-esse*", to exist is to co-exist. Therefore, my relation to God becomes one of "I hope in thee for us" The 'I-Thou' relation in Marcel connotes the idea of presence, participation and availability. The reality of presence is an important aspect of the I - Thou relationship. Presence in the Marcelian I

- Thou relationship denotes something more comprehensive than the fact of just being there. It transcends spacio-temporal proximity. This is because I can be present to a thou far away from me through feeling and spiritual availability when the person sitting beside me may not be present to me; just as things cannot be present to me.

Therefore, I can only be present to a thou the being who takes me into consideration or account. According to Marcel, presence by definition becomes a mutual self-giving to being. In this case, presence becomes the Response by which the subject opens himself to receive he thou in his self- giving, and as such; "Presence belongs only to the being who is capable of giving himself" (Marcel 1949). Therefore in the 'I-Thou' relationship, I encounter the thou and become present to him. The 'I-Thou' encounter then becomes a mingling of two presences, a co-presence. So the reality of presence implies encounter. Participation on the other hand, is the main element of Marcel's I - Thou relationship, as he observes: "The dyadic relation is what in my previous inquiries I called participation" (Marcel 1949).

Participation is the interpenetration of beings. The being of the 'I' penetrate the being of the thou and allows itself to be penetrated by the thou. It is a being – with, a togetherness of realities. It is a subject - subject mode of relation as opposed to the abstract and detached subject - object relation. Through participation, I become present and available to the other. To be present and available to the other is to be at the disposal of the other. to find time for the other, and to listen attentively to his feelings both of joy and sorrow .

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What is a "dyadic" relationship.

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2. What is "participation" for Marcel?

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3.6 IMMANUEL KANT AND PERSONS AS “ENDS IN THEMSELVES”

Though it was Immanuel Kant who popularized the idea that persons are ends in themselves and can never be used “merely as a means”, the view had been upheld a long time before him (notably by scholastic thinkers). A means is that which is useful, a thing (and the word is deliberately chosen) which is sought only for the sake of something else and not desired for its own sake. Thus as long as I need my cycle or my tooth brush it is of any value for me: once I’ve finished using it, I put it aside and forget about it. Persons are not things: they are to be loved, not used. Of course, there are occasions when I make use of a person (his or her services, to be precise), as when I ask someone to drop me to the station by motor-bike or even when I avail of a driver and bus conductor to use the public transport. Kant recognized that we sometimes have to “make use of” each other’s services: that is why he, very wisely, said we shouldn’t use a person *merely* as a means. We need make use of people’s services from time to time. That is what life in community is all about: mutual co-operation and assistance. But it would be totally wrong on my part were I to use a person merely as a means, exactly like I would use, say my toothbrush or cycle. I must respect the freedom of the person and politely request his/her services, recognizing his/her right to refuse. I have to pay him or her some compensation if he or she is a public servant like a bus driver (this is done by paying for my ticket.) Finally, I must render to him or her basic respect that is due to a person, something which I am in no wise obliged to give to my cycle or toothbrush. We may find ourselves in a situation where we have to use the other person as a means, but nothing would justify us using him or her merely as a means.

But why not it is? What is the basic metaphysical reason, why we should not use a person merely as a means? On what grounds can persons claim preferential treatment over things? There is a very good reason for this. And humanists, of both the theistic as well as the atheistic persuasions, would uphold it. For theistic humanists, the person is an “end in him/her” because; of all created beings only the person can directly attain the ultimate end of all reality. Our transcendental analysis of the metaphysical fact of direct judgment has revealed that the unlimited being is the ultimate goal of my intellectual dynamism, the dynamism that underlies all my other striving and drives. Inasmuch as I can know and love, I can directly apprehend (not comprehend) the ultimate reality though, in this present condition, I can only do so indirectly and mediate: here and now I have only a mediated encounter with the Unlimited Being (i.e. through the finite things which I affirm in my daily experience). But I could – if that opportunity were granted me as a freely bestowed gift (in the beatific vision, for instance) – respond directly to such a direct, personal encounter by means of my “spiritual” faculties. Other, non-personal beings, can attain the ultimate and of all reality only in and through personal beings like myself. Hence it is that other beings can be sought and used merely as a means whereas persons can never be so exploited. Let us remember that an “end in oneself” is not the same as the ultimate end. No finite person can be made one’s ultimate end, though he or she must be loved for his or her own sake and not even be “used spiritually” (whatever that is supposed to imply) as a means to attain God. If there comes about a clash between any person I love and God (a clash of loyalties or demands) then, without ceasing to love the former, I have to elicit preferential love for the latter, i.e. God. Let us also not

forget that to make any finite person my ultimate end would be to do him or her grievous harm. For I would be absolutizing or divinizing him or her. This would be unfair and tantamount to making demands of him or her that he or she would be unable to fulfill.

The atheistic humanist would agree that a person is an end in him/her, though for a different reason. The argument would be that there is no higher being given us on earth than the human person. Only humans have consciousness to the extent of being free, intelligent and creative. Only human beings can love each other in the fullest sense of the term. Hence they cannot be treated as mere things, as inanimate or non-free, non-rational beings. Indeed, some of the most ardent and dedicated champions of human rights have been atheists who have been prepared to die for their fellowmen and women... and have actually done so. They do exist even martyrs of love among Marxists.

3.7 DIFFERENT FORMULATIONS OF CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVES

The categorical imperative is the central philosophical concept in the moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant, as well as modern deontological ethics. Introduced in Kant's *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, it may be defined as a way of evaluating motivations for action. According to Kant, human beings occupy a special place in creation, and morality can be summed up in one ultimate commandment of reason, or imperative, from which all duties and obligations derive. He defined an imperative as any proposition that declares a certain action (or inaction) to be necessary. A hypothetical imperative compels action in a given circumstance: if I wish to quench my thirst, I must drink something. A categorical imperative, on the other hand, denotes an absolute, unconditional requirement that asserts its authority in all circumstances, both required and justified as an end in itself. He has three famous formulations of the Categorical Imperative.

The First Formulation: "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law without contradiction." (Categorical Imperatives 2010). The Second Formulation: "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end and never merely as a means to an end" (Categorical Imperatives 2010). The Third Formulation: "Therefore, every rational being must so act as if he were through his maxim always a legislating member in the universal kingdom of ends" (Categorical Imperatives 2010).

We ought to act only by maxims that would harmonize with a possible kingdom of ends. We have *perfect duty* not to act by maxims that create incoherent or impossible states of natural affairs when we attempt to universalize them, and we have *imperfect duty* not to act by maxims that lead to unstable or greatly undesirable states of affairs.

3.8 ARGUMENTS FOR THE CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE

What are Kant's arguments for the Categorical Imperative? First, consider an example. Consider the person who needs to borrow money and is considering making a false promise to pay it back. The maxim that could be invoked is, "when I need of money, borrow it, promising to repay it, even though I do not intend to." But when we apply the universality test to this maxim it becomes clear that if everyone were to act in this fashion, the institution of promising itself would be undermined. The borrower makes a promise, willing that there be no such thing as promises. Thus such an action fails the universality test (McCormick 2001).

The argument for the first formulation of the categorical imperative can be thought of this way. We have seen that in order to be good, we must remove inclination and the consideration of any particular goal from our motivation to act. The act cannot be good if it arises from subjective impulse. Nor can it be good because it seeks after some particular goal which might not attain the good we seek or could come about through happenstance. We must abstract away from all hoped for effects. If we remove all subjectivity and particularity from motivation we are only left with will to universality. The question “What rule determines what I ought to do in this situation?” becomes “what rule ought to universally guide action?” What we must do in any situation of moral choice is act according to a maxim that we would will everyone to act according to (McCormick 2001).

The second version of the Categorical Imperative invokes Kant’s conception of nature and draws on the first *Critique*. In the earlier discussion of nature, we saw that the mind necessarily structures nature. And reason, in its seeking of ever higher grounds of explanation, strives to achieve unified knowledge of nature. A guide for us in moral matters is to think of what would not be possible to will universally. Maxims that fail the test of the categorical imperative generate a contradiction. Laws of nature cannot be contradictory. So if a maxim cannot be willed to be a law of nature, it is not moral.

The third version of the categorical imperative ties Kant’s whole moral theory together. Insofar as they possess a rational will, people are set off in the natural order of things. They are not merely subject to the forces that act upon them; they are not merely means to ends. They are ends in themselves. All means to an end have a merely conditional worth because they are valuable only for achieving something else. The possessor of a rational will, however, is the only thing with unconditional worth. The possession of rationality puts all beings on the same footing, “every other rational being thinks of his existence by means of the same rational ground which holds also for myself; thus it is at the same time an objective principle from which, as a supreme practical ground, it must be possible to derive all laws of the will” (McCormick 2001)

3.9 PERSONS AND SOCIETIES

Just as collections of things can be gathered together into aggregates and held together by some external means and thereby, thanks to the creativeness and inventiveness of human beings, be put to work to fulfill various uses, persons, too, can form analogous groupings or societies. The basic difference here is that such persons have come together freely and bind themselves together by moral (not physical) links, which they can surrender if and when they so will. Such groups may come together for a limited goal (e.g. to perfect their skills in a particular language or sport: thus we have language academies and sports “clubs”) or in an attempt to support and help each other in all-round personal growth and development (as may be the case in a nation, a religious order or a religion). The scholastics generally referred to the last group as “perfect” societies and the former as “imperfect” societies. The appellation “perfect” or “imperfect” was not meant to refer to the moral status of the persons who made up the society in question. In the first place, *perfecta* in Latin means complete and, in the second place, it is meant to be descriptive of the goal of the society. A “perfect” society is one which seeks the total, all-round good of the persons who are its members. In that sense, a religion is most adequately called a perfect society, inasmuch as it seeks to make persons better persons and not just better speakers or better citizens or better athletes (Desbruslais 1977).

A very relevant question which is often asked today is, to what extent can a society (club, the state, a religion) ask the individual to sacrifice himself or herself for the common good? It is equally clear that we cannot allow a person to be swallowed up and annihilated, as it were, by any society: he or she is an end in itself and can't be totally sacrificed for some other allegedly "higher purpose". But persons are no mere private individuals: a person is a "community being", too. After all, the supremely perfective acts of a person are knowing and loving and these turn one outside of himself/herself – indeed, as we have seen, both these "spiritual" activities attain their fulfillment in an inter-personal relationship. So, were a person to refuse to relate himself to others in a meaningful community he would frustrate one of the most essential dimensions of his being. Hence, we cannot advocate the "drop out" solution, where a person turns his back on society, on all societies and refuses to make any adjustments or sacrifices for the community. But where do we draw the line?

Generally speaking, no society can use a person merely as a means. If a given society were to ask a person to do something immoral for the sake of an alleged "greater good", it would be wrong. For instance, if a given society decided to eliminate all "unproductive" persons (the aged, the terminally ill and the mentally defective) on the grounds that, since they were not making any contribution to the per capita income of the people and were, on the contrary, a drain on its resources, obviously this would be treating all those persons as mere means for augmenting the income of society (even if this did, in the long run, increase the apparent well-being of the others – but, can one really become an all-round better person by forcibly killing of hopeless and helpless people who might have already given their best to society or who, through no fault of their own, cannot contribute to the amount of goods and services that society craves? Besides, even if they are not "productive" in this narrow, physical sense, can we be so sure that they are unable to contribute to the personal growth of people in other, more vital, ways?). So also would it be against the personal nature of humans, to take children away from their families and indoctrinate them in isolation from their natural parents and families. Again, it would be totally false to identify personhood with a particular ethnic origin or social class or even sex or the color of one's skin. We have seen that what constitutes a person is something deeper than any of these things.

This does not deny the fact that sometimes, for a limited period, the state may curtail some personal rights for the sake of the deprived, in order to give them a chance to overcome the obstacles and injustices meted out to them by an unfair and dominant class. Hence the reservation quotas and land ceilings may interfere with the legitimate aspirations of certain persons, but these are temporary and seek to right an unjustified imbalance that has been done in the past. In all these matters, there needs to be a place for dialogue and the accepted process of democracy. People have also the right to protest decisions of the State if they feel, in good conscience that these go against fundamental personal rights but they should be on the guard against ways and means of protesting that are uncalled for, such as hasty resort of violence and endangering lives of innocent and helpless people (Pandikattu 2011).

3.10 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we tried to bring forth the basic notions of human uniqueness in terms of 'I-Thou' relationship (Buber and Marcel), authentic presence, participation and availability (Marcel). Then we say how Kant views humans as ends in themselves and his categorical imperatives that enable us from a rational perspective to see the uniqueness of human beings and human

relationship. They form together the philosophical foundations of interpersonal relationship, which is quite different from other relationships present in the world.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. According to Kant can we ever “make use of “ persons?

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2. Give any two formulations of Kant’s categorical imperative.

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3.11 KEY WORDS

Categorical imperative: Kant defined an imperative as any proposition that declares a certain action (or inaction) to be necessary. A hypothetical imperative compels action in a given circumstance: if I wish to quench my thirst, I must drink something. A categorical imperative, on the other hand, denotes an absolute, unconditional requirement that asserts its authority in all circumstances, both required and justified as an end in itself.

Ends in themselves: A typical Kantian expression it means that persons have unique dignity and they should never be merely used as means. Since they have value on their own, they are “ends in themselves.”

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UNIT 4 RELATIONALITY: RECENT SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES

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 - 4.2 Relationship among Alphabets
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4.0 OBJECTIVES

- To explore some of the recent scientific basis for relationality.
 - To appreciate that relationality is fundamental to the universe, even at the physical level.
-

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Today science has profoundly shaped and changed the understanding of reality and of ourselves. In this unit, we wish to study the intimately, relational understanding of reality and human beings as espoused by contemporary science. Such an understanding will have profound implications for the understanding of humans themselves. In the first part of this unit, we use the ordinary alphabets to indicate that language and reality is more than monadic letters. Then we take up three scientific theories to indicate the inherent connectedness of the whole reality. we also use another contemporary scientific finding to show us that we do not perceive much of the empirical world, urging us to be humble in our approach to the larger world. Then in the light of our scientific analysis, we recognize human beings not as a pure entity but as an evolving horizon that is ever becoming. Finally we dwell briefly on love and relationality which are constitutive of reality.

4.2 RELATIONSHIP AMONG ALPHABETS

Alphabets, or phonemic alphabets, are sets of letters, usually arranged in a fixed order, each of which represents one or more phonemes, both consonants and vowels, in the language they are used to write. In some cases combinations of letters are used to represent single phonemes, as in English sh, ch and th. (<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/alphabets.htm>). The word alphabet comes, via Latin *alphabētum*, from the Greek word *αλφάβητος* (*alphabētos*), which itself comes from the first two letters of the Greek alphabet, α (*άλφα/alpha*) and β (*βήτα/beta*). The best-known and most widely-used alphabets are the Latin or Roman alphabet and the Cyrillic alphabet, which have been adapted to write numerous languages. Most other alphabets are used for a single language or just a few languages.

The history of the alphabet begins in Ancient Egypt, more than a millennium into the history of writing. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alphabet>) The first pure alphabet emerged around 2000 BC to represent the language of Semitic workers in Egypt and was derived from the alphabetic principles of the Egyptian hieroglyphs. Most alphabets in the world today either descend directly from this development, for example the Greek and Latin alphabets, or were inspired by its design. The Greeks were the first people to create a phonemic alphabet when they adapted the Phoenician alphabet to write their language. They used a number of Phoenician letters that represented sounds with no equivalent in Greek to write Greek vowels.

Looking at the structure of written English language, we can describe it as being made up of building blocks called words. Words, when they are written down, are made up sequences or *strings* of the 26 letters in the alphabet. Not every sequence or string of letters that we put together forms a word that we recognize or *accept* as part of the English language. (<http://www.c3.lanl.gov/mega-math/workbk/machine/mabkgd.html>)

Similar to English, languages that are made of “words” which are “strings” of “letters” from an “alphabet” are found in many areas of science. Biologists, for example, know that proteins are made up of discrete building blocks called amino acids that can only occur in certain combinations. A DNA molecule is a long chain made up of only four building blocks, but the patterns and ordering of the elements of this alphabet is used to write out the “words” that describe the genetic material of all living things.

After experimenting with the letters of the alphabet, it will become evident that for any *finite* set of letters or symbols of the *alphabet*, the number of *words may be* infinite. Thus obviously alphabets are important in forming words. But on their own they are useless and insignificant. Only in creative combination and guided sequence do they make sense. What is noteworthy is the location of space between words. Unlike zero in number system, space does not have any value in itself. But it is the space that contributes to the construction of a meaningful word. Though the number of possible combination and permutation of the letters can be infinite, for any useful purpose to serve, they have to be located properly and bound suitably. So the space between words does have a function which is different from zero, but necessary for the meaning construction.

The use of alphabets to describe words denotes the importance of positioning or placement in the derivation of meaning. So in using alphabets to write words, positioning, sequencing and recognition pattern emerge as very highly significant. After focusing on the positioning and patterns that constitute meaning and life, we take up a few important scientific theories that demonstrates that reality is much more than the empirical or quantifiable aspect of physical experience.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What is the significance of positioning in alphabets?

2. Where did the first alphabets emerge?

4.3 SOME SCIENTIFIC POINTERS TO RELATIONALITY

In this section we take up a few of the contemporary scientific theories that point to the inherently relational and connected nature of reality. Due to lack of space we are forced to give only a general overview of some of the significant theories in contemporary science. In the following sections, we shall see the salient insights of relativity theory and chaos theory which help us to understand how the whole of reality be intimately coupled.

Relativity Theory: The Field Theory

Newtonian mechanics provided the paradigm to understand the classical physical world. According to Isaac Newton, material objects basically pull on each other, with a force that increases with the mass of those objects; and decreases with the distance between them. His solution relating mass, force, energy and acceleration, was elegant and accurate. Though, Newton, himself, was not satisfied because he saw no way for this force to be conveyed through empty space. Thus in spite of the mind-boggling and fantastic achievements, Newton laments: “I have not as yet been able to deduce from phenomena the reason for these properties of gravity, and I do not feign hypothesis. For whatever is not deduced from the phenomena must be called hypothesis; and hypotheses, whether metaphysical or physical, or based on occult qualities, or mechanical, have no place in experimental philosophy.” (Isaac Newton *The Principia*. Cited in <http://anson.ucdavis.edu/~beran/inference.html>.) In sharp contrast to Newton’s theory, Einstein proposed that the *structure* (or geometry) of space was responsible for gravity. In fact, this greatest scientific genius seldom saw no need for material objects as he affirmed: “We could regard matter as the regions in space where the field is extremely strong.... There would be no place, in our new physics, for both field and matter, field being the only reality.” (http://www.gravityandspace.com/Gravity_Potent.html)

Although matter is generally conceived to be made of atoms, the actual volume of atomic (or sub-atomic) particles in a material object is only about one-trillionth of the total volume of that object. The rest of the volume is occupied by relational space. So almost all the volume of matter is actually space. And within that space, there lies electric and magnetic fields that somehow serve to hold matter together. Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity did away with many of the

classical problems of physics, and at the same time it radically altered physicists' view of the Universe. The main features of General Relativity may be summed up as:

- Space and space-time are not rigid arenas in which events take place. They have form and structure which are influenced by the matter and energy content of the universe.
- Matter and energy tell space (and space-time) how to curve.
- Space tells matter how to move. In particular, small objects travel along the straightest possible lines in curved space (space-time). (John Wheeler, http://theory.uwinnipeg.ca/mod_tech/node60.html.)

In curved space the rules of Euclidean geometry are changed. Parallel lines can meet and the sum of the angles in a triangle can be more, or less than 180 degrees, depending on how space is curved. Einstein's theory gave a correct prediction for the perihelion shift of Mercury. It also explained why objects fall independent of their mass: they all follow the same straightest possible line in curved space-time. Finally, in Einstein's theory the instantaneous gravitational force is replaced by the curvature of space-time. Moving a mass causes ripples to form in this curvature, and these ripples travel with the same speed as light. Thus, a distant mass would not feel any instantaneous change in the gravitational force, and special relativity is not violated. (http://theory.uwinnipeg.ca/mod_tech/node60.html). According to Albert Einstein, "The electric and magnetic field or in short, the "electromagnetic" field is, in Maxwell's theory, something real." (Albert Einstein & Leopold Infeld, *The Evolution of Physics: From Early Concepts to Relativity and Quanta*, A Touchstone Book, Simon & Schuster, New York, p. 145.)

Chaos Theory: The Butterfly Effect

The Theory of chaos is among the youngest of the sciences, and has rocketed from its obscure roots in the seventies to become one of the most fascinating fields in existence. At the forefront of much research on physical systems, and already being implemented in fields covering as diverse matter as arrhythmic pacemakers, image compression, and fluid dynamics, chaos science promises to continue to yield absorbing scientific information which may shape the face of science in the future. This theory deals with non-linear and complex situations like stock-market, flow of blood in the human body, weather forecast, etc.

The two main components of chaos theory are the ideas that systems – no matter how complex they may be – rely upon an underlying order and that very simple or small systems and events can cause very complex behaviors or events. This latter idea is known as *sensitive dependence on initial conditions*, a circumstance discovered by Edward Lorenz (who is generally credited as the first experimenter in the area of chaos) in the early 1960s. Taking only the second aspect of the theory, I want to limit my investigation to the butterfly effect, which theories that something seemingly innocuous, such as a butterfly's wings, may be the catalyst for something larger, such as a tornado. The *butterfly effect* is a phrase that encapsulates the more technical notion of *sensitive dependence on initial conditions* in chaos theory. (Wikipedia) The small variations of the initial condition of a nonlinear dynamical system may produce large variations in the long term behavior of the system. At times this is sometimes presented as esoteric behavior, but can be exhibited by very simple systems: for example, a ball placed at the crest of a hill might roll into any of several valleys depending on slight differences in initial position.

The phrase refers to the idea that a butterfly's wings might create tiny changes in the atmosphere that ultimately cause a tornado to appear (or prevent a tornado from appearing). The flapping

wing represents a small change in the initial condition of the system, which causes a chain of events leading to the large-scale phenomena. Had the butterfly not flapped its wings, the trajectory of the system might have been vastly different. (Wikipedia) Recurrence, the approximate return of a system is towards its initial conditions; together with sensitive dependence on initial conditions are the two main ingredients for chaotic motion. They have the practical consequence of making complex systems, such as the weather, difficult to predict past a certain time range (approximately a week in the case of weather). (Wikipedia)

Sensitive dependence on initial conditions was first described by Jacques Hadamard in 1890 and popularized by Pierre Duhem's 1906 book. (Pierre Duhem (1861–1916) was a French physicist and philosopher of science. As a physicist, he championed “energetics,” holding generalized thermodynamics as foundational for physical theory, that is, thinking that all of chemistry and physics, including mechanics, electricity, and magnetism, should be derivable from thermodynamic first principles. The book referred is *La théorie physique, son objet et sa structure*, Paris, Chevalier et Rivière, 1906.) The idea that one butterfly could have a far-reaching ripple effect on subsequent events seems first to have appeared in a 1952 short story by Ray Bradbury about time travel, although the term “butterfly effect” itself is related to the work of Edward Lorenz. In 1961, Lorenz was using a numerical computer model to rerun a weather prediction, when, as a shortcut on a number in the sequence, he entered the decimal .506 instead of entering the full .506127 the computer would hold. The result was a completely different weather scenario. Lorenz published his findings in a 1963 paper for the New York Academy of Sciences in which it was noted that “One meteorologist remarked that if the theory were correct, one flap of a seagull's wings could change the course of weather forever.” Later speeches and papers by Lorenz used the more poetic butterfly. According to Lorenz, upon failing to provide a title for a talk he was to present at the 139th meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1972, Philip Merilees concocted *Does the flap of a butterfly's wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas* as a title. (Wikipedia) From then on butterfly effect has become a popularly successful theory.

So there are in reality many natural phenomenon which are so extremely sensitive to the initial conditions, that the outcome –intended or unintended – cannot be theoretically predicted. In such a world, one can visualize that the relationship between events or between individuals are so complex that we cannot sensibly speak of determinism and cause-effect. Thus in such areas what we have are not accurate measurements but rough approximations. And a major aspect of reality is thus approximation, which belong to the world of roughness and inter-relationships.

4.4 THE UNKNOWN UNIVERSE

The cosmic reality that we experience is truly and ontologically connected and interrelated. At the same time there is another significant fact that the physicists tell us out of experimental observation, which the mystics of all religious tradition have always implied. It is about how little we really know about the reality, which truly makes us humble and open-minded. So in this section we shall briefly deal with two of the most puzzling phenomena that confront today's astrophysicists: that of dark matter and dark energy.

Dark Matter

In 1933, the astronomer Fritz Zwicky was studying the motions of distant galaxies. Zwicky estimated the total mass of a group of galaxies by measuring their brightness. When he used a different method to compute the mass of the same cluster of galaxies, he came up with a number that was 400 times his original estimate. This discrepancy in the observed and computed masses is now known as “the missing mass problem.” Nobody did much with Zwicky's finding until the 1970's, when scientists began to realize that only large amounts of hidden mass could explain many of their observations. Scientists also realize that the existence of some unseen mass would also support theories regarding the structure of the universe. Today, scientists are searching for the mysterious dark matter not only to explain the gravitational motions of galaxies, but also to validate current theories about the origin and the fate of the universe. (Chris Miller, “Cosmic Hide and Seek: the Search for the Missing Mass,” accessed at <http://www.eclipse.net/~cmmiller/DM/> on 23 June, 2007.)

Scientists estimate that 90 to 99 percent of the total mass of the universe is the dark matter. Scientists can tell that the dark matter is there, but they cannot see it. Bruce H. Margon, chairman of the astronomy department at the University of Washington, told the *New York Times*, “It's a fairly embarrassing situation to admit that we can't find 90 percent of the universe.” (Wilford, John Noble. “Astronomy Crisis Deepens As the Hubble Telescope Finds No Missing Mass.” *New York Times*. 29 Nov. 1994: C1-C13). This problem has scientists scrambling to try and find where and what this dark matter is. “What it is, is any body's guess,” adds Dr. Margon. “Mother Nature is having a double laugh. She's hidden most of the matter in the universe, and hidden it in a form that can't be seen” (McDonald, Kim A. “New Findings Deepen the Mystery of the Universe's 'Missing Mass'.” *Chronicle of Higher Education*. 23 Nov. 1994: A8-A13)

What do scientists look for when they search for dark matter? We cannot see or touch it: its existence is implied. Possibilities for dark matter range from tiny subatomic particles weighing 100,000 times less than an electron to black holes with masses millions of times that of the sun. The two main categories that scientists consider as possible candidates for dark matter have been dubbed MACHOs (Massive Astrophysical Compact Halo Objects), and WIMPs (Weakly Interacting Massive Particles). Although these acronyms are amusing, they can help you remember which is which. MACHOs are the big, strong dark matter objects ranging in size from small stars to super massive black holes. MACHOs are made of 'ordinary' matter, which is called *baryonic* matter. WIMPs, on the other hand, are the little weak subatomic dark matter candidates, which are thought to be made of stuff other than ordinary matter, called *non-baryonic* matter. Astronomers search for MACHOs and particle physicists look for WIMPs.

Astronomers and particle physicists disagree about what they think dark matter is. Walter Stockwell, of the dark matter team at the Center for Particle Astrophysics at U.C. Berkeley, describes this difference. “The nature of what we find to be the dark matter will have a great effect on particle physics and astronomy. The controversy starts when people made theories of what this matter could be – and the first split is between ordinary baryonic matter and non-baryonic matter.” Since MACHOs are too far away and WIMPs are too small to be seen,

astronomers and particle physicists have devised ways of trying to infer their existence. (www.eclipse.net/~cmmiller/DM/)

Dark Energy

Dark energy started its long history in 1917 and was introduced by Albert Einstein. A constant (which he called Λ) was needed in his equations of General Relativity in order to allow for a static Universe. But shortly thereafter, when Hubble made his famous discovery of the expansion of the Universe, this constant Λ , now seeming an unnatural and superfluous admixture, was rejected, even by Einstein himself (although his often cited “biggest blunder in my life” most probably is a myth).

Later, when quantum theory was developed, it was realized that “empty space” was full of temporary (“virtual”) particles continually forming and destroying themselves. Physicists began to suspect that indeed the vacuum ought to have a dark form of energy, and that Einstein’s Λ could be interpreted as vacuum energy. But when they tried to estimate its value, they disagreed with observational limits by 120 orders of magnitude, making this the most erroneous estimate in physics ever. Λ was forgotten by most astronomers for nearly 70 years. Most interestingly, Λ was unearthed in the 1990s in order to reconcile theory with observations. Nowadays it has become fashionable to call Λ “dark energy.” (<http://www.astro.uni-bonn.de/~webiaef/outreach/posters/darkenergy/>)

The discovery in 1998 that the Universe is actually speeding up its expansion was a total shock to astronomers. It just seems so counter-intuitive, so against common sense. But the evidence has become convincing. The evidence came from studying distant type Ia- supernovae. This type of supernova results from a white dwarf star in binary system. Matter transfers from the normal star to the white dwarf until the white dwarf attains a critical mass (the Chandrasekhar limit) and undergoes a thermonuclear explosion. Because all white dwarfs achieve the same mass before exploding, they all achieve the same luminosity and can be used by astronomers as “standard candles.” Thus by observing their apparent brightness, astronomers can determine their distance using a simple mathematical calculation.

Astronomers know dark matter is there by its gravitational effect on the matter that we see and there are ideas about the kinds of particles it must be made of. By contrast, dark energy remains a complete mystery. The name “dark energy” refers to the fact that some kind of “stuff” must fill the vast reaches of mostly empty space in the Universe in order to be able to make space accelerate in its expansion. In this sense, it is a “field” just like an electric field or a magnetic field, both of which are produced by electromagnetic energy. But this analogy can only be taken so far because we can readily observe electromagnetic energy via the particle that carries it, the photon. (imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/science/mysteries_11/dark_energy.html)

In the context of dark energy, the cosmological constant is a reservoir which stores energy. Its energy scales as the universe expands. As yet, no scientist can give the answer to this fundamental question. We do not know what the nature of dark energy is, and unveiling this mystery will most probably reveal new physics and even might shake modern particle physics to its very foundations. Nevertheless, we have considerable astronomical knowledge about the properties of dark energy:

- Dark energy acts as a repulsive force or anti-gravitation. It is responsible for the acceleration of the Universe today.

- Dark energy is probably related to a vacuum energy density: (www.astro.uni-bonn.de/~webiaef/outreach/posters/darkenergy/)

Saul Perlmutter, leader of the Supernova Cosmology Project headquartered at Berkeley Lab remarked wryly. “The universe is made mostly of dark matter and dark energy, and we don't know what either of them is.” (www.lbl.gov/Science-Articles/Archive/dark-energy.html) More recent precision observations have shown that on the one hand the Universe is spatially flat, but that on the other hand matter (both ordinary and dark matter) contributes only about 30% of the matter/energy density required for the Universe to be flat. The startling conclusion is that the dominant component (70%) of the Universe is in the more exotic form of “dark energy.” (www.astro.uni-bonn.de/~webiaef/outreach/posters/darkmatter/)

Thus the universe is not merely interconnected, we do not know even empirically what the universe is in fact made of. If 90-99% of the universe is unknown to the physicists, we need to be humble and accept the limitations of our human knowledge. It could be that this dark matter could further connect the reality more deeply.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What percentage of the matter in the universe is dark matter?

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2. What is “butterfly effect”?

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4.5 BETWEEN BEFORE AND BEYOND

In the above section we have used the scientific theories to point to the inherent relational nature of the reality that includes the cosmos, humans and life. In this section I want to point to the essentially intentional or inherently dynamic nature of human being itself, who forms not a monad but a horizon that emerges and enlarges itself.

For this purpose we analyse the use of alphabets and language in our daily language. (Obviously language reflects the reality, the referred. But a brief reflection will tell us that language also

reflects the human person, the speaker and its creator.) As we know prepositions are grammatical words that show relationships between two things. These relationships often relate to time or space. In grammar, an adposition is an element that combines syntactically with a phrase and indicates how that phrase should be interpreted in the surrounding context. If the location of a particular adposition is fixed with respect to its complement phrase, it may also be known as a preposition (comes before the phrase), postposition (after the phrase), or circumposition (around the phrase).

Adpositions form a heterogeneous class, with fuzzy boundaries that tend to overlap with other categories (like verbs, nouns, and adjectives). It is thus impossible to provide an absolute definition that picks out all and only the adpositions in every language. The following properties are, however, characteristic of the most frequently used, “core” members of most adpositional systems: The most common adpositions are single, monomorphemic words. According to the ranking cited above, for example, the most common English prepositions are *of, to, in, for, on, with, as, by, at, from*. Adpositions are among the most frequently occurring words in languages that have them. For example, one frequency ranking for English word forms begins as follows (adpositions in bold): *the, of, and, to, a, in, that, it, is, was, I, for, on, you*. (Wikipedia)

Our basic assumption is that noun denotes objects as entities and verbs denotes objects in action. It is the adpositions that denote the relationality between entities. Though such adpositions, and hence relationality, are the most frequently words in language, what is noteworthy is the very limited number of words denoting adpositions. Where as a normal dictionary may contain a large number of nouns and limited number verbs, the number of adpositions is less than 15. That could be one of the reasons why we have been traditionally identifying reality, including human beings, with individual objects. But in fact the human beings are materially composed of ‘objects,’ (nouns) and dynamically active (verbs) and the interrelationship that relates the nominal and the verbal forms of actions (adpositions). Understood thus, I am not the noun form “I” but the “between-ness” (now) that carries with itself the before (past) and the ever widening beyond (future or realization). That is why theologians feel comfortable to speak today not of human beings, but of human becoming. I am not the static being that forms a self-enclosed monad, but a dynamic becoming that is open to new possibilities.

Human beings are not just the “givenness” but have the opportunity and freedom to choose, realize, evolve and in the process the “gift” that makes out the given. Human being is therefore best characterized by the “horizon” that always recedes from us, but that always invites us and enlarges itself. The horizon, which constitutes our dreams, visions, disappointments, hopes and aspirations and which includes our physical possibilities and limitations and the volitional yearning and openness is human being. In this sense, I am always one step ahead. I am a pilgrim reaching out to the highest and deepest and always on the way, but carried and supported by others. In this sense, each one of us is a relationship, intertwined and related to the whole of cosmic reality that is ever becoming.

4.6 LOVE AS RELATIONALITY

After having indicated the inherent relationality in reality, I want to make some brief reflection on the profound notion of love: its depth, significance and implication. We have seen from our above discussion that we need to go beyond the monadic (and the consequent dualistic) patterns of understanding reality and the human being. The traditional understanding of human being as a subject who interacts with other subject through love is not fully adequate in our world-view. The traditional understanding that love is a quality (or property) that the subject possesses need to be replaced by a more integral view. Such a view presupposes that love is integral to the subject or in other words it is love (relationship) together with the physical subject that constitutes the person. In this sense it is insightful that Christianity identifies God with love. Such an understanding is deeper than asserting that love is a property of God. Love, understood holistically, becomes the relationship of interdependence and mutual affirmation and is constitutive of reality.

In this sense a human person may be ontologically understood as love. A person is dependent on the environment, on the beloved ones and on the social setting, all of which are truly interacting, dynamic and inherently relational. A person himself or herself is also a relational entity in interaction with other persons. Finally we can hold that a person is truly in interaction with his or her own self. The self of a person evolves in contact interaction and feedback with oneself. The person is intrinsically dependent on relationship or interaction. Such an interaction when properly experienced, enhanced and affirmed could be interpreted as love, from a spiritual perspective. (Desbruslais 1998)

4.7 CONCLUSION

To recap some of our insights: counting and quantification has a value. But the significance of counting is derived from the pattern or sequence, as is abundantly clear from our use of alphabets in the language. In a similar vein we have shown from the scientific theories of the second part that pattern, configuration, interrelationships, fields, oscillations, tension and interconnectedness are constitutive of the totality of reality. So we need to go beyond a monadic or dualistic understanding of reality to a dynamic, connected and integral vision of reality which is ever evolving, like a horizon. The relativity theory speaks of the space-time curvature as a continuous, interacting field in exchange. The chaos theory with its butterfly effect points to the inherently instable state of both chaos and order and the intrinsic causal or non-causal relationship between the various entities in the universe. The string theory holds that it is oscillations or the vibration of the extended string, which can take different forms, that forms the basic building block of the universe. Such building blocks are essentially relational and interacting.

Still we need to admit with humility that about 90% of the reality is unknowable to contemporary physics. The dark matter and the dark energy present new mysteries to today's physics and affirm the need for the physicists to be humble and to carry forward their search in an open-ended manner. From such perspectives we can infer that essentially human beings are not merely entities or nodes, but "human becoming," or the between-ness, between before and beyond, which always tends to exceed itself and in the process creates itself ever new. We can also affirm that love, both metaphysically and affectively, is constitutive of such an interdependent reality. Thus from our study it is clear that the reality of the material cosmos is essentially relational. The self and the person that constitute the human becoming too are essentially in enriching interaction and enhancing connectedness. We are truly the dynamic, ever open between-ness – or better, in-between-ness - that goes beyond itself.

4.8 LET US SUM UP

After having seen the inherently relational aspect of the universe drawn from some scientific findings, we conclude this unit by asserting that love can be seen as one aspect of relationality.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What is adposition?

.....

.....

.....

2. In the light of scientific and evolutionary findings today, how will you understand human beings?

.....

.....

.....

4.9 KEY WORDS

The *butterfly effect* is a phrase that encapsulates the more technical notion of *sensitive dependence on initial conditions* in chaos theory. The small variations of the initial condition of a nonlinear dynamical system may produce large variations in the long term behavior of the system, like a flapping of a butterfly causing hurricane after many years in a far away place.

Chaos Theory: The Theory of chaos is among the youngest of the sciences, and has rocketed from its obscure roots in the seventies to become one of the most fascinating fields in existence. This theory deals with non-linear and complex situations like stock-market, flow of blood in the human body, weather forecast, etc.

Adposition: it is an element that combines syntactically with a phrase and indicates how that phrase should be interpreted in the surrounding context. If the location of a particular adposition is fixed with respect to its complement phrase, it may also be known as a

preposition (comes before the phrase), postposition (after the phrase), or circumposition (around the phrase).

4.10 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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