

# The Three Selves: A Memory of the Future

An Essay by Dr. Marc Gafni

*From:*

*The Phenomenology of Eros:*

*Meditations on the New Narrative of Desire*

*[Soon available]*

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# Desire: The Heart of Reality

We will start with just a couple of sentences recapitulating what we have discussed in depth elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

We live in a CosmoErotic Universe. Reality itself is animated and driven by Eros.<sup>2</sup> That is one of the tenets of what we have called *CosmoErotic Humanism*.<sup>3</sup> The core understanding, drawn from an extensive integration of a broad range of exterior and interior sciences, is that the human participates directly and uniquely in the larger Field of Value, which is Cosmic Eros.

The human being is the CosmoErotic Universe in person. And by CosmoErotic Universe we do not imply merely the physical structure of matter, but rather the entire Universe in all of its interiors and exteriors. The realization that the CosmoErotic Universe distinctly incarnates in every human being is the core of CosmoErotic Humanism.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the four-volume *Meditations on the New Narrative of Desire* by Dr. Marc Gafni, Barbara Marx Hubbard, and Dr. Kristina Kincaid.

<sup>2</sup> We are using the word *Eros* in a very specific sense, as what we have called *the experience of radical aliveness, desiring, seeking, moving towards, ever-deeper contact and ever-greater wholeness*.

<sup>3</sup> CosmoErotic Humanism is a world philosophical movement aimed at reconstructing the collapse of value at the core of global culture. Much like Romanticism or Existentialism, CosmoErotic Humanism is not merely a theory but a movement that changes the very mood of Reality. It is an invitation to participate in evolving the source code of consciousness and culture towards a cosmocentric *ethos* for a planetary civilization.

CosmoErotic Humanism addresses three core questions: *Who? Where? What?*

- *Who am I? Who are we?* [Narrative of identity]
- *Where are we?* [Universe Story]
- *What is there to do? What do we want? What is our deepest heart's desire—both personally and collectively?* [Eros and *ethos*]

This movement is a strong, fluid, and emergent response to the meta-crisis, fundamentally understanding that existential and catastrophic risks are not just rooted in flawed infrastructure (technological and other systems), social structure (law, education, politics), but primarily in failed superstructure—specifically the collapse of an implicit, shared worldview, what we call a *shared Story of Value rooted in evolving First Principles and First Values as a context for our diversity*.

The core of CosmoErotic Humanism is therefore a new Story of Value rooted in First Principles and First Values that integrates the validated insights of the interior and exterior sciences—across premodern, modern, and postmodern thought—ultimately recasting cosmic evolution as a Story of Value, in which our stories are understood to be chapter and verse in the larger narrative arc of Reality—the CosmoErotic Evolutionary Love Story of the Intimate Universe.

These evolving First Principles and First Values embedded in a Story of Value are grounded in a comprehensive set of meta-theories, encompassing psychology (and a theory of self), epistemology, scientific metaphysics, education, ethics, theology, mysticism, sexuality, Eros, and *ethos*.

CosmoErotic Humanism offers some of the first words on the possible emergence of world philosophies and world religions adequate to our time of civilizational crisis and transformation—rooted in a universal grammar of value as a context for our diversity, weaving humanity into a shared story of inherent yet evolving Cosmic Value.

An essential quality of Eros is desire. Throughout traditional, modern, and postmodern societies, the surface chatter of human culture has tended to identify desire with sex. The two words are virtually synonyms. But deeper levels of realization in all three time periods inform us that desire is not in any sense reducible to the sexual; indeed, **sexual desire participates in the larger Desire of Reality**—a Desire that powers Reality.

When I am on the inside, when I am fully intimate with myself, I am able to access desire, the most wanton and poignant quality of the erotic experience. Desire is an essential expression of Love and Eros. But when I am on the outside, a stranger to myself, I am alienated from my deepest desires. I cannot access my yearning, though longing and desire are vital strands in the textured fabric of Eros.

It was Rilke, rebelling against the old religious dogmas, who wrote of the shivering blaze that is Reality's Desire as it awakens in human consciousness:

*You see, I want a lot.*

*Perhaps I want everything*

*The darkness that comes with every infinite fall*

*And the shivering blaze of every step up*

*So many live on and want nothing*

...

*But what you love to see are faces*

*That do work and feel thirst.<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> From: *Rilke's Book of Hours: Love Poems to God* by Rainer Maria Rilke, Anita Barrows (Translator), Joanna Macy (Translator), Riverhead Books, 1997. The original German book *Das Stunden-Buch* was first published in 1905.

Desire is a quality of Cosmos itself. To place desire only in the realm of the sexual is to exile the erotic to the sexual<sup>5</sup>—but we must remember that twelve billion years of Cosmic Eros existed before sex disclosed itself.

## **Desire Implies Future Tense**

Intense desire means that I yearn for something I do not have. I yearn *not* for what is present but for that which longs to present itself. **Desires implies future tense.** We do not desire the past or the present. We desire the future.

## **Desire Implies Need**

As we have written elsewhere, not all desires are equal. Our deepest heart's desire is a quality of Eros. Eros is the force of Cosmos itself desiring to emerge. We have articulated Eros clearly in the writings of CosmoErotic Humanism via the Eros equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Eros} = & \text{Radical Aliveness} \times \text{Desiring (Growing + Seeking)} \times \text{Deeper Contact} \\ & \times \text{Greater Wholeness} \times \text{Self-Actualization/ Self-Transcendence} \\ & [\text{Creation/Destruction}] \end{aligned}$$

We have formulated a set of precise interior science equations evolving around what we have called *First Principles and First Values embedded in a Story of Value*. We cannot engage in a reconstruction project of culture with regressive fundamentalism, or progressive human potential movement, or new age declarations, with all due respect to the partially legitimate

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<sup>5</sup> On the exile of the erotic in the sexual as a primary malaise of the culture and as source for the collapse of sexuality itself, see *The Mystery of Love*, by M. Gafni, 2004, Simon and Schuster, Chapters 1-3. See also Chapter Seven “The Cosmo-Erotic Reality Unveiled” in *A Return to Eros: The Radical Experience of Being Fully Alive*, by M. Gafni and K. Kincaid, 2017, BenBella Books, Inc.

offerings of each of those forms. As such, we have articulated these precise equations, which we unpack in other writings on CosmoErotic Humanism.<sup>6</sup>

For our purposes in this short essay, a general statement of the Eros principle, without entering the details of the equation, is sufficient, as the purpose of this essay is to introduce a key part of the theory of identity in CosmoErotic Humanism. By identity we mean the most accurate and compelling response to the first of the three great questions of CosmoErotic Humanism: *Who am I?* The core of our response to this great question of CosmoErotic Humanism—integrating the leading validated insights of premodern, modern, and postmodern insights across wisdom streams into a New Story of Value and Identity—is the five selves, which are at the core of Unique Self Theory.<sup>7</sup> In this writing, however, we are adding a new key dimension in our response to the question of *Who am I*—the narrative of identity. This new dimension was first articulated in our study and practice intensives in Holland and Belgium over the last decade.

So, here is our general Eros statement:

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<sup>6</sup> See David J. Temple, *First Principles and First Values of Evolving Perennialism: Forty-Two Propositions on CosmoErotic Humanism—Post-Tragic Memories of the Future* and see also the fuller conversation in David J. Temple, *First Principles and First Values: Towards an Evolving Perennialism—Introducing the Anthro-Ontological Method*—both books published by World Philosophy and Religion Press, in Conjunction with Waterside Press and Integral Publishers. David J. Temple is a pseudonym representing Marc Gafni and Zachary Stein in all of these writings. In individual books, David J. Temple also represents key partners in the project. In the books referred to above, a third figure, who is also represented by David J. Temple, is our dear friend Ken Wilber. Ken is the co-founder with Marc and Zak of the Center for World Spirituality, which later renamed Center for Integral Wisdom and finally evolved to its present name, Center for World Philosophy and Religion. Each of these name changes was with great intention and represented an evolution of the Center's mission and work.

<sup>7</sup> On Unique Self Theory and the five selves, see Gafni, Marc. *Your Unique Self: The Radical Path to Personal Enlightenment*, with Introduction and Afterword by Ken Wilber, Integral Publishers, 2012. The notions of *Unique Self* and *Unique Self Symphony* emerged at the interface of religious scholarship, psychological meta-theory, and evolutionary meta-theory—expressed collaboratively in different forms by Gafni, Stein, and Hubbard. This work naturally integrates with Hubbard's seminal work expressing and exploring *Conscious Evolution: Awakening the Power of Our Social Potential*, by B. M. Hubbard, 2015, New World Library (revised edition). For a detailed look at the genesis of Unique Self Theory itself, see the special scholarly issue of the *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*, 6(1), which is dedicated to Unique Self Theory. The volume was edited and largely penned by M. Gafni, with the lead article, "The Evolutionary Emergent of Unique Self: A New Chapter in Integral Theory," by M. Gafni, 2011, *JITP*, (6)1, 1-36. See also major works by Gafni (2012; 2014) *Your Unique Self* (see above) and *Self in Integral Evolutionary Mysticism: Two Models and Why They Matter* on the core articulation of Unique Self Theory. And see the forthcoming work by Z. Stein and M. Gafni, *Toward a Politics of Evolutionary Love*. For the first book-length treatment of First Principles of CosmoErotic Humanism, see *A Return to Eros* by M. Gafni and K. Kincaid, 2017. The Center for World Philosophy and Religion is supporting a series of book projects currently underway involving scholars from over a dozen fields, including business, psychotherapy, attachment theory, evolutionary theory, medicine, and technology. For more details about this emerging school of thought, see the think tank at the Center for World Philosophy and Religion: <https://worldphilosophyandreligion.org>.

*Eros = the experience of radical aliveness, desiring, seeking, moving towards, ever-deeper contact and ever-greater wholeness.*

In other words, desire is one of the constituents of Eros. Eros lives in us as evolutionary desire itself, uniquely incarnate in our irreducibly unique personhood. When we are disassociated from the unique Eros that animates us and drives us, we are alienated from the larger Field of Eros. It is precisely through our irreducibly unique quality of Eros that we participate in the larger Field of Eros.

When we are *not* in the Field of Eros, feelings of emptiness and *ennui* overwhelm us. We can barely bear it. So, we cover over the emptiness with pretty costumes of pseudo-eros and its desires. These desires are not our deepest heart's desire, but a more surface, pseudo-erotic form of desire. What psychologists call *acting out*, in its myriad forms of addiction, is but one expression of pseudo-eros.

We need to know our own desire. And we desire to know what we authentically need. That is what it means to *know thyself*. To know yourself is to clarify your desire. The process of clarification is known by the interior sciences as *Berur*.<sup>8</sup> Once you do *Berur*—the clarification of desire—you develop the capacity to incarnate the desire of evolution itself—manifest as you.

Desire implies need.<sup>9</sup>

Clarified desire meets authentic needs. This is the need of evolution, or Reality, itself for its unique expression in you, as you, and through you. Or said in the language of CosmoErotic

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<sup>8</sup> Borrowing a term from the sixteenth-century Lurianic interior sciences.

<sup>9</sup> Desire and need, however, are not isomorphic. Need is generally understood to be more survival-oriented, fundamental, and non-negotiable versus desire, which evokes the sense of a more discretionary nature. Need is also understood in the sense of *immediately needed, right now*, versus desire, which is more future-oriented with less of a sense of pressing immediacy. But to really engage desire and need, one must first distinguish between Eros and pseudo-eros. Eros is the experience of radical aliveness moving towards wholeness, while pseudo-eros is the attempt to cover up the lack of Eros through various frivolous or destructive strategies. In the way of this initial distinction, we further elucidate the distinction between authentic desire (or deepest heart's desire) and pseudo-desire. Pseudo-desire might also be called *unclarified desire* or *surface desire*. The same goes for need. We distinguish between authentic need and pseudo-need. Once you take this distinction into account, and we affirm that we are talking about authentic need and clarified desire, the sharp distinction between need and desire becomes sharply attenuated and even blurred. Indeed, the more evolved one's developmental level and the more evolved one's level of self (for example, Unique Self vs. separate self), the more needs and desires blur into each other.



Humanism, clarified desire, your deepest heart's desire, is evolution awakening as you. Your need becomes Reality's Need.

Distorted desire meets distorted needs. Ambiguous desire meets ambiguous needs. Both are often forms of pseudo-eros.

Desire implies a need that is not met in the present or in the past. Desire implies a need that lives in the future. This is true, even if the desire is about reconnecting to the past. The point is that, in the future, I want to collect my past.

The realization of that desire, or *LoveDesire*, is a core structure of Cosmos. It is a core structure that informs us about the dignity of desire, which in turn informs us of the dignity of need. Cosmos is animated by desire and need. Their evolution appears as two interwoven plotlines of Cosmos, and the response to need is a fundamental driver of Cosmos.

At the human level, we awaken to ourselves as evolution. From our perspective, we might even say, evolution awakens to itself as us. But from evolution's interior perspective, it was self-evidently already awake when it manifested the vast codes and design of the *Intimate Universe*. Just think *mitosis* and *meiosis*, and the intelligent, conscious Cosmos becomes self-evident.

At the human level, therefore, Reality generates a new capacity—to clarify desire and need. Awakening to our identity as evolution, the capacity to distinguish between authentic needs and pseudo-needs, authentic desires and pseudo-desires, emerges. We will articulate the clarification of need on the human level later but, for now, let's stay focused on desire and its implied need, with the understanding that we are referring to authentic need in all of its disguises.

In many systems of spirit, desire was thought to be the enemy of the sacred. Classical forms of both Eastern and Western mysticism reject desire and, with it, its implicit future tense. Theravada Buddhism, for example—along with most other great mystical spiritual traditions—either rejects desire, viewing it with great suspicion, or seeks to straitjacket it in every possible way.

A natural corollary of the rejection of desire is the rejection of the future tense. Mysticism puts radical emphasis on the Eternity that resides in the present. Indeed, the reality of the *now* is

omnipresent in much of the interior sciences and is often expressed as the *Power of Now* or the invocation to *Be Here Now*.

In a not-unrelated move, virtually all the great traditions, at least in their public teachings, falsely conflated desire with its sexual expression, effectively exiling desire, a core face of Eros, to the sexual. This reduction of desire to the sexual distorts both the nature of the sexual and the nature of desire itself. The result is the collapse of the sexual and the failure of desire. The sexual collapses because we look to it to meet all our needs for the full aliveness of desire. Desire collapses because when we exile it to the sexual, we effectively denude all other dimensions of life from the pulse of its aliveness and wisdom. We become, in the language of T.S. Elliot, *the hollow men* and *the stuffed men*.

We become, as the poet continues,

*Shape without form, shade without colour,  
paralysed force, gesture without motion;*<sup>10</sup>

The contemporary field of study that most potently restored desire to the heart of the Universe is emergence science,<sup>11</sup> science's *fairly dust*. At its core, emergence is the realization that the present—in all its complexity—is not the future. The future will emerge something new, which is not only not reducible to, but also greater than, the sum of its parts. **Emergence has two steps: First** is the *desire to merge*, the yearning for deeper unions. **Second** is the *desire to emerge* resulting from these newly merged unions that generate new synergies—new wholes that are greater than the sum of their parts.

In the language of second simplicity:

*Evolution pulses with desire: the desire to merge and the desire to emerge.*

Key moments of desire are recorded all through evolutionary history. The notion of Reality's Desire for more—why Reality did not stop at hydrogen and helium—is core to

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<sup>10</sup> Eliot, T. S. (1925), "The Hollow Men," Faber & Faber. See also <https://standardebooks.org/ebooks/t-s-eliot/poetry/text/single-page#the-hollow-men>. Retrieved February 2024.

<sup>11</sup> On what is being called *emergence science or theory*, see, *The Reemergence of Emergence Theory*, Phillip Clayton, Paul Davies, Oxford University Press.

evolutionary thought and, similarly, the intense desire that binds all of Reality in dances of allurements is the heart of all matter. The iconic scientist and author Howard Bloom writes lyrically about the intense desire of protons for electrons, which advanced evolution 380,000 years after the Big Bang.<sup>12</sup>

Reality is driven by desire. The desire at the heart of Cosmos is specific, not simply general. Unseen reasons of the heart guide the precise, potent path of desire that animates the self-organizing Universe. Evolution emerges through new configurations of intimacy, all brought into being by the constant allured desire of the Cosmos.

Interior scientist Rabi was feeling Reality's desire when she wrote:

*God must get hungry for us; why is He not also  
a Lover who wants His lovers  
near.*<sup>13</sup>

But, at its core, desire is *not* about the sexual. It is the quality of the evolutionary impulse itself that has been throbbing at the core of Reality since the inception of time. In the writings of Alfred North Whitehead, who wrote *Principia Mathematica* with Bertrand Russell at Cambridge,

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<sup>12</sup> In *The God Problem: How a Godless Cosmos Creates*, Prometheus Books, 2012, Howard Bloom writes on p. 46: "At roughly the 380,000-year mark after the big bang, the particles in the plasma slow down. We call that deceleration "cooling." The skittering protons, neutrons, and electrons separate, and give each other more space. But more space does not mean solitude. It does not mean time off from social gatherings. And it does not mean randomness. In fact, it means the very opposite. The puny particles called electrons discover for the first time in their 380,000-year existence that they are not satisfied on their own. Whizzing in their vicinity are particles 1,837 times more massive than they are. Hulking giants. At least relatively speaking. These galumphulous Gargantuas are protons. And the tiny flits called electrons find that they have an electromagnetic hunger, an electromagnetic craving for a sort of coziness this universe has never known before. What's more, the hulking giants of the new cosmos, protons, discover that they, too, feel they are missing something. They discover that they, too, have an electromagnetic longing at their core."

<sup>13</sup> *Love Poems from God: Twelve Sacred Voices from the East and West—Renderings* by Daniel Landinsky (p. 26). Penguin Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

*it is the radical desire for the Good, the True and the Beautiful, in all of their forms, that is the generator function, the animating Eros of Cosmos.*<sup>14</sup>

Evolution is Reality's inherent Desire for the future. Reality is not satisfied with the past or even with the present; Reality yearns for, desires, *needs* the creative fulfillment of the future.

## **The Three Selves: Psychology, Enlightenment Science, and Evolutionary Science—Competing Visions of Time—Past, Present, and Future**

The very nature of the call of the future implies the freedom of emergence and possibility. Indeed, evolution is the possibility of possibility making a choice.

To understand the full implications of evolution as desire reaching for the future—  
a future filled with infinite possibility,  
and yet guided by the *telos* of ever-deeper contact and ever-greater  
wholeness—  
it is instructive to compare evolutionary thought with two other disciplines or  
thought forms—  
contemporary psychology and classical enlightenment science in its ancient  
and modern expressions.

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<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, New York, Free Press, 1967 (originally 1933). See especially pp.11-13 on the attraction to goodness, truth, and beauty as an expression of the Eros of Reality: "All three types of character [intellectual beauty, sensible beauty, and moral beauty] partake in the highest ideal of satisfaction possible for actual realization, and in this sense can be termed that beauty which provides the final contentment for the Eros of the Universe."—p. 13. It is also expressed elsewhere as what Whitehead calls *Divine Appetite* or, to put it more simply, the hunger of the Divine Desire (or the hunger of the Divine) that animates all of Reality. E.g.: "God's immanence in the world in respect to his primordial nature is an urge towards the future based upon an appetite in the present." Whitehead, Alfred North. *Process and Reality* (Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh During the Session 1927-28)—p.32. Free Press. Kindle-Version. We talk about this Divine Appetite that is the Eros of Cosmos in *The Intimate Universe*, deploying the more intuitive language of desire. See also Whitehead, Alfred North. *Science and the Modern World*, Free Press, 1997. See also David Ray Griffin, *Religion and Scientific Naturalism*, State University Press of New York, Albany 2000, p. 294, who succinctly alludes to Whitehead with the sentence, "We are attracted to beauty, truth, and goodness because these values are entertained appetitively by the Eros of the universe, whose appetites we feel."

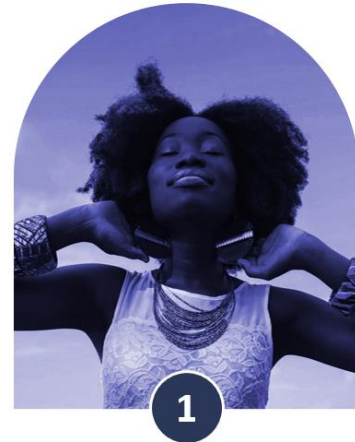
## The Past: Psychology and the Psychological Self

Psychology, which has brought us great goods, and some would say equal ills,<sup>15</sup> focuses on the past.<sup>16</sup> Psychology focuses on the past and particularly on the traumatized past. At the core of the therapeutic method is the recognition that past events drive the way we show up in the present. This opened up great possibilities of healing through the modern creation of psychological modalities. Joseph Breuer in Vienna realized that the hysterical women who were his patients were neither possessed nor insane, as much of the medical establishment of his time assumed, but rather women who had suffered past trauma—often sexual abuse—that could be therapeutically addressed and healed.

### Homo Amor Theory of Self

#### Psychological Self

- Also known as *Separate Self* or *Ego Self*
- Memory of the **Past**, Yesterday



Unique Self Theory 2011, Homo Amor Theory of Self 2016 (Dr. Marc Gafni) | The Crossing 2024 | Office for the Future 2018 (Belgium & Loveland, CO USA)

It is fruitful to examine the multiple schools of psychology in this creative light. Virtually all understand the past to be the place where the *gold* of healing is hidden. It is the re-organizing, re-narrating, or re-enactment of the past trauma that changes our relationship to it, freeing us into

<sup>15</sup> For one strain of the destructive side of the psychology's influence, see, for example, Christina Hoff Sommers blistering cultural critique of contemporary psychology in her book, together with Sally Satel, *One Nation Under Therapy: How the Helping Culture Is Eroding Self-Reliance*, St Martins Pr, 2005.

<sup>16</sup> For an excellent articulation of psychology's obsessive focus on the past and rejection of causation from the future, see "Navigating into the Future or Driven by the Past," by M. E. Seligman and P. Railton et al., 2013, *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8(2), p. 119-141, Association for Psychological Science.

full participation in the present. The argument between the various schools is not over the primacy of engaging the unfinished business of the past, but rather around which modality is most effective in the process of the past's re-narration.<sup>17</sup> And all of this is enormously important and makes a momentous contribution to the evolution of love.

The two primary weaknesses of psychology, however, are as castrating to the human experience as the potent contribution of its strengths are.

The **first** weakness is that psychology, with some rare but notable exceptions, focuses on the typology of the sick human. But the sick human cannot be the strange attractor to human wholeness. And the healthy human is not merely the functional human but the fantastically awake, alive, conscious, and loving human. By its obsessive focus on the sick human as its core typology, human greatness and grandeur is caricatured and even pathologized. Expressions of yearning, creativity, love, or unique individuation that do not fit into the typological straitjacket of the dogmatic DSM<sup>18</sup> need to be *treated* or *medicated*. Along the way, psychology lost much of the genuine sense of care for the soul and love of our humanity in all of its magic and mystery that was its sacred initiating impulse.

The **second** weakness is psychology's virtually obsessive focus on the past as the *only* generator function for healing by way of recovering our memory of the past, reclaiming and re-narrating lost parts of our story.

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<sup>17</sup>In an important set of essays, Dan Brown, Jack Engler, and Ken Wilber organize the eleven or major schools' psychology around the particular healing function of past trauma that each of the particular schools of psychology addresses. See Wilber, Brown, Engler, *Transformations of Consciousness: Conventional and Contemplative Perspectives On Development*, New Science Library, 1986.

<sup>18</sup>The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is a publication by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to classify mental disorders using common language and standard criteria. See "DSM-5 Full Text Online" (PDF). *Archive.Today*. [https://repository.poltekkes-kaltim.ac.id/657/1/Diagnostic%20and%20statistical%20manual%20of%20mental%20disorders%20\\_%20DSM-5%20\(%20PDFDrive.com%20\).pdf](https://repository.poltekkes-kaltim.ac.id/657/1/Diagnostic%20and%20statistical%20manual%20of%20mental%20disorders%20_%20DSM-5%20(%20PDFDrive.com%20).pdf). Retrieved January 10, 2022. In the United States and Australia, it is the main book for the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders. In other countries it may be used in conjunction with other documents—for example, the International Classification of Diseases (ICD), the Chinese Classification of Mental Disorders (CCMD), and the Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual.

In psychology, the focus is on your story—your past story. The therapist identifies the tangled parts of a client’s past story, and then, deploying a range of methodologies, seeks to untie the knots of past trauma.

This might involve entering into the trauma and re-experiencing it through a range of modalities,

from exposure therapy to expressive arts therapy,

to more classic psychoanalytic or psychodynamic modalities,

or re-narration,

but the focus is always on reclaiming the fullness of the past story,

re-integrating any split-off parts that were in shadow,

and restoring integrity to the full narrative of the client’s life.<sup>19</sup>

The brilliance of psychology is its intuitive understanding, when practiced at its best, that one cannot rip out pages from one’s own book of life. In the teachings of *Homo amor*,<sup>20</sup> we call this process *writing your sacred autobiography*.<sup>21</sup> Gradually, however, the realization grew,

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<sup>19</sup> Even classical behavior therapy, which mainly focuses on current problems and how to change them *in the present*, is based on the idea that all behaviors (including destructive ones) were learned *in the past* and that behaviors can be changed by using the same principles and mechanisms (e.g., *classical conditioning* (developed by Ivan Pavlov) and *operant conditioning* (developed by B.F. Skinner) that led to the original behaviors that the client learned *in the past* and wants to unlearn *now*. See, for example, Schaefer, H.H.; Martin, P.L. (1969). *Behavioral Therapy*. Blakiston Division, McGraw-Hill. pp. 20-24.

Behavioral psychotherapy is sometimes juxtaposed with cognitive psychotherapy. It is then called *cognitive behavioral therapy*, which integrates aspects of both approaches. It focuses on challenging and changing cognitive distortions (in the form of thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes) and the behaviors associated with these distortions—both the behaviors and the cognitive distortions, which are thought of having been learned *in the past*—in order to develop better emotional regulation and personal coping strategies that target solving current problems *in the now*. See, for example, Beck JS (2011), *Cognitive behavior therapy: Basics and beyond* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), New York: The Guilford Press, pp. 19–20.

<sup>20</sup> *Homo amor* is the name we have given—in the New Story of Value, CosmoErotic Humanism—to the emergent of a New Human and a New Humanity that is the fulfillment of *Homo sapiens*. This emergence is, at least in potential, a natural evolutionary process. It is this kind of evolutionary emergence that is necessary and sufficient to respond to the challenge of what we have called the *meta-crisis*. For a longer statement of the meta-crisis, see Volume One of this series. See also David J. Temple, *First Principles & First Values: Forty-Two Propositions on CosmoErotic Humanism, The Meta-Crisis, and the World to Come* (2024) and David J. Temple, *First Principles and First Values: Towards an Evolving Perennialism: Introducing the Anthro-Ontological Method*.

<sup>21</sup> Chapter 13 in *Your Unique Self, The Radical Path to Personal Enlightenment*, by M. Gafni, with Introduction and Afterword by Ken Wilber, 2012, Integral Publishers on this and Part Four in *Soul Prints: Your Path to Fulfillment*, by M. Gafni, 2002, Fireside.

especially in the latter part of the twentieth century, that addressing the past was insufficient medicine for the present pain that afflicts most people.<sup>22</sup>

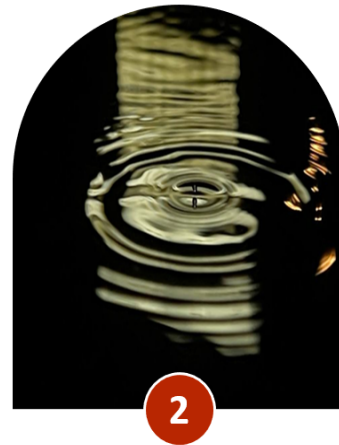
## The Present: Enlightenment Science and the Eternal Self

At the end of the twentieth century, a second contemporary discipline gradually entered the heart of Western culture, referred to as *contemplative* or *enlightenment science*. In its more popularized forms—sanitized of its deeper spiritual implications—it is often referred to as *mindfulness*. Mindfulness, however, is rooted in the great mystical traditions of every religion, which focus not on the past but on the Eternity that resides in the present.

### Homo Amor Theory of Self

#### Mystical Self

- Also known as *True Self* or *Eternal Self*
- Fullness of the **Present**, Now, Today



Unique Self Theory 2011, Homo Amor Theory of Self 2016 (Dr. Marc Gafni) | The Crossing 2024 | Office for the Future 2018 (Belgium & Loveland, CO USA)

<sup>22</sup> Paradoxically psychology's emphasis on the past echoes that of religion, against which psychology at its inception was highly antagonistic. Indeed, the modern psychology can accurately be seen as a rebellion against traditional religion with the psychologist replacing the priest. At the same time, both psychology and religion venerate the past. Both, paradoxically, see the past as containing the key to liberation. Religion thus venerates original moments of purported purity that must be reclaimed—think the Garden of Eden and pivotal moments of prophetic revelation [Moses, Jesus, Mohammed]. Religion—for the most part—views the future as either God's province or as being initiated by human obedience to God's Will. But since the original revelation is that which is to be revered, the future can rarely be seen as holding new emergents of genuine value and sacred quality. Psychology sees those original moments of purity as taking place in the personal context before the onset of shame or before original moments of trauma or alienation in the attachment bond. And psychology views—like religion—the return to the clarity, purity, and obedience of those moments as being causative for future health, much as religion views such collective moments as being causative for future redemption.



Books like Richard Alpert's (Ram Dass's) *Be Here Now* and Eckhart Tolle's *The Power of Now* became popular clarion calls for this very different approach to the realization of our True Nature. Liberation lies not in the past but in the fullness of the present moment, in which there is no past and no future. The focus is not on re-narrating or otherwise healing or fulfilling your story, but on moving beyond your story. Indeed, it is the very act of letting go of your story and stepping into the fullness of the present that allows one to receive the healing blessings of the Infinite Present.

While psychology is focused on what we have called your *separate self*, enlightenment studies are focused on what has often been called the *True Self*.<sup>23</sup> The separate self is the classical, individuated ego, which is the self-identity of most of the unreflective world. True Self is accessed through contemplation and reflection, or forms of meditation and prayer. True Self is the realization that separation, both from an exterior and interior perspective, in Albert Einstein's phrase, is an *optical delusion of consciousness*. True Self is, in physicist Edwin Schrödinger's phrase, the *singular of ... which the plural is unknown*.<sup>24</sup>

Said slightly differently, the total number of True Selves is One. True Self is the realization that you are not separate from the seamless coat of the Universe but that you participate in it. You are an expression and an emergent of the whole thing. You have no meaningful identity as separate from that whole process of being and becoming that is Reality.

Another name for the True Self is *Eternal Self*. The Eternal Self lives in and for Eternity. And Eternity, as Ludwig Wittgenstein pointed out, is not everlasting time but *beneath* time and place. The Eternal Self is not your separate-self personality living forever but rather your

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<sup>23</sup> This identification of selves is deeply grounded in what we have called, in other writing of CosmoErotic Humanism, the *Five Self Model*, which includes separate self, false self, True Self, Unique Self, and Evolutionary Unique Self. This model is explicitly formulated in the earlier writings of CosmoErotic Humanism. See Gafni, Marc [Guest Ed.]. *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice* 6:1, Special Scholarly Issue on Unique Self, Ed. Sean Esbjörn-Hargens. See also Gafni, Marc. *Your Unique Self: The Radical Path to Personal Enlightenment*, with Introduction and Afterword by Ken Wilber, Integral Publishers, 2012. See Gafni, Awakening Your Unique Self course: <https://ciwprograms.com/courses/awakening-your-unique-self-with-marc-gafni/>. For an application of this model to education, see the endnote essay in Chapter 4 "Uniqueness, Separateness, and Specialness" and the section "Unique Self: Reclaiming the Personal and Democratizing Enlightenment" in Chapter 5 of Stein, Zak. *Education in a Time Between Worlds: Essays on the Future of Schools, Technology, and Society*. Bright Alliance, 2019.

<sup>24</sup> See Erwin Schrödinger, *What Is Life? The Physical Aspect of the Living Cell*, Cambridge University Press (1944). In the Epilogue: On Determinism and Free Will, he wrote: "Consciousness is never experienced in the plural, only in the singular. ... The only possible alternative is simply to keep to the immediate experience that consciousness is a singular of ... which the plural is unknown."

Essence that lives beneath space and time, which participates eternally in the larger Field of Consciousness and Desire. Your Eternal Self is one with the entire process of being and becoming.<sup>25</sup>

*Separate self seeks to heal the past.*

*True Self lives in the timeless time and placeless place of the Eternal Present.*

Each of these visions of self and time claims to be the whole truth, implicitly or often explicitly dismissing the other. But upon deeper reflection, we realize—as is virtually always the case—that each of these sciences has a true but partial perspective. Each presents its vision of self—the psychological self and the Eternal Self—as the strange attractor towards a life that is good, true, and beautiful.

### ***True But Partial***

Each is true. And yet each is also necessarily partial.

Enlightenment science thought it could bypass psychological work and find full liberation in the present. The vision of True Self or Eternal Self felt like it could transcend and leave behind the traumas of the past, which so often are the hell realms of separate self. Enlightenment science all-too-often ignores the past traumas of the separate self—what our colleague, John Welwood, aptly called *spiritual bypassing*. It views the domain of what it calls *relative* as opposed to the domain of the *Real*, or what it calls *the Absolute*.

### ***The Love Story of the Universe Embraces both Past and Present***

Both past and present must be transcended and included in the Love Story of the Universe.

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<sup>25</sup> This sense of the Eternal Self, who lives in the Eternal Present, is the province—in some version—of virtually all the great traditions, however not of public exoteric religion but of esoteric religion—the interior sciences.

Psychology does not deal with or generally does not even recognize the domain of True Self or Eternal Self. Instead, psychology limits its gaze to the limited identity of the skin-encapsulated ego and virtually never accesses our True Nature as indivisible from the Whole.

Because our identity participates in the Whole, we are filled with an inconsolable longing for a greater wholeness than cannot be accessed through even the most balanced and functional skin-encapsulated ego. We are therefore not made Whole by a treatment that focuses exclusively on our skin-encapsulated ego driven by prior—past—causation as the sum total of our wholeness. Psychological science thought it could liberate the past by re-narrating its contours, but failed to realize that the narrow identity of the skin-encapsulated ego could never satisfy our yearning for the larger identity that is our True Nature.

But while the psychological self ignores the depth of the present and its compelling invitation, often losing itself in the recursive loops of the traumatic past and its compelling invitations, the Eternal Self fails to mine the fruits of the past, which in their own way are keys to full presence in the present.

It is only in the last two decades or so, at the very leading edges of culture, that we are realizing the need to bring these two disciplines, these two dimensions of time, into a larger wholeness. We are just now realizing that neither psychological maturity, growing up, where we have integrated the past, nor liberation into the present, waking up, is sufficient to create a whole human being. It is only, as John Welwood pointed out so many years ago, *by both waking up and growing up together* that we can begin to realize a kind of personal and collective wholeness and health, the kind we desperately need to find joy and not be drowned in suffering beyond measure.<sup>26</sup> It is only such wholeness and joy as the core mood of Reality, in which we participate, that can break the global action paralysis and confusion and respond effectively to the meta-crisis.

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<sup>26</sup> John Welwood, *Toward a Psychology of Awakening: Buddhism, Psychotherapy, and the Path of Personal and Spiritual Transformation*, Shambhala, 2002, (first published in 2000), p. 7, “In addition to learning how to open and surrender to the divine or ultimate, we also need to understand how the maturation of the genuine individual, at least for Westerners, can help us integrate our spiritual realization into the whole fabric of our personal life and interpersonal relations. Another way to say this is that in addition to *waking up* to our ultimate spiritual nature, we also need to *grow up*—to ripen into a mature, fully developed person.”

As we have articulated the contours of the New Human and the New Humanity over the last decade, we realized that a human cannot realize their True Nature—we cannot be lived as Love—only by healing the past—by being faithful to yesterday—or by entering the fullness of the present. It has become increasingly clear to us that neither the science of psychology, and its true but partial devotion to the past, nor the science of enlightenment, and its true but partial devotion to the present, is sufficient to express the Love Story of the Universe.

There is a third tense that must be engaged—the tense of the future. There is a third science—evolutionary science—whose mood and focus engages this third tense. Evolution as the Love Story of the Universe invites the future. *LoveDesire* reaches for the future. This becomes self-evidently true when the future itself—the future of life, and certainly human life—is threatened, which is the very essence of our contemporary situation—the meta-crisis.

### **The Future: Evolutionary Self or Future Self—The Love Story of the Universe Must Recall—and Be Called by—a Memory of the Future**

At its leading edge, evolutionary science recognizes that evolution is animated not only by the push of the past, as expressed in natural selection, but by the incessant ceaseless creativity of Cosmos that draws it towards the future. It is a future that is both open and filled with possibility, even as it yearns for the fulfillment of the ordinating Principles and Values of Cosmos. Evolution is driven by the past and drawn by the future.

And it is here that *Homo amor* focuses most of her attention. As evolution in person, she is called by her *Future Self*—or what we might also call *Evolutionary Self*.<sup>27</sup> She fully embraces the need to transform the past and be liberated into the fullness of the present. But she realizes that there is a deeper call that is fundamentally ignored in both enlightenment and virtually all of the classical psychological sciences.

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<sup>27</sup> *Evolutionary Self* is an expression of what we call in Unique Self Theory *Evolutionary Unique Self*—below and in the section on the five selves in Chapter Four of Gafni, Marc, *Your Unique Self: The Radical Path to Personal Enlightenment*, with Introduction and Afterword by Ken Wilber, Integral Publishers, 2012.

## Homo Amor Theory of Self

### Unique Self

- Also known as *Evolutionary Unique Self* or *Future Self*
- Memory of the **Future**, Tomorrow



Unique Self Theory 2011, Homo Amor Theory of Self 2016 (Dr. Marc Gafni) | The Crossing 2024 | Office for the Future

### *Past, Present, and Future as First Principles and First Values*

Past, present, and future are each self-evident First Principles and First Values of Reality's Love Story. When the personal self, or a culture, disassociates from the past, present, or future, then personal or cultural pathology is the inevitable result. **A person, community, or nation must be grounded in and reckon with its past, engage its present, and be called by its future.**

To rigidly locate a culture in any one of the three, and ignore or dismiss the other two, is to ensure cultural pathology. *Cultural pathology*, as Joseph Tainter and others point out, always causes *civilizational collapse*.<sup>28</sup> But today our civilization is not local but global; and all the factors that move towards cultural pathology are still present, but this time, they are armored not just with the internal combustion engines of the twentieth century but with the exponentially weaponized info tech, bio tech, nano tech, and artificial intelligences of the twenty-first century.

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<sup>28</sup> See Joseph Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies (New Studies in Archaeology)*, Cambridge University Press, 1990 (first published in 1988).

**We need to emerge a New Human, who is reverent of the past, enchanted in the present, and called by the future.**

We cannot be Whole unless we hear and respond to the call of the future. As interior scientist of nineteenth-century Hebrew wisdom Jacob Joseph of Polonne used to say,

*If your carriage is stuck in the mud, no amount of pushing from behind will free you. You need horses from up ahead to pull you out.*

Indeed, the greatest slave driver in the world is the belief that yesterday determines today. Besides *waking up* and *growing up*, we need to *show up*. We can only show up today if we are fully present, in integrity with the past, *and* in integrity with the future.

In psychological terms, for example, we have long argued that we cannot be healed only by recovering and reorganizing the memories of our past. We must recover the memory of our future. And the memory of the future, at this moment of the second shock of existence,<sup>29</sup> must include the personal and the collective. The call of the future is for all forms of transformation: personal, political, and social. If we are not intimate with our *collective* future, we cannot hear the voices of the unborn calling us. **We are the future's only voice in the present.** If we cannot see, feel, and hear their future voices, then the unborn cannot speak through us.

We love with whom we share identity, coupled with mutualities of recognition, *pathos*, value, and purpose.<sup>30</sup> **We need to be intimate with the future unborn. We need to fall in love**

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<sup>29</sup> The first shock of existence is the realization of the death of the human being. The second shock of existence is the realization of the potential death of humanity. A colleague, Mauk Pieper, an excellent thinker in his own right, attended my (Marc's) seminars themed around *Your Unique Self* in response to collective existential crises in Holland between 2009 and 2013. He published a book entitled *Humanity's Second Shock and Your Unique Self*, 2014, Venwoude Press, for which I (Marc) gladly wrote an afterword. *Your Unique Self* is the title of my core writing on this topic. He understood well the basic premise of our work—what I have called *Unique Self Theory*, meaning an emergent new theory of identity—an accurate response to what we call the first great question of CosmoErotic Humanism: *Who Am I?* Unique Self Theory as part of a larger Story of Value is crucial if we are to respond to the meta-crisis of the twenty-first century and beyond. Mauk coined the term *second shock of existence*, to capture the notion of existential risk, which we happily acknowledge. The term *shock of existence* seems to have been coined by philosopher Robert Creegan in his book by that name *The Shock of Existence: A Philosophy of Freedom*, by R. F. Creegan, 1954, Sci-Art Publishers. On Unique Self, see Gafni, Marc. *Your Unique Self: The Radical Path to Personal Enlightenment*, with Introduction and Afterword by Ken Wilber, Integral Publishers, 2012. See also, Gafni, Marc [Guest Ed.]. *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice* 6:1, Special Scholarly Issue on Unique Self, Ed. Sean Esbjörn-Hargens.

<sup>30</sup> This is our definition of intimacy (or a simplified version of our intimacy equation): Intimacy is shared identity in the context of (relative) otherness x mutuality of recognition x mutuality of *pathos* x mutuality of value x mutuality of purpose.

**with the future unborn.** Intimacy with the future is a core emergent of what we are calling *Evolutionary Intimacy*.

Evolution is a series of transformations. From matter to life to the depth of the human self-reflective mind, the motivational architecture of evolution is desire for transformation. It is the pleasure of that desire that is the erotic motive of Cosmos. Pleasure—not in the pseudo-eros sense but the Pleasure of Eros itself as Reality moves in its great Love Story—is filled with agony and ecstasy, shrouded in mystery, and yet guided by simple clarities—First Principles and First Values embedded in a Story of Value. These First Principles and First Values are the plotlines of the Story reaching for a future *telos*, allured towards ever-deeper Value, ever-deeper Eros, ever-deeper goodness, truth, and beauty.

The call of the future is for all forms of transformation—personal, political, and social.<sup>31</sup>

### ***Recovering the Memory of the Future***

Nachman of Breslov, a wisdom master in the Field of Eros, famously beloved by Franz Kafka and Martin Buber, wrote that the first act one must perform upon awaking in the world is *Zichron Alma De'ati*—remembering the future. Gabriel Marcel echoes Nachman when he wrote that hope “*might be called a memory of the future.*”<sup>32</sup> This is the nature of evolution as expressed in the leading edges of evolutionary science, or what we referred to above as *emergence science*.

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<sup>31</sup> The call of the future naturally has a genuine Eros expression as well as a pseudo-eros expression. A kind of naïve techno-optimism of the kind that characterized much of the earlier days of Silicon Valley—in which the future, generated by future technologies, was cast in virtually inevitable utopian terms—is an example of the pseudo-eros versions of the call of the future. One of the core characteristics of the pseudo-eros expressions of the call of the future self, is that they are untethered and even disassociated from the past. Indeed, much of what we have called *contemporary TechnoFeudalism* is profoundly alienated from the value structures of the past, dismissing them via generalized and superficial caricature. The call of the future must be rooted in the depth of the present, as well as being both critical and reverent of the memory of the past.

<sup>32</sup> Gabriel Marcel, *Homo Viator: Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, translated by Emma Craufurd, Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1951, p. 53, “All then prepares us to recognize that despair is in a certain sense the consciousness of time as closed or, more exactly still, of time as a prison- whilst hope appears as piercing through time; everything happens as though time, instead of hedging consciousness around, allowed something to pass through it. It was from this point of view that I previously drew attention to the prophetic character of hope. Of course one cannot say that hope sees what is going to happen: but it affirms as if it saw. One might say that it draws its authority from a hidden vision of which it is allowed to take account without enjoying it. We might say again that if time is in its essence a separation and as it were a perpetual splitting up of the self in relation to itself, hope on the contrary aims at reunion, at recollection, at reconciliation: in that way, and in that way alone, it might be called a memory of the future.”

The evolutionary impulse that throbs in all of Reality, even as it beats in us, is the great surging forth of Reality. Reality is relentlessly reaching for the future. This longing that lives in us, that is the texture of all of Cosmos, is animated by a quality of *ecstatic urgency*.<sup>33</sup> We locate ourselves in this dimension of future time, as our reaching toward it becomes part of our core self-sense of identity.

### **Briefly Integrating the Two Models of Self: The Five Selves & The Three Selves**

We are implicitly engaging here two models of Self that are core to CosmoErotic Humanism. The first, which we briefly referenced above and is discussed in depth in other writings, is the five selves.<sup>34</sup> They are separate self, false self, True Self, Unique Self, and Evolutionary Unique Self.

#### *The Briefest of Recapitulations*

*Separate self*, the classical identity of the modern human being in open societies, and to a large extent in closed societies, is the experience of the egocentric self—the skin-encapsulated ego-self—who experiences herself as ontologically separate from the larger wholes in which she is entwined. She is surrounded, in the best-case scenario, by her immediate set of family and perhaps friends, in open societies; and in closed societies, she is also embedded in the identity of the state.

*False self* is a distortion of the separate self that starts forming through the pain of separation that the child experiences after the separate self emerges from the pre-personal stage.

*True Self* is the realization that changes everything. It is the realization that she is in fact not separate from—indeed fully one with—the seamless coat of the Universe in all its interiors and exteriors.

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<sup>33</sup> We are indebted to our friend and colleague Andrew Cohen for the term *ecstatic urgency*.

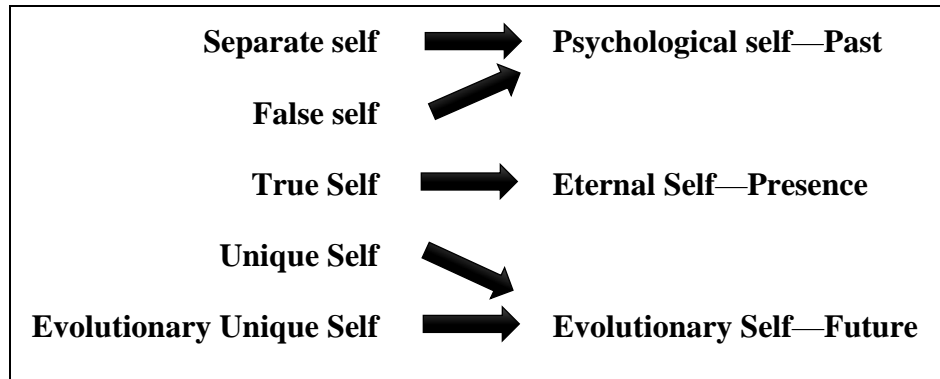
<sup>34</sup> Ibid, see Gafni, Marc [Guest Ed.]. *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice* 6:1, Special Scholarly Issue on Unique Self, Ed. Sean Esbjörn-Hargens. See also Gafni, Marc. *Your Unique Self: The Radical Path to Personal Enlightenment*, with Introduction and Afterword by Ken Wilber, Integral Publishers, 2012.



*Unique Self* is the realization that the coat of the Universe is seamless but not featureless—and that he is its distinct feature, a distinct individuation, of the whole with ontological dignity and distinction.

*Evolutionary Unique Self* is her self-location in the larger evolutionary context—the realization that she is the personal face of the evolutionary impulse itself.

### ***The Integration***



The self of psychological science—the psychological self—is separate self and false self.

The Self of enlightenment science—the Eternal Self—is True Self.

The Self of evolutionary science—Evolutionary Self—is Unique Self and Evolutionary Unique Self.

While separate self heals by recovering the memory of the past, Unique Self heals by recovering the memory of the future. We engage Unique Self more fully in my (Marc’s) book *Your Unique Self: The Radical Path to Personal Enlightenment*. But for now, we will focus on its future dimension. Evolution is about the Will of the Cosmos freely reaching for the future, and uniqueness is the sense organ that calls from the future. We have called this dimension of Unique Self *your Future Self*. We are called by our future selves.

## Unique Self Recovery

I (Marc) am co-authoring a psychological manual entitled *Unique Self Recovery* together with Lori Galperin, one of the leading clinical practitioners and theorists in western psychology. It focuses on the clinical need to recover a memory of the future—to respond to the call of the Unique Self, which itself is the call of our possible future, in order to achieve even basic psychological wellness.

Lori and I began our conversation and work on this book, based on my Unique Self writing and Lori's clinical work and writing in the therapeutic disciplines, back in 2011. Our premise was that neither classical psychology nor enlightenment practices could create wholeness by themselves without responding to the call of the future. It is Unique Self, and particularly its expression as Evolutionary Unique Self, that is the sense organ for the future. It simply means Unique Self, aware of its own True Nature, as the personal unique expression of the evolutionary impulse.

### *A Unique Self Recovery Practice*

A practice we use as part of the core clinical deployment of *Unique Self Recovery* is a two-step process of communicating with your Future Self.

**First**, you ask your Future Self if it would be willing to help you. You might say that you require its help to navigate your life and take decisions from your highest levels of consciousness.

In the **second**, more central step, you write a letter from your Future Self back to your present self. Your Future Self invites you into your own future—in effect, you become your own sage and seer.

### *Homo Prospectus*

This realization of being called by the future is now entering the doors of mainstream psychology. Paradoxically, psychology itself is, at least at its leading edges, beginning to recognize the call of the future. Martin Seligman, founder of *positive psychology* together with three leading colleagues from mainstream academic psychology, has recently written an

excellent set of critiques of psychology's focus on the past. Instead, they suggest the term *Homo prospectus*.<sup>35</sup> *Homo prospectus* is a prospector for gold who is fevered and driven by future possibility. *Homo prospectus* is the human who—like the prospector for gold—is *called* by the future. The point of the book is to demonstrate that psychology and learning theory were taken prisoner by the past.

The book's authors Seligman, Railton, Baumeister, and Sripada point to psychology's attempt to define the present exclusively in terms of past causation. Seligman and his co-authors, however, argue that humans are actually driven by their desire for the future, what earlier papers called *prospection*.<sup>36</sup> We have integrated some of the important academic work around *Homo prospectus* into our broader vision of the New Human and the New Humanity captured in our term *Homo amor*. ***Homo prospectus, like the Homo amor, reclaims the dignity of desire and need. Desire implies need. And desire and need reach towards the future.***

### **The Call of the Future: A Metaphor of the Real**

We will return to the core theme of desire and need, but first, let's deepen our understanding of this future-reaching quality of the Evolutionary Love Story of the Universe.

It is worth noting that the call of the future is more than mere metaphor. It is, rather, what our colleague Howard Bloom has called *real metaphor*—that is, metaphor that evokes ontology, a Real dimension of Reality. One way that the Future Self sometimes shows up in very concrete terms is in precognition, the ability of a person in the present to access details of future events, details that are validated when the event happens.

Research on precognition is no longer anecdotal. It is clearly validated in extensive and rigorous empirical literature. As precognition researchers Dean Radin and Julia A. Mossbridge point out in their articles, which directly address *prospection* and *precognition*:

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<sup>35</sup> See Seligman, M. E., Railton, P., Baumeister, R. F., & Sripada, C. (2016). *Homo Prospectus*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>36</sup> Seligman and his cohorts in *Homo Prospectus* refer to an article on *prospection*. See "How Are We Called Into the Future," pp. xxvii-xxvi in *Being Called: Scientific, Secular, and Sacred Perspectives*, by M. Seligman, 2015, Praeger.

*Prospection, the act of attempting to foresee one's future, is generally assumed to be based on conscious and nonconscious inferences from past experiences and anticipation of future possibilities. Most scientists consider the idea that prospection may also involve influences from the future to be flatly impossible due to violation of common sense or constraints based on one or more physical laws. We present several classes of empirical evidence challenging this common assumption.*<sup>37</sup>

Radin and Mossbridge's work is long anticipated in the intuitions of the interior sciences, where the DNA of Reality is contained in what are termed, in multiple great traditions, the *Names of God*.

The Hebrew wisdom expression of the classic four-letter Name of God is *Yod Hei Vav Hei*—or the English letter equivalent *YHVH*. In Hebrew linguistics, the first letter *Yod* always represents the future. The second three letters literally spell the Hebrew word for the *present*. The Name of God is therefore—literally—the call of the future in the present.

In this not only poetic but very precise sense, *Homo prospectus* embodies the Name of God. For the core of *Homo prospectus*—as Seligman and his colleagues already implicitly point towards—is the call of desire. We desire the future. We are in the present, and the past becomes the province of various forms of classical memory, ranging from nostalgia to reverence, but the future is the object of our desire. We desire that which the future offers us. And we need the future. Without the call of the future, we experience life as a repetitive cycle in which our aliveness is deadened in direct proportion to the inanity of our effect. Our effort seems futile.

In the immortal words of the old King from Jerusalem, the wise Solomon, from the perspective of past and present:

*Vanity of vanity, all is vanities.*<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> “Precognition as a form of prospection: A review of the evidence,” by J. A. Mossbridge and D. Radin, 2018, *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 5(1), p. 78-93. American Psychological Association.

<sup>38</sup> *Ecclesiastes* 1:2.

While the psychologist is overly focused on the past, the enlightenment scientists undermine the past and ignore the future, seduced as they understandably are by the Infinity of the Present.

### **The Freedom of the Will: The Call of the Future**

It is important to note at this point that the reaching for the future also implies the freedom to reach.<sup>39</sup> We experience the freedom of our will in reaching for the future. The very experience of cognition, in which a decision appears in our neurons, split seconds before it is conscious in our minds, may be an example of the future pulling us forward.

This is a very different potential understanding than the reductive materialism, which animates much of neuroscience research, which dogmatically seeks to undermine the future entirely. Indeed, reductive materialism allows only for the causation of the past,<sup>40</sup> but evolution is almost self-evidently animated by myriad forms of causation from the future. And as leading neuroscientist, philosopher, and free researcher Eddy Nahmias has pointed towards in numerous studies,<sup>41</sup> it is the depth of our reaching towards the future that defines our free will.

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<sup>39</sup> For our *Homo amor* essay on free will, see *Towards a World Religion: Homo Amo Essays* by Marc Gafni and Zachary Stein, Essay Four: Reclaiming Free Will as an Evolving First Principle and First Value of Cosmos (in preparation).

<sup>40</sup> The concept of causation or causality has also been challenged as a whole by science, especially physics. See, for example, Frisch, Mathias, "Causation in Physics," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2022/entries/causation-physics/>. Some physicists, however, come to the conclusion that "causality is more fundamental than time." See, for example, Riek R, Chatterjee A. Causality in Discrete Time Physics Derived from Maupertuis Reduced Action Principle. *Entropy* (Basel). 2021 Sep 14;23(9):1212. doi: 10.3390/e23091212. PMID: 34573836; PMCID: PMC8472125. This same notion was also expressed by Reichenbach with the wording that "time order is reducible to causal order." See Reichenbach H. *The Direction of Time*. Volume 65 University of California Press; Oakland, CA, USA: 1991.

<sup>41</sup> Nahmias is incisive in undermining the superficial attempts to deny free will by pointing to physical correlates to an action that appear in brain imaging before the rational mind has had time to express its decision. Nahmias, in one of many arguments, points to the deeper structures of free will that reach for the longer-term future. From Mossbridge and Radin's perspective, these physical correlates might also be appropriately understood as the call of the Future Self. See "Intuitions about Free Will, Determinism, and Bypassing," by E. Nahmias, 2011, *Oxford Handbooks Online* (doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195399691.003.0029). See also "Surveying freedom: Folk intuitions about free will and moral responsibility," by E. Nahmias, S. Morris, T. Nadelhoffer, & J. Turner, 2005, *Philosophical Psychology*, 18(5), p. 561-584. Routledge. See also "Free will, moral responsibility, and mechanism: Experiments on folk intuitions," by E. Nahmias, D. J. Coates, & T. Kvaran, 2007, *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 31, p. 214-242. Philosophy Documentation Center. See also "The Phenomenology of Free Will" by E. Nahmias, S. Morris, & T. Nadelhoffer, 2004, *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 11(7-8), p. 162-179. (<https://philpapers.org/archive/NAHTPO.pdf>)

In moment-to-moment automatic decisions, the programmed responses of the past might tend to be repeated in the present. The depth of our free will is most potently activated when we seek to discern the call of our Future Self.<sup>42</sup> It is in the prospection of the future that free will emerges most radically. Will is a quality not of mere rationality but of desire. Indeed, *ratzon*, the source word for *will* in the original Hebrew, is literally the same word deployed to express *Eros* and its expression as *desire*.<sup>43</sup>

Some dimension of freedom—itsself a First Principle and First Value of Cosmos—is one of the core qualities of Eros, Reality’s most foundational value. Let’s look at our Eros definition once more:

Eros is the experience of Reality’s radical aliveness, always seeking, desiring, moving towards, ever-deeper contact and ever-greater wholes.

There cannot be a yearning without a degree of freedom.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> The call of the future is also one of the core anthro-ontological experiences that move us beyond death. Death knows no future while we are always called by the future. In this sense, we have an innate knowing that death is not the end. This however is only one of twelve innate anthro-ontological realizations—*gnosis* that lives in the depth of our clarified first-person experience—of the non-final and non-ultimate nature of death. See our book in preparation *Twelve Portals to Life Beyond Death: Responding to the Second Shock of Existence* by Dr. Marc Gafni.

<sup>43</sup> *Song of Songs*, Ch.1:4, *Mascheni Acareacha, Ve’Narutza*—Draw me after you, and I will run towards you—filled with desire.

<sup>44</sup> As the most basic elements of matter, called *quanta* or *quantum waves*, can maybe best be thought of as *probability waves* that only manifest as particles in moments of interaction with other quanta, e.g., in moments of being *measured*, there is freedom built in from the very beginning of the Universe—the Big Bang. The term *probability wave* was coined by Max Born, one of the early quantum physicists, for the mathematical *wave function* that describes the behavior of a quantum particle between detections—with the detection being the moment of the *collapse of the wave function*, when the particle acts like a classical particle with a simple location. In the original version of the most accepted interpretation of quantum phenomena, the so-called *Copenhagen Interpretation*, it is the moment that the quantum particles interact with a macroscopic object that they become part of the macroscopic realm and their wave function collapses. That can happen, for example, when an electron hits a phosphorescent screen, where it interacts with the phosphor to create a tiny spark. In recent decades, many physicists have pointed out that macroscopic objects are not different from quantum objects. Instead, it is the interaction with *any* bit of matter or energy that collapses the wave function. Macroscopic objects simply consist of many particles, which provide many more opportunities for interaction than subatomic particles. In this sense, the Copenhagen Interpretation, which is but one of over twenty interpretations under serious considerations, has evolved. Another interpretation is the *Bohmian Interpretation* that was suggested by David Bohm in 1951, building on the work of Louis de Broglie, one of the founders of quantum physics. In it, the particles are always particles but are guided by a real wave described by the wave function. That *guiding wave* travels through a field called the *quantum potential*, and it is part of a *universal wave function* that connects all the particles of the Universe, regardless of distance. For a simple explanation of the Bohmian Interpretation, see, for example, here: <https://quantumphysicslady.org/glossary/bohmian-interpretation-of-quantum-mechanics/>.

Freedom, on each level of evolution, always dances with the constraints that prior patterns of Reality impose on the new emergents. These constraints of prior patterns function as prior causation, even as they are functions of the *telos* that Reality desires to realize. But neither the causation nor the *telos*-driven desire for the future eliminates freedom. Rather, freedom dances with the patterns of the past and the patterns of the possible future inscribed on the walls of nothingness.

Possible future, however, is not proscribed future. The future invites the possibility of possibility. Emergence precisely means the birthing of a new potency—a new possibility—a new wholeness that is greater than the sum of all the prior parts. In other words, the new emergent is not merely a consequence of the prior causation of the past. Instead, a new emergent wells from the synergistic convergence of the causation of the past, the depth of possibility in the present, and then, most powerfully, from the *telos*-animated yet *free* call of the future.

That is Nahmias' core point: The ability to think and vision deeply about possible futures—choosing our path—is one of the most profound expressions of free will.<sup>45</sup>

The word *will*, itself, speaks not of rational choices that might be determined, but of an innate quality of living desire that incarnates as will. The intimation of the identity of words, in original Hebrew, between the word for *will* and the word for *desire* is precisely that *will is desire reaching toward the future*.

Materialism is (mostly) naturally deterministic in its orientation for what could generate causation other than the past. But for non-reductionists who directly sense the presence of love and value in history, the call from the future is virtually self-evident. The untrained Eye of the

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, see our earlier footnote on Nahmias. The sense of the brain knowing before the mind, which has been raised extensively in reductive attempts to deploy neuroscience in favor of the denial of free will, is exploded, according to Nahmias (2011), when we talk about the deeper visioning for the future, which is not a short-range decision for an immediate action, which the brain may register before the mind. See “Intuitions about Free Will, Determinism, and Bypassing,” by E. Nahmias, 2011, *Oxford Handbooks Online* (doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195399691.003.0029).

Senses, together with the Eye of the Mind, might be mainly determined by yesterday,<sup>46</sup> but what we, as radical empiricists, have called the *Eye of Consciousness*<sup>47</sup> is called by a vision of tomorrow. And it is this mood of the interior Heart of Cosmos that finds expression in evolutionary thought. For evolution is about the Will of Cosmos reaching from and for the future.

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<sup>46</sup> In physics, for example, there have been quantum experiments that seem to reverse the order of cause and effect. In other words, events seem to be caused by future events. This effect has been well researched. Some physicists are even abandoning the concept of causality altogether. Others conclude that causation, not time, is the fundamental feature of the universe. Other physicists, like Dr. Rod Sutherland at the University of Sydney, Australia, introduce the concept of *retrocausality*, which allows quantum measurements to influence events in their past. See, for example, Sutherland, RI, (2022) Probabilities and certainties within a causally symmetric model. *Foundations of Physics*, 52(4), 1–17. doi.org/10.1007/s10701-022-00573-x. See also, Sutherland, RI, (2017). How retrocausality helps. In *AIP Conference Proceedings*, 1841(1), 020001. AIP Publishing LLC. doi.org/10.1063/1.4982765.

In theory, this effect follows from a quantum phenomenon known as *superposition*, in which quanta maintain all possible realities simultaneously until the moment they are measured (which is the moment they interact with other quanta). Physicists have observed what has been called *indefinite causal order* in labs in Austria, China, Australia, and elsewhere by putting a photon (a quantum of light) in a superposition of two states. They then subjected one branch of the superposition to process A followed by process B, while subjecting the other branch to process B followed by A. In this procedure, known as *the quantum switch*, A's outcome influences what happens in B, and vice versa. This means that the photon experiences both causal orders simultaneously. Over the past few years, a growing community of quantum physicists has been experimenting with this quantum switch. E.g., Giulia Rubino, a researcher at the University of Bristol, led the first experimental demonstration of the quantum switch in 2017. See her article “Experimental verification of an indefinite causal order” together with Lee A. Rozema, Adrien Feix, Mateus Araújo, Jonas M. Zeuner, Lorenzo M. Procopio, Časlav Brukner, and Philip Walther, published in *Science Advances*—<https://www.science.org/doi/full/10.1126/sciadv.1602589>.

In addition to that, all the papers about the quantum switch suggest a link between quantum gravity and indefinite causality. In another key paper in 2019, Magdalena Zych, Časlav Brukner, and collaborators did an interesting thought experiment with two people in spaceships at two different distances from Planet Earth, in which they were able to prove that this situation would allow these two people to achieve indefinite causal order. See the paper, “Bell’s theorem for temporal order” by Magdalena Zych, Fabio Costa, Igor Pikovski, and Časlav Brukner, published in *nature communications*—<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-019-11579-x>.

These quantum effects and their philosophical implications have reached the mainstream with popular science articles: See, for example the article “Quantum Mischief Rewrites the Laws of Cause and Effect” on *Quantamagazine*, <https://www.quantamagazine.org/quantum-mischief-rewrites-the-laws-of-cause-and-effect-20210311/>. See also the article “Time might not exist, according to physicists and philosophers—but that’s okay” in *The Conversation*—<https://theconversation.com/time-might-not-exist-according-to-physicists-and-philosophers-but-thats-okay-181268>.

See also Hoffman, Donald D., *The Case Against Reality: Why Evolution Hid the Truth from Our Eyes*, W. W. Norton & Company, 2019, Chapter Six, “Gravity: Spacetime Is Doomed” and Chapter Seven, “Virtuality: Inflating a Holoworld”—in the latter, he also quotes the study published on *Science Advances* we referred to above.

<sup>47</sup> As we have pointed out in other writings of CosmoErotic Humanism, the Eye of Consciousness expresses itself in at least four distinct forms, which we have called the Eye of Value, the Eye of the Heart, the Eye of Spirit, and the Eye of Contemplation.



## **Desire: Reaching for Future, Grounded in the Present, Animated by the Past**

And with this, we come to the core point of this section: Human interiors participate in the interior of Cosmos.

The vision of an inert cosmos, populated by mechanistic and lifeless it-objects, generates the vision of a human being who is the same. It is a reductionist materialist universe story, which birthed a reductionist materialist psychology, which only recognizes the causation of the past. However, just as the materialist universe story was highly valuable in moving us past superstition, which ignored the inherent nature of Cosmos in favor of super-imposed supernaturalism, so too was the materialist psychology focus on the inherent causation of the past enormously valuable in liberating us from contrived external causations. Both of these steps were crucial in the evolution of love. **But now it is time for Love to continue its evolution.**

As quantum physics and the interior sciences—each in their own forms—complement each other in utterly rejecting the vision of an inert cosmos in favor of a living Universe animated by desire, so too must we affirm the dignity of human desire—specifically human desire and allurements as an expression of the larger Field of Desire—as core to the human motivational architecture. In that realization, the evolutionary clarification of desire, both in the collective and in the personal, becomes essential. What becomes apparent, at the human level, is the dimension of freedom in choosing which desires to honor and deepen and which to contain.

That is *not* to say that intrinsic *telos* and prior causation are absent in forming human desire. Rather it is to say that there is a dialectical *dance of freedom and choicelessness*, which is core to the human motivational architecture. If there is freedom in your capacity to direct your desire, then clarifying your authentic desire—so you can focus your desire appropriately—becomes essential.

## **Reclaiming the Dignity and Divinity of Need**

Before we go any further, a key word is in order on the nature of need and its relationship to desire.

First let's turn to need. Need is a hidden, yet fundamental category in both the interior and exterior sciences. Central to our work in CosmoErotic Humanism is what we have called *the dignity of need*. But not only the dignity of need, also the Divinity of need.

Moreover, we have understood desire and need in their most clarified expressions—at the higher levels of developmental consciousness—to be virtually isomorphic. In that sense, we affirm not only the dignity and Divinity of need but the dignity and Divinity of desire. We will return to the apparent distinction and deeper identity between desire and need in even greater depth below.

First, however, it bears mention that neither the dignity nor the Divinity of need or desire are self-evident or even obvious. Indeed, quite the opposite is generally assumed.

This affirmation of the dignity and Divinity of need and desire are not only not obvious, but—as we just noted and have elaborated elsewhere in the writings of CosmoErotic Humanism, for example, in *The Phenomenology of Eros* and the *Evolution: The Love Story of the Universe* volumes—such a claim is a scandalous idea in the classical traditions.

The classical Eastern idea of the enlightened Buddha, as expressed in many popular texts, is the one who has liberated himself from needs—and certainly, from desires. In Eastern enlightenment, desire and need are what keep you enslaved to *samsara*, the wheel of suffering, that is seen to be this world. As long as there is desire, you are to experience life, to be born and reborn, and therefore, you suffer. To get off the wheel and be re-united with *Source*, whatever that might mean, you need to free yourself from need and desire.

The Eastern teaching, paradoxically and, in some real sense, correctly, understood that our humanity is identified with desire. But from the medieval Eastern perspective—as well as the medieval Western mystical perspective—both our desire and our humanity are obstacles to overcome on the way to Infinity—and not finitude to be celebrated because it already participates in Infinity.

From this perspective of course, we must liberate ourselves from desire and need. To do so we must get off *the wheel of suffering*, which is the wheel of desire and need—for desire attracts you—desire forces you to experience its fruits—indeed, whatever you desire badly enough will come to you—whatever you desire, you will draw towards you. This is true because

the human being is condensed *Shakti*, which has the creative power of desire. But the Eastern model uses this correct identification of human desire to indict desire as that which keeps the human being bound to the base reality of *samsara*.

In the Western canon, the paragon of the perfected One, the typology of the *Homo religious*, is the one who fulfills the great injunction of *imatatio dei*—the imitation of God. God, as described in the texts and as realized in the human heart and mind, is to be imitated. But that understanding of God degrades the status of human need and desire. For in the Western canon, realizers and texts go to enormous lengths (think Maimonides or Aquinas) to demonstrate that God, by definition, has no needs or desires whatsoever. Indeed, the very Essence of the Divine is to be utterly devoid of need or desire. For need or desire would indicate that there was something that was not yet fulfilled in God. God would be said to contain emptiness, deficiency, imperfection, or lack. There would be something outside of God—namely the unfulfilled need or desire. And since God is Infinite Perfection, ultimately full, deficiency in the Divine is, by the very nature of the Divine, impossible.

In Western enlightenment, needs and desire are seen not as sacred but as expressions of the narrow separate self, who is alienated from the will of God, who is the Source of all that is good, true, and beautiful.

In sum, we can simply say that in both the West and the East, need and desire are degraded in the very dramatic sense that they are set in opposition to the Divine.

### **CosmoErotic Humanism on Need and Desire**

Both the Eastern mystical position and the Western religious position are diametrically distinct from CosmoErotic Humanism.

On the one hand, CosmoErotic Humanism identifies with the dominant teachings of Eastern and Western religion and identifies our humanity with need and desire. For the religions, however, both classical and mystical, our humanity in that very precise sense—in its sense of need and desire—is opposed to our Divinity.

On the other hand, CosmoErotic Humanism—as the very name implies—affirms the ultimate dignity of both of our desire and our need as the core of both our humanity and our

Divinity. CosmoErotic Humanism includes but transcends the realization of consciousness that characterizes both Eastern and Western mystical positions—in that it integrates modernity and postmodernity—with its humanistic, embodied, and evolutionary cast—in a New Story of Value.

In other words, CosmoErotic Humanism recognizes that these purported understandings of need and desire—demanding their discipline—in Eastern enlightenment<sup>48</sup> are true but partial. In fact, these views generally ascribed to mystical enlightenment are the public stand of the traditions, but they obfuscate the deeper view of the interior sciences that live within both the Eastern and Western traditions.

In this deeper view, we understand that the Infinite manifests finitude—Reality—because She *desires*—because She *needs*—Reality. In this more subtle read of Reality, we begin to recognize, as the Kashmir Shaivite sages declared, that Reality arises because there is a *stirring of desire in the Infinite*. Or as the Western interior sciences say, *Divinity lusts to make His indwelling in the manifest human world*.

Indeed, as we have unpacked in great depth in *The Phenomenology of Eros* and in the *The Universe: A Love Story* volumes,<sup>49</sup> Reality is desire, all the way down and all the way up the evolutionary chain. And it is moreover Divine Desire—Divine Need—that incepts Reality. Indeed, for Infinity to manifest finitude, *She* must be prepared to limit Herself, to withdraw Her own power, and step into the experience of Divine Need and Divine Desire. This is the place where, exploded by Infinities of Love—in the language of the Hebrew mystics—the Infinite turns to finitude and says, *I love you, I need you*. Or, as sixteenth-century renaissance mystic Meir Ibn Gabbai declares of the Infinite, *Avodah Tzorech Gavoha—God needs your service*.<sup>50</sup>

The same lineage strain in Hebrew wisdom, from which Ibn Gabbai draws, albeit a thousand years earlier, described Divinity as *filled with passionate desire to make his dwelling place in the human world*.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> And many Western mystical enlightenment teachings.

<sup>49</sup> See the six-volumes series by Marc Gafni and Zachary Stein with Barbara Marx Hubbard, *The Universe: A Love Story*. See also *The Abridged Phenomenology of Eros* and *The Complete Phenomenology of Eros*, by Drs. Marc Gafni and Kristina Kincaid—all published by World Philosophy and Religion Press, in Conjunction with Waterside Press and Integral Publishers, 2024.

<sup>50</sup> From Meir ben Ezekiel ibn Gabbai's *Avodat Hakodesh*, Section One, Chapter 27.

<sup>51</sup> *Midrash Tanchuma, Parshat Bechukosai*, sec. 3; See Chasidic master Schneur Zalman of Liadi in his *Tanya*, chs. 33 and 36.

The realization of Divine Desire—called *Teshuka*—is a central dimension of the interior sciences, some of whose sources we have adduced in some depth in the early writings on CosmoErotic Humanism.<sup>52</sup>

God needs and God desires.

This is a deeper sense of Reality—a cross-cultural anthro-ontological knowing at the leading edge of realization—veiled in the codes and texts of the interior sciences world over—hidden because of its explosive nature. Divinity too has needs and desires. There is not only Divine Potency but also Divine *Pathos*. And they cannot be split.

Moreover, our needs and desires participate in Divine Need and Desire. Our deepest heart's desire is, at source, Divine Need and Desire. This view of a participatory Cosmos, from the interior sciences, is, of course, profoundly resonant with the evolutionary view of the exterior sciences.

### **Evolution Is Driven by Desire and Need**

With this recapitulation of the *interior sciences* in relation to desire and need in mind, we can now turn to a recapitulation of the *exterior sciences* in relation to need and desire, with two seemingly simple sentences—but not first-simplicity sentences, but second-simplicity sentences, the kind of simplicity that comes *after* integrating very much complexity and not before. We have spent some decades formulating and showing the accuracy of these two simple sentences that succinctly but accurately articulate the view of need and desire from the perspective of the exterior sciences—and, as already noted, also in the interior sciences.

*Evolution is driven by need.*

*Evolution is driven by desire.*

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<sup>52</sup> See Gafni, *Radical Kabbalah*, Vol. 1, Integral Publishers, 2010, chapter 11 on “The Way of *Teshuka*.” pp. 219-226.

We have addressed each of these sentences in other writings of CosmoErotic Humanism, but for now, the most direct and simple—second simplicity—unpacking of them will suffice. Particularly we are interested here in the vital relationship between desire and need.

### **Between Need and Desire**

In CosmoErotic Humanism, we are speaking of what we refer to as *word clusters*.<sup>53</sup> For example, Eros, intimacy, and desire are distinct words, each reflecting distinct qualities of consciousness, but are also inter-included, inseparable, and—to at least some extent—overlapping.

Each of the words in this cluster are what we might call *primary words*—that is that each evokes a certain quality of Reality—which cannot easily be reduced to other ostensibly synonymous words. Thus, a word cluster is required to embrace different dimensions of depth and quality in the phenomenological reality being evoked.

In some sense, this is also the case regarding desire and need. Although the word *need* is, upon first inspection, not quite as tightly correlated to desire as words like *Eros* and *intimacy*, upon only slightly closer phenomenological investigation, it turns out to be part of the same word cluster.

With this context in mind, let's turn briefly to the words *need* and *desire* and their intimate relationship, and let's articulate two complimentary relationships between desire and need.

Desire is the ceaseless creative force of evolution that is always seeking, moving towards, ever-greater contact, fullness, and wholeness. Alfred North Whitehead calls this evolutionary force of desire *the creative advance into novelty*. Desire is the Eros of evolution. In this sense,

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<sup>53</sup> In a scholarly work, *Radical Kabbalah*, written originally as a doctoral dissertation at Oxford University, I (Marc) introduced the idea of *erotic word clusters*. I tried to show that often a thinker—especially one trying to communicate different dimensions of Eros—would use a series of inter-included, overlapping words which were not synonyms but different faces of the same core quality. These are clusters of words, each of which is a unique expression of the same underlying *qualia* of Eros. The words include *Love, Outrageous Love, Desire, Intimacy, Allurement, Seduction, Attraction, Supra-Sex, Relationship, Sexing, and Fuck*. In the four volumes entitled *Meditations on the New Narrative of Desire*, which are part of a larger body of work, *The Phenomenology of Eros*, there are series of contemplations on the implications, the feeling tone, or quality, and the inherent structure of Reality, as evoked by each of the words in the erotic word cluster.

desire is a force that arises in the now moment reaching not only for a new present but for a new future.

## **Two Forms of Desire: Unclarified and Clarified Desire**

There are two core forms of desire. There is what we might call *surface desire* and *depth desire*—the latter of which is also referred to as *clarified desire*—desire aligned with the motive force of Desire in Cosmos.<sup>54</sup>

Clarified desire is always reaching for a better future, a future where there is *more value to come*. Or again said somewhat differently, the future is always reaching into the present to allure it towards more value to come.

## **Crisis in the Motivational Architecture of Evolution**

But there is a second drive in evolution, which operates in tandem with the core desires of evolution.

*Crisis is an evolutionary driver.*

*Emergency drives emergence.*

The immediate unmet need of the present is called *crisis*. Crisis—the pressing authentic need of the moment—generates new emergence.

In other words, desire and need—brought into bold relief through crisis—are the twin forces driving evolution. In this first-level view, desire and need are both inter-included, yet not redundant—they are, in some real sense, apparently distinct. They are related to each other in a kind of dialectical dance, where they arise and fall into each other.

The desire for ever-more life, love, creativity, complexity, interconnectivity, and uniqueness drives evolution forward. These are the First Principles and First Values of Cosmos

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<sup>54</sup> On the distinction between surface and depth desire—*omek* and *gavan*—in the interior sciences of Hebrew wisdom, see Gafni, *Radical Kabbalah*, volume 1, Chapter 8 (pp. 129-166), “The Will of God and Radical Freedom.” See also Chapter 11 (pp. 219-226), “The Way of *Teshuka*,” on desire. On the clarification of desire, see Chapter 10 (pp. 215-218), “The Nature of *Berur*” in *Radical Kabbalah* volume 1.

that Reality seeks to implicitly increase through desire. In effect, desires are memories of the future that are the creative siren song of evolutionary desire.

Needs are what must be met in the present to fulfill the desires of evolution calling from the future. In one way of articulating this distinction between desire and need, we might discern between the desire for creativity and the need for food. If the need for food is not met, then the desire to fulfill the Cosmic Value of Creativity can also not be met. (But of course, the distinction still remains at least somewhat contrived because one might also talk of a desire for food and a need for life).

Crisis emerges when the core needs required to fulfill the desires of evolution for its inherent values of ever-more love, creativity, uniqueness, contact, fullness, and wholeness are not met. In this sense, crisis is the thwarting of evolutionary desire for a better future because of a failure to meet present core needs.

An example of this distinction of a crisis revealing a need that *must* be filled to meet the evolutionary desire—might be as follows: When single-celled prokaryotes are dying all over planet Earth, poisoned by oxygen, they don't just die off. Instead, their need for life (expressed in their need for safety from poisoning and their need for nourishment), together with their need for ever deeper and wider intimacy, causes their evolution to new configurations of intimate coherence—namely prokaryotes able to breathe oxygen, then eukaryotes, and later multicellular life. Through this evolutionary leap, organisms have the capacity to use the oxygen, which used to poison them before, to fulfill their need for nourishment and thereby also fulfill their desire for ever deeper and wider intimacy and life.

This is the two-step process of evolution. Evolution is driven by Eros and its desire for ever-more contact and wholeness. This is the call of the future. Eros, intimacy, contact, wholeness—these are all values of evolution, or in other words, that which is desired by evolution. Evolution desires more value—more Eros, more intimacy, more contact, and more wholeness—but it also desires deeper (more evolved) expressions of these values.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> In that sense, evolution also desires deeper (more clarified and evolved) expressions of desire and need, and we can refer to desire and need not only as mechanisms of evolution but also as themselves being First Values and First Principles of Cosmos.



Therefore, when there is a failure of present capacities to meet present needs, the entrepreneurial Universe meets present needs in emergent ways. That is what we mean when we say that *emergency generates emergence*. Or *crisis is an evolutionary driver*.

### **Evolving Need, Desire, and Value**

The evolutionary driver often meets needs in a way that not only solves the present and immediate problem or crisis, but rather solves it in a way that creates new possibilities for the future.

In other words, crisis generates new—emergent—forms, which have the capacity to meet not only the immediate need—for example the single cells’ need for life-sustaining nourishment and protection against poison—but also the greater desire of evolution.

And that greater desire of evolution is not simply for ever-more complexity, but for the fulfillment of all the First Principles and First Values of evolution,<sup>56</sup> which are themselves the core plotlines of evolution. These values plotlines include ever-greater communion, ever-more uniqueness, ever-more creativity, ever-more consciousness, and ever-more care and concern, or what we might simply call *love*.

All of these are realized in the movement from single-celled to multicellular life that was initiated by the oxygen crisis.

### **The Three Great Questions of CosmoErotic Humanism**

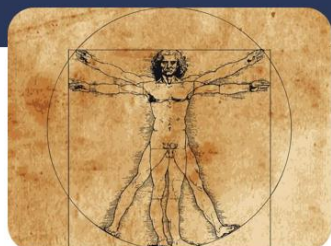
From the perspective of this deeper view, let’s integrate the interior and exterior sciences and understand how need and desire express themselves in relation to the great questions of our lives, what we have called the *three great questions of CosmoErotic Humanism—Who am I,*

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<sup>56</sup> See David J. Temple, *First Principles and First Values of Evolving Perennialism: Forty-Two Propositions on CosmoErotic Humanism—Post-Tragic Memories of the Future* and see also the fuller conversation in David J. Temple, *First Principles and First Values: Towards an Evolving Perennialism—Introducing the Anthro-Ontological Method*—both books published by World Philosophy and Religion Press, in Conjunction with Waterside Press and Integral Publishers.

*Where am I, and What do I want?*<sup>57</sup> The response to these questions based on the deepest view of need and desire must be at least three-fold.

## The Three Great Questions of Homo Amor:



- 1** **Who** am I?  
**Who** are we?
- 2** **Where** am I?  
**Where** are we?
- 3** **What** is mine to do?  
**What** is ours to do?  
  
**What** ought be done?

Unique Self Theory 2011, Homo Amor Theory of Self 2016 (Dr. Marc Gafni) | The Crossing 2024 | Office for the Future 2018 (Belgium & Loveland, CO USA)

*First*, we must locate the response to these ostensibly personal questions in a larger Cosmic Context. The question of *Who am I* can only be responded to in the context of the second question of *Where am I*? In other words, we can only articulate a narrative of identity in the context of a larger Universe Story. We have articulated the New Universe Story, integrating exterior and interior sciences, in our writings on CosmoErotic Humanism.

For now, it is sufficient to say that there is an inherent evolutionary need and desire—and here need and desire blur together—for the values of ever-more wholeness, uniqueness, creativity, and Eros. This evolutionary need, and desire, for these First Values of Cosmos incepts in the first nanosecond of the Big Bang in matter, the ostensibly inanimate worlds, and continues to unfold through the biological life worlds, and then much later, in the depth of the human self-reflective mind and culture.

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<sup>57</sup> For a deeper unpacking of the Three Great Questions of CosmoErotic Humanism, see, for example, Dr. Marc Gafni & Barbara Marx Hubbard, *The Rise of Evolutionary Relationships: The Evolution of Relationships—In Response to the Meta-Crisis*.

*Second*, this evolutionary need, and desire, for the First Values of Cosmos requires at the human level the progressive widening—or what we might call *evolution*—of identity. The evolution of identity is precisely the movement from separate self to True Self—and then to Unique Self and Evolutionary Unique Self—and finally to our participation in Unique Self Symphony.<sup>58</sup> This movement is not merely a form of personal transformation. The movement of desire and need is rather the evolutionary movement of Cosmos—the individuated expression of need and desire that participates directly in the throb of the larger evolutionary impulse. This movement of Cosmic Eros towards ever-greater value—which includes greater wholeness, uniqueness, creativity, and Eros—manifests in Unique Self, Evolutionary Unique Self, and the participation in Unique Self Symphony in ways that transcend the natural limitations of separate self.

Said simply, there is more Eros, uniqueness, creativity, and wholeness in True Self than in separate self, and then even more of all of the above in Unique Self, and even more in Evolutionary Unique Self—playing her instrument in the Unique Self Symphony.

Indeed, the transformation from separate self to Unique Self to Evolutionary Unique Self to the participation in Unique Self Symphony is precisely the realization that your Unique Self is *an irreducibly unique response to the inherent evolutionary need and the expression of evolutionary desire* for growth and transformation to one’s widest and fullest and most accurate self-identity.

Speaking in second person: You are not merely a separate self. You are a Unique Self. And your Unique Self lives in an evolutionary context—Evolutionary Unique Self. Reality’s

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<sup>58</sup> Unique Self Symphony is the answer to the question of *Who are we?* We are participants playing our unique instruments in the Unique Self Symphony. When you are committing your unique Outrageous Acts of Love for the sake of the larger Whole—which is your deepest heart’s desire—your evolutionary desire—the evolutionary impulse lived as you—your Outrageous Acts of Love, which emerge from your unique configuration of desire—you are living your Unique Self and giving your unique gift. When we give our unique gifts in a way that is omni-considerate, omni-responsible, and omni-loving—for the sake of the Whole... When we intend our unique gifts as an expression of a larger evolutionary purpose and Evolutionary Love... When we are allured to other Unique Selves, each giving their unique gifts for the sake of the Whole... ..then a new emergent discloses itself—a new structure of Evolutionary Intimacy—which we have called *Unique Self Symphony*. That’s what it means to play your unique instrument in the Unique Self Symphony. *Homo amor*—incarnate as the Unique Self Symphony—is not a top-down command-and-control structure. It rather is the human being self-organizing—self-actualizing—to their highest self, to their deepest self, to their most wondrous and beautiful self, which is their Evolutionary Unique Self—their Unique Self in an evolutionary context. Unique Self Symphony is the new emergent of Evolutionary Intimacy, which is the natural product of the self-organizing Universe and the self-actualizing Cosmos.

needs and desires show up uniquely in you, as you, and through you. Your deepest desires are Reality's Desires. Your deepest needs are Reality's Needs. Not your surface needs but your clarified needs—your deepest needs. As such, just as Reality shows up uniquely as you, you need to show up uniquely in Reality.

There are unique desires for you to fulfill and unique needs for you to meet in the world. Or said slightly differently, adducing Ibn Gabbai, whom we cited above, *God—Reality—needs your service*.<sup>59</sup> Or in the same lineage, *God desires your service*. In other words, you are uniquely desired and needed by Reality, and you express a unique dimension of Reality's Desire. You live in a Cosmos dripping with Eros, which lives in you.

That leads us to the *third part of the response to the core questions*, which is the realization that your own deepest need and desire is to meet the needs and desires in Reality that are uniquely yours to meet and fulfill.

This is the recognition that your deepest heart's desire is the deepest Heart's Desire of Reality, that Reality needs you, and that your own deepest needs—to live your unique life and give your unique gifts in your unique circle of intimacy and influence—are the Needs of Reality.

These realizations meet your core Eros need of aliveness—together with your core Eros need to transform—to grow to the highest and deepest version of yourself—which is the core Need of Reality living in you, as you, and through you. These needs transform your consciousness in wondrous ways, from which you will never recover.

This kind of—what we might call—*participatory mutuality* between cosmic and personal need and desire is what evolutionary mystic of desire Abraham Kook was referring to when he wrote,

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<sup>59</sup> See, for example, Arthur Green, in his essay “God’s Need for Man: A Unitive Approach to the Writings of Abraham Joshua Heschel,” writes that, “in his summary of kabbalistic teaching ‘*Avodat ha-Kodesh*,” Rabbi Meir Ibn Gabbai, “who lived in the Ottoman Empire in the early sixteenth century, offers a great synthesis of Jewish mystical wisdom in the generation immediately preceding that of Moshe Cordovero and Yizhak Luria, who were to make such great additions and changes to that tradition. The key theme of the work, repeated frequently throughout, is *ha-‘avodah tsorekh gavoha* (lit.: “service is a need on high”), that worship, including the life of the *mitzvot*, fulfills a divine need.”—see here: <https://www.studocu.com/row/document/มหาวิทยาลัยขอนแก่น/calculus/arthur-green-god-s-need-for-man-a-unitiv/44871119>.

*Cosmic nature and the nature of every particular creature, human history, and the life story of every unique person and her deeds must be surveyed in one encompassing glance, as one content with different parts; then will the light of wisdom which leads to Teshuva speedily arrive.*<sup>60</sup>

### **Between Need and Desire: A Second Look**

One last note is in order before we proceed. We have already talked about the dialectical distinction and inter-inclusion of need and desire with each other. We still tend to split needs and desires.

From the perspective of the distinction, we articulated desire as being a call from the future, while need more often responds to a crisis in the present. Or said more precisely: Desire is a call from the value of the future that wants to be realized in the present. Need is the present moment need—let’s say food—needed in order to fulfill the desires of the future—for more life. And more life includes the core Values of Cosmos—in other words, more uniqueness, communion, Eros, intimacy, creativity, etc.

But the words *need* and *desire*, as we have already implied, also overlap.

I might say,

*I desire to write a book.*

Or:

*I need to write a book.*

Desire is a call from the future, while need is a visceral feeling in the now. That is true. But the two clearly overlap and even interface with each other. And we can see how we might also formulate a sentence where desire lives in the now and need calls from the future.

In conventional parlance, need is often regarded by us as related to our survival, whether physical, psychological, or emotional. Desire is often understood to be either in reference to a

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<sup>60</sup> *Lights of Penitence* 4:4.

less immediate and less essential need, or to a more primal life force underlying any particular need.

An example of the former:

*I need food.*

*I desire gourmet food.*

Or an example of the latter:

*I need insulin.*

*I desire life.*

But the more aware, or we might say *more awake* or *more conscious*, a human being is—the more enlightened we are—the more evolved our identity—the more we realize the more profound and accurate answers to the questions of *Who am I* and *Where am I*—the more we transcend the grasping of the skin-encapsulated ego into the accurate radiance of Unique Self—the more we close the gap between need and desire. We accomplish this clarification in myriad ways, only three of which we will allude to briefly in this writing.

**First**, we allow the future to enter the present. We tilt our ear to the future, and particularly to the voice of our Future Self, calling us forth. In CosmoErotic Humanism, we call it *recovering the memory of the future*. When the future enters the present, desire is widened and deepened—clarified. This has been extensively documented in leading-edge trends in academic psychology as *prospection*.<sup>61</sup> The image is that of the human being as the prospector, who

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<sup>61</sup> See, for example, Seligman, M. E., Railton, P., Baumeister, R. F., & Sripada, C. (2016), *Homo Prospectus*, Oxford University Press, to whom we have referred to above. We have integrated the extensive research on prospection, gathered by leading thinkers in neuroscience, cognition, learning theory, education, psychology, and philosophy into CosmoErotic Humanism. Our notion of the memory of the future was developed independently of prospection. The research on prospection, however, filled in major areas of research, confirming our core notion of the memory of the future as being essential to human wellbeing, both from a psychological and even what we might call *a transpersonal or spiritual perspective*. In general, as we unpacked in our original note on the same, CosmoErotic Humanism synergizes multiple meta-theories from a wider range of disciplines into a larger mood and worldview. When we encounter excellent research around a core realization of CosmoErotic Humanism, namely the crucial nature of the memory of the future to human wholeness and health, we integrate with very great joy and recognition.

refuses to be satisfied by repeating the present and is instead allured forward by the call of the future.

**Second**, we clarify the objects of our specific desires. Buddha was in fact, at least in the original Pali cannon, not opposed to desire. Rather, he is reported to have said,

*Have few desires but have great ones.*

The clarification of desire moves us from surface desires to depth desires, what we might also call *true desires*—or even *sacred desires* or *divine desires*. We begin to desire what we truly need and need what we truly desire. This does not mean that we need less or desire less. It is not an issue of how much we need or desire but what we need or desire and how deeply we feel our needs and desires.

We might realize, for example, that our need for truth, beauty, love, aliveness, adventure, or goodness far exceeds what we thought we could scrape by on. We often need and desire more than we thought, not less. But our needs and desires are exponentially more clarified, precise, and therefore potent. Our personal desire and need—in the precision of its individuated personhood—discloses itself as the Need and Desire of Cosmos itself.

## **Three Selves: Psychological, Mystical, and Evolutionary—Past, Present, and Future**

The core of this third station, where need and desire meet, is the experience of the call of the future entering the present moment.

In this context, it is important to recall the second model of self that we have integrated into the core model CosmoErotic Humanism, which crosspollinates with its classical five selves. This model illuminates the core topic we are discussing here—the call of value from the future into the present, which itself is what creates desire and, by implication, need as well.

The classical five selves of CosmoErotic Humanism are drawn from Unique Self Theory. It is those five selves that we have at the center of CosmoErotic Humanism. The five selves are separate self, false self,<sup>62</sup> True Self, Unique Self, and Evolutionary Unique Self.

Let's recapitulate the complimentary model of self in relationship to the classical five-self model—and particularly the thread of separate self, True Self, Unique Self, and Evolutionary Unique Self.

### **Psychological Self: The Need, Desire, and Value of the Past**

The first of the three selves in the new model is the psychological self. The psychological self focuses on the past, sees liberation in our capacity to recover our memory of the past or to re-experience past trauma in a healthy way, so that our psychological self can heal.

The psychological self is a form of separate self. Like separate self, its view of the Real is true but partial. What is key here, however, is that there is both *a desire and a need* to reconfigure our relationship with the past, and in some sense, to reconfigure the past itself. Moreover, it is fair to say that this model locates value in the past and the need to recover the past is connected to an immensity of that value in the past that we need, in order to live a happy life now.

### **Mystical Self: The Liberation from Need, Desire, and Finite Value in the Present**

The second of the three selves in the new model is the Mystical Self. The Mystical Self sees liberation in moving beyond the stories of the past. Mystical Self sees human wholeness and liberation from suffering in the fullness of the present moment, or what is often called *the Now moment*.

Mystical Self is congruent with True Self in the core model of the five selves. Mystical Self sees authentic (or absolute) Value in the Ground of the Eternal Present, which, in many

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<sup>62</sup> False self is simply a particular form of distorted separate self in contradistinction to a healthy separate self. But that is beyond the purview of this conversation.



classical teachings, serves to liberate us from need, desire, and finite, inauthentic (or relative) value, at least in their more classical forms.

## **Evolutionary Self or Future Self: Needs, Desires, and Values Calling from the Future**

The third of the three selves in the new model is the Evolutionary Self. The Evolutionary Self is all about the future. The Evolutionary Self, or what we sometimes call *Future Self*, is filled with desire for the future, called by future, committed to recovering the memory of the future. Evolutionary Self naturally maps on Unique Self and Evolutionary Unique Self in the core model.

*Again, let us reiterate:*

It is *not* that only Evolutionary Self has a relationship to need, desire, or value. ***All the selves engage need, desire, and value, but in very distinct ways.***

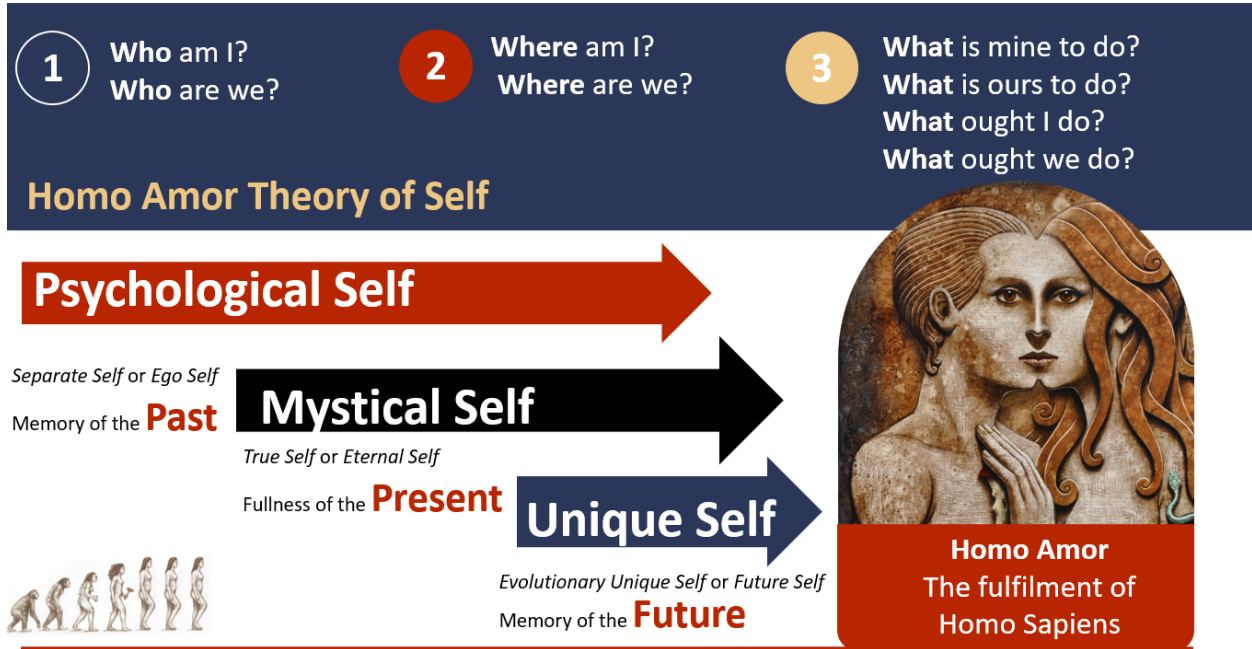
*Mystical Self* has a fundamentally negative relationship to need and desire, generally identifying both desire and need with what we have called their *surface forms* and understanding—correctly—that surface desire is a formidable obstacle to entering the Eternity—the Eternal Ground of Value—that resides in the moment.

*The psychological self* generally thinks of desire as the healthy expression of the separate self in the present. For the psychological self, our unhealed relationship to the past is viewed as being a formidable obstacle to our capacity to know and enact our appropriate desire in the present. But there is also a genuine need and desire to revisit the past and heal its trauma. In this sense, there is precious value in the past.

But for the *Evolutionary Self*, desire—specifically *clarified desire*—is central. It is clarified desire that holds the call of the future. And once desire is clarified it merges with need—*clarified need*—as the fundamental compass of a human life well lived, reaching for ever-deeper and wider value—the Good, the True, and the Beautiful—and being omni-considerate for the Value of the Whole.

## Desire Is a Memory of the Future: *Homo Prospectus*

Desire is what pulls you into the future. Desire is always about transformation. Desire moves us from one state to another state. Reality invites us, seduces us, demands us into tomorrow. *Homo amor* is *Homo desirus*—what we have long held to be a core tenet of Unique Self Theory—meaning that our very nature is to be pulled by our future, even more than we are pushed by our past.



The core tenet of the mental-health expression of Unique Self Theory<sup>63</sup> has long been that the pull of the future—mediated through your Unique Self’s desire to fulfill itself—is more important than the push of the past. We have found that the future mediates the present as much as, if not significantly more than, the past. It is a desire for the future, calling us from the future, that liberates us from the otherwise deadly undercurrents of the past.

<sup>63</sup> What we term *Unique Self Recovery*—working with trauma, eating disorders, addictions, and the like.

This notion is validated by Martin Seligman and colleagues' work on *Homo Prospectus*, which arose independently.<sup>64</sup> Seligman, widely considered the father of *positive psychology*, and his colleagues, all leading experts in various facets of psychology, take issue with the reigning wisdom of the old psychology which suggests that a person is only driven by the past. Seligman and his colleagues assert that *Homo prospectus*, or *Homo desirus*, is pulled by the desire for the future.

When *Homo prospectus* awakens also as *Homo amor*—to the realization that all of Reality is a Field of Evolutionary Love—his or her entire being can relax into itself. *Homo amor* moves beyond the struggle of choice, not to a pre-personal and primitive place but to a transpersonal and spacious place. When you awaken as *Homo amor*, you realize that your desire is Divine Desire. Your dignity is restored in the dignity of your desire. You realize that Reality chose you. You begin to understand that your evolutionary blueprint is encoded in the unique structure of your deepest heart's desire. You feel Reality desiring and choosing you in the same breath.

We are each chosen by the LoveDesire of Reality. But we are chosen not simply as passive recipients of Reality's Love. We are chosen as Reality's partners. We can access the Will of Reality. We access this knowing directly, in the anthro-ontological experience of our own individuated will and agency. We feel our distinction, even as we awaken to the truth that the only mature individuation is in the larger context of union—union with the entire Field of the embracing, interconnected, Intimate Universe, always evolving towards ever-deeper intimacy and coherence. We can feel Reality's urgent invitation to partnership in our own deepest heart's desire. Our deepest heart's desire is the will of Reality moving through us.

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<sup>64</sup> See again Seligman, Martin EP, et al. *Homo prospectus*. Oxford University Press, 2016. The first public talks on Unique Self Recovery were given by the world-recognized trauma and eating disorder expert Lori Galperin, together with myself, Marc Gafni. In those lectures in 2014, we challenged the reigning paradigm in psychology, which assumes that by reordering or reworking the past, trauma can be healed. We found this reworking of the past to be absolutely essential but insufficient. The reordering of the past is a prerequisite but, to really transform, one needs the invitation of the future. We proposed that genuine healing only takes place when there is a recovery of Unique Self, which we call a *memory of the future* or *Unique Self Recovery*. Full healing and transformation require both the reworking of the past and the allurements into the future. See Galperin, Lori and Marc Gafni. *Unique Self Recovery*, forthcoming.

Indeed, in the original Hebrew, the word for will is *ratzon*. *Ratzon* is an erotic word connoting the depth of desire. The beloved in the *Song of Solomon* sings to her lover, *Draw me after you (ve'narutza), and I will run after you.*<sup>65</sup> *Rutza* has the same root as *ratzon*.

Will is not a dry, desiccated, rational affair, where we are called to stand down from our deepest desires. Rather, will is an erotic affair, where we are called to clarify our deepest heart's desire. We are seduced—through holy seduction—by our deepest heart's desire.

In the truth of Reality, our greatest seductress—our wildest, most untamed lover—is our deepest heart's desire. That desire needs to be discerned, clarified, and deepened in the course of a lifetime. But what we know at the outset is that our deepest heart's desire is never narcissistic, it is never cruel or ugly. It is not driven by the petty contractions of egoic posturing. Your deepest heart's desire is radically alive, wildly generous, grounded, and responsible, even as it is spacious and expansive. In Mordechai Lainer's teaching, your deepest heart's desire seduces you.

We have exiled seduction to unholy seduction—the attempt to cause you to violate your appropriate boundary for the sake of another's greed. But Reality is constantly engaging in your holy seduction, the attempt to cause you to transcend your artificial boundary for the sake of your and Reality's deepest need. Your deepest heart's desire is Reality's holy seduction.

This is what the erotic mystics term *zihuy retzonot*—the *identity of wills*. They teach that there is an ontic identity of wills between man and God. It is from *that* place that one can say, *Thy Will be done*. This is not an abdication of human agency and sovereignty, but rather its fulfillment.

Implicit in the word *ratzon*—a word which also means *desire*—is the realization that the ontic identity of will between man and God is, in effect, the ontic identity of human and Divine Desire. It is precisely this ontic identity of Desire between the human being and the evolutionary impulse itself that is the demarcating characteristic of *Homo amor*.

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<sup>65</sup> From *Song of Songs*, Ch.1:4, *Mascheni Acareacha, Ve'Narutza*—Draw me after you, and I will run towards you—filled with desire. [KJV: “Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.”]

*Homo amor* is lived by love. But not only by an agapistic<sup>66</sup> love. *Homo amor* is pulled into the future by *LoveDesire*, by *Outrageous Love*. This desire is so much greater and wider than the local desire of a separate self. And it is also so much deeper than the social, cultural, and psychological conditioning that forms the desire of the separate self.

The desire of *Homo amor* is *Unique Self Desire*—the irreducibly unique expression of the True Self imprinting on the world through you. This is the *Judah archetype* from the wisdom of Solomon lineage. And the Judah archetype is but an early precursor for what we are terming *Homo amor*.<sup>67</sup>

When we are seduced by clarified desire, we surrender choice itself. It is not that you regress to an infantile state, in which you cannot choose. It is rather that you evolve beyond a separate-self contraction where you *think* you are choosing everything, but in fact, your band of choice is exceedingly narrow (if it even exists at all). We evolve into choicelessness.<sup>68</sup>

Choicelessness means being fully awake and empowered to choose, even as you surrender to a higher will that is beyond the contraction of the ego's separate-self choice-making. You live not just in the contradiction of free will and determinism, but in the paradox of choicelessness. You both choose and are beyond choice in the selfsame moment. In this sense of choicelessness, you can feel the breath of the larger Field, the mystery that brought you to this moment over eons of past time, and the implications of your choices over eons of future time. You move from a narrow sense of personal integrity to an expanded sense of evolutionary integrity.

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<sup>66</sup> *Agapistic* as in *agape*, a Greek word for *love* signifying a universal, unconditional quality of love that is context and domain independent. It is often alluded to as the quality of love descending from wholes to parts, as contrasted from *Eros* as that quality of love motivating the parts to love (and thus move towards) wholes. *Homo amor* is many expressions of love, *agape* included, but not to be reduced to any particular quality; just as there are many faces of *Eros*, there are many faces of *amor*, with *Eros* and *agape* being but two essential faces.

<sup>67</sup> Judah refers to one of twelve tribes of the kingdom of Israel, to the fourth son of Jacob (the founder of the tribe of Judah), and to the kingdom of Judah, which was successor to the unified tribes (which the tribe of Judah was a part) of the Israelite kingdom, which fragmented in Deuteronomic historical account. Judah remained loyal to *Yahweh* (the God of Israel)—to monotheism and to the banning of idol worship. In biblical lore, Judah represented strength (by his physical feats and by his faith) combined with selfless humility (for admitting his wrongs), which is held in the meaning of the name *Judah* itself: to give thanks and to admit, derived from the Hebrew word *hoda'ah*, meaning *acknowledgement, humility*. But even deeper, Judah represents the unification of circle and line, submission and intention, masculine and feminine, in the unique and refined realization of Divine Infinitude.

<sup>68</sup> On choicelessness, see *Sexually Incorrect: The Abridged Phenomenology, Volume Two*, Chapter Five, section "Choicelessness: the Ultimate Dignity of Allurement."

I recognize that my choiceless choices might not be fully understood in the course of my lifetime. I fall into the arms of the Beloved, who is living in me, even as I assert my radical responsibility and agency.

Regarding everything that has already happened, even if but a split second ago, I surrender to the larger Will, the greater Desire, moving through me that made that choice.

Regarding everything that is tomorrow, including the very next split second, I am fully sovereign and responsible for my choice and all its arising consequences.

## About the Office for the Future

Reality is at a crisis point. We stand poised between two futures. We are at a moment in history where the future could be the best of times, or the future could be the worst of times. We stand at a unique pivotal point poised between unbearable promise and joy and unbearable peril and devastation. In response to the demand of this moment, we are convening the Office for the Future.

The purpose of the Office for the Future, which I (Marc) was privileged to co-found with Barbara Marx Hubbard and lead together with Zachary Stein, and our lay leaders Stephanie Valcke, Mathi Gijbels, and Wouter Torfs, is to articulate a set of First Principles and First Values, which are the context for the next great flowering of humanity. The First Principles and First Values activate the emergence of a New Human and a New Humanity, what we have called *Homo amor*, the fulfillment of *Homo sapiens*.

This is the New Story of Humanity that we need, to transform the exponential risk of the present and activate the exponential potential of the future. The world is changing so fast that the future is not going to look at all like today and certainly not like yesterday. We need to imagine the highest of all possible futures.

To be clear: Without deploying a new set of First Principles and First Values, and evolving the source code of consciousness and culture, humanity will likely not survive the existential risks, which threaten our civilization at this pivotal phase-shift moment in human history.

We must articulate a global *ethos* for a global civilization, based on the New Story. The New Story is woven from First Values and First Principles, themselves drawn from the leading-edge validated insights of the interior and exterior sciences, from the traditional, modern, and postmodern epochs of human history. This is our absolute obligation, absolute joy, and absolute gift to ourselves and to our children. It is the gift that the stakeholders of the future demand from us.

The purpose of the Office for the Future is to resource the research, articulation, and writing of the *Great Library*; a new set of impact books and media projects that will be the strange attractor toward the memory of the future. The deployment of the Great Library in public

culture, through a carefully developed set of strategies, is directly aimed at catalyzing the evolution of consciousness and culture.

## **You Are Welcome to Participate**

### **Office for the Future**

<https://www.officeforthefuture.com/>

### **Free Weekly Broadcast: One Mountain, Many Paths**

<https://www.onemountainmanypaths.org/>

### **Dr. Marc Gafni**

<https://www.marcgafni.com/>

### **Center for World Philosophy and Religion**

<https://worldphilosophyandreligion.org/>

### **Foundation for Conscious Evolution**

<http://www.foundationforconsciousevolution.com>

### **Eros Mystery School**

<https://www.erosmysteryschool.com/>