I-8.   What Is In An Abstract?

Received wisdom and knowledge differs from the shared knowledge that come to you as an abstract, an outline, or a snapshot. The difference lies in how it tickles your mind, when does it begin to mirror your own thinking, and when does the experience become a matrix for thought process.

The device of succinct (abstract, outline, snapshot) presentation says some things fundamental. The form in #A1-23 is remarkably analogous to the modern usage of the abstract in scientific literature. It is as much about the content as about the style. It is about the key elements of the approach and assumptions. It is also about the roots and purpose of the work. It provides a link to the tools for learning that are developed later (Chapters A-H). It is not just a summary or conclusion. It is a matrix for the thought process that facilitates representation and abstraction.

What did you read?

    One of the most remarkable things that I learnt was at the age of 9. In my school when you went to return the borrowed book, the librarian would always ask what did you read? In less than 2 minutes you were supposed to give a summary of what you read and thought. Based on your input he would recommend the level of books based on your interest, otherwise you were asked to the same book read again.   The school gave me a special award for reading 279 books in one year. What I cherish most is the habit of focusing on the content, theme, message, and relevance as I interact linearly with books, people and the world.

Jeevatthan text in Chapters A through H is about representation

and reconciliation of the diversity of animate beings.   The term *jeev* refers to all animate beings: not just the living beings but all the real and imagined animate beings of psychosomatic and cultural origins. They share some common properties. But the distinctions, and not the mere differences, are the attributes evaluated in terms of defined criteria. For example the observed reality of celestial shining objects is acknowledged as *jyotish-dev* (the celestial shining objects) or the *kalp-dev* (imagined objects). Such moving or animate beings, including those of the under world, are represented to facilitate their observed behaviors.

Tools and devices for representation are about the way of thinking. It is useful to appreciate the purpose of the tools that facilitate flow of ideas, information, and knowledge. An analogy will be helpful here. If you wanted to cross a river (an idea), information is like looking for a way to take a single ride in a rented boat, and knowledge is like having your own boat. Knowledge of the methods and devices is like having the tools and blue print to make a boat. The concept revisits as you feel a need for a better boat. For such purposes consider the efficacy of *Gatha, sutr, mantr*, aphorisms and of the concepts based on your experience.

Jeevatthan text is for self-learning. It develops in steps as a dialog with simple, short and terse sentences with a focus on the content. Hardly anything is negated. What is said is positive and critical for the appreciation of the content, and nothing is superfluous or rhetorical. Implications of what is said, which can be profound, are left for the reader. In this sense the text in a matrix form is **a statement of principles and processes for the reconciliation of the animate world perceived by humans**. Here an apt analogy would be the role of the constitution of a country,

or even a charter or a bill of rights as perceived by the citizens. In all such cases, details and subtleties emerge through continuous interaction.

Economy of words places a special burden on the reader, who must provide an appropriate context rooted in experience. Recall that this material relies on the *anugam* process that is analytical but not critical. It starts with curiosity and explores the significance of the context and content that lies in logic-space. A matrix of properties and attributes generated by the observer is explored in relation to defined criteria. Therefore, the quality of the observer-observed interaction is critical for appreciating what attenuates and augments individual perceptions. Operational generalizations are built from representations (definitions and assumptions), rather than from some arbitrary universal.

Reality-based empiricism

The empiricism built into Jeevatthan and Nay works makes it unique. Certainly it is ahead by several millennia compared to the trends that perpetuate the futile searches for the omniscience. Modern science is also beginning to come to grips with the depth of it. As shown by Godel's incompleteness theorem: "you cannot prove anything that is not already built into the starting definitions, assumptions, and axioms."

Understanding of perception is hallmark of the 12th *Ang*, which is appropriately called **itthi-vay** (II-11). For explanation, interpretation, and elaboration it relies heavily on the conceptual and logical interaction with one's own experiences, shared knowledge and available evidence. The it seeks a deeper understanding of ones own perceptions in search of consistency, coherence, and context. Appreciation of the content and implicit emerges as the trends (*bhav*) of the observed reality unfold in stages. Then it is by more formal means (the *Syad-Anekant* **Nay**

Volume III) one builds reason and thought in to the matrix of relations that make up the shared-knowledge.

Step-wise elaboration. The approach of stepwise elaboration is an essential part of linear language communication. The matrix approach also emphasizes a structure for reasoning to build thought. Therefore, for the conceptual grasp of the multi-dimension world on a real-time basis reasoning is guided by a matrix of tangible attributes and criteria. Thus relations are built and elaborated by algorithmic iterations and successive approximations. May be a similar process is also at work to attenuate, augment and process our perceptions.

      The approach of step-wise elaboration of a matrix is remarkably effective for self-learning and teaching. To be engaged the reader or the pupil must provide the relevant context. It can be applies in a variety of ways because an stepwise approach gives operational and analytical tools for problem solving and decision-making. Such tools of reasoning search for relations that make one aware of the practical (*vyavhar*) limits to the use of language and observations for the representation of complex situations. In short, the matrix approach provides for a graded transition from the observed and experienced to the representational and abstract.

Contents of Volume I

Representation and Quality of Perception