The way of being

Outline with document and [site](../index.html) plan

For work [brief](brief%20outline.html) and [long](long%20outline.html) outlines, toward [Essential](the%20way%20of%20being-brief.html) and [Complete](the%20way%20of%20being-long.html) editions

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Anil Mitra

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The way of being

# About this document

### Concept

This document is outline and plan for the [site](../index.html), its pages, and [essays](.). It will replace the [brief outline](brief%20outline.html) and the [long outline](the%20way%20of%20being-long.html) outlines which are backed up and may be altered and eliminated.

### Ongoing

Review and minimize [about this document](#_About_this_document).

### Plan

Minimize [main ideas](#_The_main_ideas); follow plan in [bare content](bare%20content.html)

### Navigation and working markup

*Frames*

Using i-frames

*Collapsibility*

* [Collapsible sections](../page%20and%20document%20templates/collapsible%20sections-template%20for%20the%20essential%20manual.html)
* [Nested collapsible blocks](../page%20and%20document%20templates/nested%20collapsible%20blocks.html)

*Primary vs secondary material*

† Mark essential heads and *content* by a dagger at the end, this bookmarks material for the short; a dagger after a term†, marks the concept as (two daggers at the end of a paragraph signify that the paragraph and the final term are both important). Style Main, Alt + Z, may be used for the same purpose as the dagger. small capitals indicate a definition, often of an important term.

\* A star marks secondary and detailed material—headings and content will be only in the long [outline](outline.html). The style Secondary, Alt + Shift + S, may be used. A star placed after a term\*, marks the concept as secondary. \*\* Two stars mark *special* material and topics not for the way itself but, e.g., consequences of the metaphysics of general or academic content. Style Secondary, Alt + Shift + S, may be used for secondary material

*Web vs print vs working document*

Character Style DocOnly, as default paragraph font, Alt + D.

Character Style WebOnly, as default paragraph font, Alt + Y.

Character Style PrintOnly, as default paragraph font, Alt + P.

*Headings styles*

Headings—work out styles – font size, indentation, italicization, but no ¿underlining? Note that for in-process work the headings are currently all numbered. In the essays only a few levels will be numbered.

*Paragraph styles*

See [Primary vs secondary material](#_Primary_vs_secondary) for uses of the styles Main, Normal, and Secondary.

Paragraph style Personal, Alt + Shift + P, for personal material for publication only if relevant to the way of being as content or resource.

Normal Main, Normal, Collapsed by default, Alt + Ctrl + Shift + M. These styles are for levels of content with detail in case useful.

Normal Indent, Normal + Left 18px, Alt + Ctrl + Shift + N.

Normal Indent 1, Normal + Left 16px, Alt + Ctrl + Shift + O.

Normal Indent 2, Normal + Left 48px, Alt + Ctrl + Shift + P.

The way of being

Outline

# Notation

1. When the styles are finalized, add notes on different styles formatted so as to mark significance and aid reading and comprehension. Should footnotes be used? Endnotes?

small capitals show a definition.

# Into the way

This work narrates ‘the way of being’, an approach to the human endeavor.

This division, [into the way](#_Into_the_way_1), is an informal guide to the way and the work.

1. Choose one or more from among the terms ‘work’, ‘narrative’, ‘book’, ‘article’…

## Wide angle view

### The way of being and living

The way is not distinct from life but takes time away from the throng of living to develop a perspective on living in the world. This is analogous to taking time to plan and prepare mentally and materially for any important activity.

### The aim of the way of being

The aim of the way is realization of the highest possibility.

What is possibility? What values determine meanings of ‘high’ or ‘highest’, and are these conceptions sufficiently focused to have coherence among different persons and societies. Is and can there be a single highest or ultimate goal? Perhaps the highest real possibility is infeasible. Perhaps it is a complex of states of being—or perhaps a process. Ought not there be a dual focus on the immediate and the ultimate, and ought they not mesh?

The work accounts for these considerations.

### Arrangement of the work

What is necessary to realizing the aim? In some situations, it might be good to plunge into action. Generally, it is effective to develop understanding as preliminary and in parallel to action.

A goal preliminary to realization is to develop knowledge of what is possible and the means to achieve it. This is undertaken in [metaphysics](#_Wide-angle_view), the first of two formal divisions of the work. [Metaphysics](#_Wide-angle_view) develops the essential knowledge of being and beings as having limited possibility in a real but not absolute sense. It shows what is possible in principle, what is of value, and, with some detail, what is in fact feasible and desirable. It develops a foundation for paths to the ultimate for limited beings in and from limited worlds. It shows how beings are at once limited and limitless.

1. In the long edition, metaphysics may be written as a number of sections, e.g., Being (and experience), Metaphysics proper (introduction, possibility, the real metaphysics, and ethics), Cosmology, Topics in metaphysics, and A system of human knowledge). In the short edition, only what is essential to realization will be kept—all under the single metaphysics division.

[Metaphysics](#_Wide-angle_view) is foundation for the second formal division on [realization](#_Realization), which develops the groundwork *for* and ways *of* realization, and presents adaptable [path templates](#_Metaphysics_and_reason) and [resources](#_Resources_1) for discovery and realization.

1. In the long edition, the section of realization on resources may be written as a separate division.

The final and informal division, [into the world](#_Into_the_world), is a prospect for living from the perspective of the way. It includes material on [renewal and sustenance](#_Renewal) in the way.

## The essence of the way

### Sources of the idea

Our personal aims and views of common goals and the idea of destiny are many, often conflicting, and seemingly marked by subjectivity. Yet it is out of this diffuse situation and its cultural histories that the sense of a common higher goal may arise.

The sources of the way as presented here are in the world and received tradition—the history of human culture through the present time—as I have experienced, reflected, extended, transformed, lived, and written them.

In seeking goals that are common and at once immediate and beyond the immediate, knowledge clarifies the issues and provides answers—answers that are in-process if not ultimate.

###  In process knowledge

A first goal for the work is (i) from received history and knowledge to identify a range of aims, goals, and of concepts of destiny, (ii) to seek, so far as it may emerge from experience and reflection, an ultimate framework of understanding of the universe and (iii) to employ the framework toward a generic common endeavor under which the range of received goals may be rethought, acquire new meaning, be enhanced, and thus improved, be bound together under the common endeavor.

### Limits to being

A seeming conflict is the tension between possibility and limits.

In received thought, there are many limits from our physical constraints to the nature of the universe, to death (and birth in that our experience seems not to extend to before our conception). Here it will emerge that the realistic traditional limits are real but not absolute.

What are these limits? One default view of science is that what it shows is (i) the truth and (ii) essentially all the truth. The way (method) of science provides reasonable justification of its content’s truth but not of it being all the truth. However, when secular thought considers alternatives it often looks to religious cosmology, which it finds absurd. Thus, a widespread default view—paradigm—of our possibilities and limits as defined by science is extremely limited on account of the tension between our secular and religious paradigms. While such default limits have some secular and material validity on a short term, they may be hopelessly pessimistic on the scale of the currently empirical and transempirical universe.

### Transcendence

It will be shown that the only absolute limits are those of logic—i.e., the only concepts not realized are the illogical.

This view and its consequences are paradigm that is not entirely new. The idea of logic as the only limit is not new. However, the demonstration (and heuristics), the working out its meaning and consequences, and its seamless integration with what is valid in the older paradigms is new. From that perspective, the paradigm is new.

The new paradigm—the view, demonstration, and consequences—will violate the sense of reality engendered by the default paradigm. Those for whom the ‘old’ secular paradigm is held strongly, will question the new, their sense of the real may resist the new. Some scientists, especially physicists, may be hostile to logic rather than natural science as the final measure of the real. It is not the aim of the work to show the default ‘wrong’. Rather, the aims include (i) arguing the truth and reasonability of the new paradigm over and above demonstration (ii) showing that the old paradigm has truth in what it allows but not in what it disallows (iii) that what it disallows may constitute real but not absolute limits and (iv) thus showing how the old fits with the new.

### Consequences

In [metaphysics](#_Wide-angle_view), the way combines this perspective of limitlessness with experience and received knowledge of patterns and limits—and draw consequences. Here are some essential consequences—

1. Shorten the following to its essentials.
2. All being and beings realize phases of limitless being, and are at once limited and limitless,
3. Even though realization is given, effective and enjoyable pathways to the limitless may be developed,
4. While paths may have limits, the way has perfection,
5. Received tradition presents such paths,
6. If enjoyment is a value, it is imperative to be on a path—and to be on a path is not just to follow but also to share, negotiate, and develop paths, and
7. This narration of the way presents path templates,
8. The way recognizes the issue of pain, that some pain is unavoidable, and that being on a path for those who can, is an element of the best address of the issue,
9. That pain is an issue does not imply that pain is to be avoided at all cost. Some pain is unavoidable, some is to be treated. But pain and fear are essential aspects of being, though imperfect in their function—and some imperfection is due to ignorance. Therefore, pain, material pain and existential fear, is an opportunity for knowledge, for closer contact with the real and resolution of the imperfection that arises out of ignorance.
10. In the long edition there will be more introductory material. In the short edition this is enough. An essential edition may have no introduction at all.

## Reading the way

That all beings are at once limitless and limited is a cornerstone of the paradigm of the way, which stands against received paradigms.

The paradigm of the way will be developed—demonstrated, not just painted as in a mythic poem.

To develop this paradigm will require new conceptions. Since the new will be related to the old, many received terms will be used—but will have new meaning. As the way is paradigmatic, the system of meaning will stand as one.

It is essential, for understanding, that readers should at least temporarily set aside their preconceived meanings and paradigms. Richness of meaning will emerge (i) from absorption and use of the new meanings and paradigm and (ii) later integration and adjustment of the old and the new.

## The main ideas

This section explains the reasons for choice and the meanings of the main concepts, roughly in their order of introduction in the main body of the work. It also functions as a preview of the work. The treatment is informal and not intended to be complete.

1. The topics, beginning with [being](#_Being_1), should be carefully revised and their essence summarized using style Main (Alt + Z). These essences will be the basis of the brief and field manual version.

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The ideas

### The system

In the extended system below the main ideas are marked by a dagger.

The following is an extended list with ideas of lesser importance or centrality marked with stars—destiny† (aim, goal, value), foundation, criticism, substance, relative foundation, matter, mind, process, being†, depth, breadth, beings†, the real†, superficial foundation, philosophical or conceptual algebra, abstraction†, the concrete†, experience†, significance†, relation†, consciousness†, concept, percept, robust world, meaning†, knowledge†, action, existence†, the universe†, form†, extension, change†, duration, creator, god, self-creation, law†, the void†, proof† (demonstration), the manifest, the fundamental principle of metaphysics (abbr. fundamental principle, FP), metaphysics†, possibility†, logic†, nature, science, mathematics, empiricism, rationalism, limitlessness†, forms of expression, the eternal, the unbounded, peak being, open adventure, transcendent peak (Brahman), self (Atman), tradition, the real metaphysics†, feeling†, enjoyment, pain, cognition†, ethics†, cosmology†, realization†, reason†, and understanding.

1. When the long and short editions are written, the sections on the ideas below may refer forward to their formal treatment.

### Advertisement

1. The appeal of the narrative should be transparent to the sympathetically disposed and have appeal for others. The function of the advertisement is to promote transparent appeal.

The aim of the way of being is shared discovery and realization of the ultimate from and so far as possible in the immediate.

It will be seen that the ultimate illuminates the immediate and that paths to the ultimate are in the immediate.

### Destiny and aim

Destiny is the idea that beings influence their future. The way explores the possibilities of destiny.

The variety of personal and collective aims over human history are not clearly part of or equivalent to a single higher aim or destiny.

How might we find such an aim? An approach would be to develop a worldview which would reveal a single higher aim. It would be necessary (i) for the worldview to be demonstrated (ii) for aim to be expressed as unitary but also be broad enough to include the higher possibilities (iii) for the worldview to have or imply a value system that gives the terms ‘high’ and ‘higher’ meaning. It would be desirable (i) to show how achievement of the aim is feasible and (ii) that the higher aims subsume positive everyday life and its aims.

How might an appropriate worldview be found and demonstrated? To find a new worldview (i) will need imagination, persistence, conceptual experiment, and criticism (ii) will be immensely enhanced and almost certainly need familiarity with cultural histories of worldviews and their foundations and criticisms. Myth, religion, philosophy (especially metaphysics, but also epistemology, value theory including ethics and aesthetics, and logic understood broadly), and science and its method are sources for the views and foundations. The question of metaphysics is problematic because of the history of the question of the possibility of metaphysics, especially emphasized by Immanuel Kant and the critical positivism of the twentieth century. Fundamental to this question is the meaning of the term metaphysics and the question of what constitutes validity in knowledge. These considerations are incorporated naturally in the development.

### Foundations

How is a worldview (a metaphysics) to be founded? Substance views have dominated the history of western thought but substance is almost invariably posited or hypothetical and so tentative as foundation. One alternative, the relative foundation, e.g. tentative acceptance or endless regress, though existentially satisfying, is no foundation at all (unless it is shown that no better is possible). A second alternative, regarding foundation as in interaction with knowledge and its use, is attractive as perhaps being the best that can be done and is also suggestive of the idea that knowledge and foundation should (or do or must) emerge together.

None of these approaches satisfy the desire to have firm and final foundation for knowledge, particularly for a worldview. But perhaps that is all we can do.

But it seems that the best we can and ought to do is, even while we tentatively accept incomplete foundations, to continue the search.

We would like our foundation to be (a) not needing further foundation—i.e., in being ‘self-founding’, (b) providing a complete foundation, and in showing the necessity of what it founds.

### Criticism

This section considers standard criticism of metaphysics and subjects those criticisms to second order criticism.

In this section ‘experience’ is experience of the world. Later in taking up [experience](#_Experience_1), the meaning is broadened.

#### Worldviews

The fundamental criticism of metaphysical worldviews is that the source of knowledge is experience. This is certainly a valid criticism of *special* metaphysics—e.g., many theological systems. It is also a criticism of the validity of merely *rational* metaphysics—i.e., systems that are consistent with experience but not required by it.

However, it is near universal but naïve to extend the criticism to all metaphysics—

1. Kant observed that though all knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it arises out of experience.
2. Thus as readings of patterns in experience concepts represent the real (i) perfectly given sufficient abstraction (ii) pragmatically, as in science, with accuracy sufficient to some purposes.
3. We will find that the abstract are (i) not remote but what is capable of being perfect by filtering from the concrete (ii) not trivial but significant in yielding an ultimate worldview with an ultimate value system.
4. Though the pragmatic are not perfect as representation they are adequate in terms of value related to purpose. Where we do not think this perfect it is because we think there can be better representation. But if there could not be better representation, there would be a better sense in which the pragmatic would be perfect.
5. The pragmatic and the abstract can—and will be—meshed as a single system, which is perfect with respect to the ultimate value system above.
6. Methods of inference emerge with the system—perfect for the abstract, inductive for the pragmatic.

#### Substance

The idea of ‘substance’ is that it is a simple that underlies the complexity of the world as an underlying cause or reason. Immediately we can see that substance is remote from the world of phenomena. This remoteness is further seen in analyzing what the characteristics of substance ought to be to satisfy the criterion of simplicity—it ought to be uniform, unchanging, eternal and thus devoid of change or reasons for or causes of change.

This suggests seeking foundation in the immediate. This is the source of the idea of being as foundation.

### Being

In criticizing [substance](#_Substance) as foundation, it was suggested that since substance is remote, we might look to look to the immediate for foundation. But is this possible except in the trivial and altogether unempowering sense that “everything founds itself”? We will find that it is indeed possible—and not just possible, but in a way that is, perhaps surprisingly, in some ways ultimately powerful.

The concept of Being—simply that which is, in terms of some form of the verb to be—has the following characteristics (i) it is universally characteristic of things, (ii) it is immanent in things, rather than remote (iii) therefore, if it could found understanding, it would be an ideal conceptual container for the essence of all being and our being in the universe, and (iv) we will find it to found understanding of the universe. We will find foundation in being to be superior to substance (a) in not itself needing foundation, (b) in providing complete foundation, and (c) in showing the necessity of what it founds.

This is a potential simplification over substance and relative foundations. Two fundamental issues arise (i) the issue of depth—i.e., is being adequate to a foundation for all understanding (knowledge) (ii) the issue of breadth—i.e., to determine what things have being, or, to determine what are beings, and what are the kinds and varieties of being.

The concept of the real is that which has being.

Beings have form and change (discussed below, especially in [metaphysics](#_Metaphysics_1)). In having form, a being has limits—especially in that those which, if exceeded, would be either a destruction or a transformation. But as there is change, limits defining destruction, which may be seen as necessary by default, my in fact define transformation. Thus, while death is apparently absolute, it may be a gateway to the ultimate—and the truth of this suggestion will emerge first, implicitly, in [the void](#_The_void), and explicitly in [the real metaphysics](#_The_real_metaphysics).

As being is immanent in things, the move from substance to being, is a move to the superficial—i.e., to a superficial foundation. Here, however, ‘superficial’ does not connote lack of depth, for while being is superficial with regard to the real, it has conceptual depth. The move from endless regress to being is a move from the indefinite to the definite. But the definiteness of being lies in its [abstraction](#_Abstraction). Thus, the study of particular beings and the question of what has being—or what things have being—takes on definiteness in a sense similar to the way in which use of an unknown variable, e.g., ‘x’, gives definiteness to unknowns in symbolic algebra. The study of being may be seen, metaphorically at least, as ‘philosophical or conceptual algebra’.

### Abstraction

How is it known that there is being?

“Being is what there is” is devoid of any detail that could be in error. Just that we have experience or even illusion of experience, implies that there is being, for experience-or-the-illusion-of-experience is (a case of) being.

It is via abstraction that we know there is (some) being.

But as used here, the abstract is not remote. Rather it is a filter from the concrete to the most concrete. The filter removes distortable or possibly illusory or erroneous detail.

The abstract is an abstraction to the real.

For example, we know there is experience (as consciousness) for even if the experience of experience is illusory, illusion is experience.

But experience is more than that for experience is the essence of what we have (as window on whatever there is).

### Experience

Experience is subjective awareness. Its first use below is as in “experience of” things, then as in experience as such. Subsequently its scope will be broadened to that of proto experience, the elementary kind, which, in compound and complex forms manifests as subjective awareness.

Experience is the place of all significance (but is not here claimed to be the source of all significance).

#### Experience and being

Analysis of “what is” shows it meaningless except as “experience of what is” (and conceptual extensions of experience). How, then, can “what is” have meaning?

If “experience of” cannot be transcended, perhaps “the experienced” is not real in itself but, rather, it is “the experience of things” (or as-if of things) that is real.

What we will find is that (i) while our immediate experience of things may be questionably real, all measures of the reality of experience lies in further experience (ii) the constitution of the world is experience (iii) being is essentially experiential and relational—being is essentially in relation.

While these assertions will elicit askance, (i) note again, that since we never get outside experience, we cannot do better than knowing the world as in experience, (ii) demonstration will proceed via analysis of the logically possible interpretations of ordinary experience, be completed in terms of more inclusive and necessary extensions of the meaning of ‘experience’ and reinforced by (also demonstrated) the principle of the limitlessness of the world.

#### Experience and paradigm

A basic paradigm of ‘the world as in experience’ is ‘the world as experiential beings in a material environment’, where the beings are persons—you, I, others—and other material, living, and experiential beings. This default common view may be called the standard secular view (SSV). Other views are developed below, some seen as ‘more real’ than SSV. What could that mean? Is it a rejection of what we all experience as true (SSV)? The meaning will be developed, but it is not a rejection of the common paradigm. Rather, it places the common paradigm of everyday utility—of which we have intuition—in a larger context that ‘works’ where the common paradigm breaks down. In fact, we will find a largest context—and all this will not be merely posited but explained and demonstrated.

1. Note to me—elsewhere, in other documents, I may have used ‘SSV’ to refer to the strict materialist version of the common view above.

#### Some basic varieties of experience

The extensions of the meaning from its first meaning above as ‘experience of’ are first to ‘experience’ as such, which shall be consciousness and conscious awareness in all their forms, and then, as suggested by the experience of things as real, but via necessary reason, to being-as-essentially-relational as the root constitution of, not just all consciousness, but also of the world.

Some of the forms or aspects of experience are (i) primitive vs elaborate experience (ii) pure vs intentional experience, and (iii) feeling vs cognition.

Elaborate experience is just the range of experience as in human beings and animals. At its primitive root, there are simple forms which bifurcate and compound to form the elaborate—in the origin of life, in evolution, and in development. Here, the idea of a primitive root is somewhat hypothetical; the real nature experience and its root is developed in the main body of the work.

Pure experience is experience without an object external to experience itself. In intentional experience, there is an object. Kinds of intention are (i) attitudinal in which the object is a state of affairs (ii) action in which the object is causative—either to prevent or effect change.

Feeling is associated with quality; cognition is associated with structure or shape and quantity. Primitive feeling is at the root of both qualitative feeling and cognition. Feeling and cognition are not entirely distinct in their nature or separate in their function. A dimension of feeling is that it lies on an intensity continuum and the more intense feelings are experienced as ‘positive’, e.g., joy, or ‘negative’, e.g., suffering and pain. Cognition, which is often regarded as essentially neutral, may be positive or negative (i) in its association with feeling (ii) in its consequences for feeling.

#### Experience and the world

Is there experience? Yes, for it is implicit that experience the given that is subjective experience (regardless of whether it has an object).

Must there be experience? It would seem impossible to show from any knowledge that are factual descriptions of the world, e.g., scientific or metaphysical accounts of the world as we find it. However, on [the real metaphysics](#_The_real_metaphysics), particularly that all possibility is realized, there must indeed be experience.

Whatever is experienced and not illusory, is named the real world (the experience itself is part of the world, even if illusory and, so, the term ‘external world’ is misleading). Our normal interpretation of our experience is that there is a real world. But is that interpretation not (logically) indistinguishable from the interpretation that the experience of a world is no more than *as if* of a world? That is, may the world be no more than experience in and of itself (that it is, is the proposition named ‘solipsism’)? That the two interpretations of our experience seem indistinguishable is an apparent paradox for it would seem that only one can be true.

And given that to doubt the common view of the reality of the world seems absurd, what is the point to such questions? The point is (i) that all is experience and that there is experience of a real world seem logically indistinguishable and that clarification is not only the resolution of an apparent metaphysical puzzle but (ii) may inform us as to the nature of the world (iii) which may show us that while the common view is pragmatically sound for many common purposes, the real and what it promises may be far different and far greater.

But how may we resolve the apparent paradox? An approach is to lay out a comprehensive set of interpretations of experience, to show that they are comprehensive, and to (attempt to) identify the real interpretation. Since the source of the paradox is in alternative interpretations, it would seem impossible to resolve strictly from experience alone. That would seem impossible since the measure of experience is further experience. However, there may be resolution (i) on pragmatic grounds or (ii) an adequate metaphysical picture of the world.

A pragmatic ground might be that the world is far more complex than the experience of a single experiencer. While that argument seems reasonable, that the world is more complex than my experience of it might be an illusion, and while this does not seem reasonable it does not seem logically impossible and so the pragmatic ground is not a necessary ground. However, there is an argument that it is logically impossible—an argument that a single experiencer cannot sustain even an experiential world privately, for even that world is built up from shared experience. However, this argument against the private experiential world assumes individual limits that are pragmatically sound but not logically necessary.

It would seem that we are at an impasse regarding the truth of or common interpretation of the world. Let us therefore review the common interpretation of our experience with the intent to seek the most comprehensive of interpretations as a possible route to finding the true interpretation.

The common view is that the world is a material world populated with experiential beings or selves—you and I and others (see [experience and being](#_Experience_and_being), above). Though there is no necessary reason to *subscribe* to a substance view, we shall do so temporarily for it will enable a clarification of the nature of the world. The presence of experience (mind) implies that the substance of the world cannot be strictly material—i.e., matter that is possessed not even of proto experience. If the world is a substance world, the substance must have proto experience (this would not entail a dualism, for it would only do so on the assumption that mind and matter are essentially distinct in a categorial or substance sense). In this case, the environment is possessed of experientiality, which is low or zero in level, but not null in category. This suggests the following more inclusive interpretation.

The world is part of a greater world or universe, which is a field of experiential being, where elementary experience crystallizes (#a) as experiential worlds with experiential beings in an environment of low to zero level but not null experientiality (#b) as other worlds, some non-experiential and purely material, others as worlds that are nothing but experience. The maximally possible case (#c) is where the worlds are limitless in variety in transient contact with the void.

Is that universe indeed maximally possible? It is maximally possible if there are no categories beyond being a field of being, which includes among its elements form (and so extension, relation, and matter) with experientiality (and so relational mind and change). But if ‘matter’ is being as such and experience is being-in-relation, higher order categories—beyond the series, being then being-in-relation—would begin with being-in-relation-in relation, which is no more than being-in-relation. Thus, there are no further categories, and the universe of the previous paragraph is maximal. We will name this universe the maximal field of being and experience universe (abbreviated, “maximal FOE universe” or just FOE).

Is that maximal universe the universe? If not, then what part of it describes the universe?

Without more than metaphysical description, nothing further can be said. What is needed is a metaphysics that (i) describes the universe and (ii) shows the described universe to be necessary. Hitherto, most metaphysical pictures have been empirically or rationally wanting. Therefore, the metaphysics should explicitly (iii) satisfy empirical and rational criteria. [The real metaphysics](#_The_real_metaphysics) satisfies these criteria and, further, shows the universe to be maximal—the realization of the greatest possibility—i.e., the FOE universe.

In summary, we can say that the universe must be a field of experiential being as described [above](#abc) with cases #a and #b immersed in #c.

What does this imply for our world? It is pragmatically and almost certainly the case that our world is pragmatically, as in case #a above, a substance world of experiential beings in a proto experiential environment, immersed in the limitless field of experiential being. However, cases such as #b do arise, but are of marginal significance though not of marginal likelihood. It is shown in the main body of the work that these conclusions are near but not absolutely certain and are based in [the real metaphysics](#_The_real_metaphysics) as a join of ideal and pragmatic sides. And it is further shown there that cases such as #a are more stable, less transient, and therefore not only more significant in experience but also, generally, of greater material significance.

Is it the best that we can do to show that the common pragmatic interpretation of our world is near certain? It is indeed the best in that we cannot show absolute certainty. But what we have shown is the absolute truth—our world is almost certainly the pragmatic interpretation but even though this is not absolutely certain, it is absolutely certain and true that our world is part of the FOE universe and all that that entails as noted in [the essence of the way](#_The_essence_of) > [transcendence](#_Transcendence) and [consequences](#_Consequences), and in the following sections, especially [the real metaphysics](#_The_real_metaphysics).

#### Robust worlds

While the possibilities #a and #b both occur under [the real metaphysics](#_The_real_metaphysics), #a is more significant, generally speaking, in experience and materially. Such worlds may be called robust worlds (robust is a descriptor that may similarly applied to any being, e.g., a cosmos or a being with identity).

### Meaning

We have seen that a focus on meanings of words is crucial to the present development. But we will find that it is not words that are the essential bearers of meaning.

The bearer of meaning shall be content of experience, i.e., the concept (which includes the percept as well as pure experience). Where a concept is an ‘experience of’, an object is ‘the experienced’.

The foregoing, if valid, shows that concept meaning is not just the association of a word or higher linguistic construct (e.g., a sentence) with something in the world. Rather, since it is valid, concept meaning must include the association—experience of the experienced—i.e., ‘concept and object’; and linguistic meaning must include association of word, concept, and object.

It will be further shown that these associations are sufficient to meaning in that (i) pragmatically, it is the best we can do and (ii) the real metaphysics reveals a domain of understanding of the entire universe in which this concept of meaning is ideal.

### Knowledge

In putting forward a meaning, it would not be said that there is the (implied) object. Rather, realized meaning is knowledge. This may be put—

Knowledge is meaning, realized.

Because knowledge of the nature of the universe and its possibilities of realization for beings is not realization, knowledge by itself is ‘ontologically incomplete’ and is potentially completed by action. This will be found particularly relevant below when we find our possibilities for realization are quite trivially known to be without limit but engagement in realization is not trivial.

### Existence

The concept of existence is regarded as elusive. But with being as conceived above, being is the real and all the real and so to exist is to be. But we already knew from language that ‘to exist’ and ‘to be’ are close if not the same.

We include ‘existence’ in the vocabulary of the narrative (i) for its general importance, (ii) because of its identity with being (though being may also carry the connotation of ‘special being’ or ‘our being’), and (iii) because there is a well-known ‘paradox of negative existentials’ and because our analysis of meaning supplies a resolution of the paradox that is an improvement over the common resolution.

The paradox of negative existentials is simply this—*If we say that something does not exist, what is it that does not exist*? That is, for the assertion that something does not exist to have meaning, do we not have to assume its existence?

The resolution is that given a meaning, i.e., the tentative association of a word-concept with an object, it exists if there is an object but does not exist if there is no object.

For example, to say “the tiger exists” means that there is an object that corresponds to the association of the word ‘tiger’ with the mental or other concept or image of a tiger.

Similarly, “unicorns do not exist” means that there is no object corresponding to the word ‘unicorn’ and the familiar pictures in books of mythology or fairy tales.

### The universe

The universe will be defined as all being—i.e., over all form and change (e.g., over all extension, duration, and their absence).

Note that form includes relation, and that space and time are measures or coordinates of form and change. Generally, a reference to space or time is a reference to a particular measure of it. Thus, when it is said that space or time are ‘not real’ what is meant is that a particular measure is not universal or that it is not precise. The roots of space and time, i.e., form and change, are real. That spacetime is one, means that the measures are interwoven and dependent on the experiencer. That they are manifest in being means that they are not independent frameworks but a framework that is of being.

That is, ‘the universe’ and ‘the material universe’ are not the same.

It follows that there is nothing outside the universe—outside the universe there is no being, no idea, no concept, no creator.

Much confusion is cleared up—e.g. (i) there is precisely one universe and (ii) not only does the universe not have a creator, but it is also inherent in the concept of the universe that it cannot have a creator.

That the universe has no creator does not imply that there are no gods, but only that there is no God-the-creator-of-the-universe.

Although it may have a coming into being, there is not even self-creation, for that would imply it had being before it came into being.

That is, so far as there is creation of the entire universe, i.e., the manifest from the non-manifest, or the reason for the existence of the universe, it is the result of an *act* of creation.

### Law

A law of nature is a reading of a pattern.

A pattern has being.

With reference to the discussions on what it is to be an object—in [experience](#_Experience_1) and [meaning](#_Meaning)—a law is a concept of a pattern in nature and the pattern itself. Stated simply—

The law is the concept of the pattern.

### The void

The void is the absence of being.

Thus, the void is the complement of any being relative to itself, particularly the complement of the universe relative to itself.

Existence and properties of the void are critical to the development and (i) will be argued—i.e., a demonstration will be given (ii) will be shown consistent with experience (iii) will be doubted, and (iv) alternative attitudes to demonstration will be given.

One proof of existence of the void is that its existence and non-existence are equivalent.

Since there no beings in the void, there are no laws of the void.

Therefore, every possible being must emerge from the void.

The universe is the realization of possibility.

(It must be the greatest consistent possibility.)

This conclusion is named the *fundamental principle of metaphysics*.

If manifest, the universe must enter a void phase—and, so, the universe must alternate between manifestation and the void.

The universe is eternal and limitless in extension and variety of being.

### Heuristic argument

These conclusions may violate the ‘common sense’ of people whose sense of reality is defined by common experience and the secular-scientific paradigm in which it is science that defines the limits of the real.

Let us therefore give heuristic reasons that, though they do not constitute proof, do show reasonableness.

It is important to remember that though the heuristic arguments are not certain, certain proof has already been given. The purpose of the heuristics is to supplement the proof with reasonable explanation.

#### The limit of natural science

The currently accepted theories at the forefront of physics—as of 2022—are (i) general relativity and the big bang cosmology (ii) quantum field theory and the standard model for subatomic particles.

The science shows (to imperfect if great precision, of course) what is there but not what is not there.

The real as defined by common experience and science is a pragmatic reality, to which we ought to subscribe and which we ought to follow for pragmatic purposes. But those purposes are themselves local and the gap between the pragmatic and the absolute, in absence of knowledge of it, may be without limit. This is good reason to hold judgment on the extent of the gap while investigating it; but now that we have shown it limitless, pragmatic judgment is seen to have only local purchase.

Since the two theories above do not fit together, it is widely felt that we have not arrived at a final theory. Suppose, however, that a unified field theory is obtained, would that constitute a final theory? Even on its own count, not necessarily—for its demonstrated purchase could not exceed the observed universe.

But now, if we had that unified theory, what might come next? That is unclear. But even that would not be demonstrated final… and just as we have a history of superseding theories, the future of science might be an unending sequence of more inclusive theories.

Is there no end to it?

Yes—logic is the final boundary. Logic is the boundary of the sequence of final theories, the theories of everything.

And what is more, while a physical theory of everything would be, as far as known, only a theory of physical everything (unless otherwise shown), logic is the boundary of the final theories of all kinds of everything.

But now we know, from the reasons in [the void](#_The_void), that logic is not just the boundary—it is the final theory of everything. With an appropriate extension of the forms of expression, the logics of the forms, would cover not just the sciences but art, literature, the humanities, philosophy, and all that the human and other minds and hearts can be.

#### A heuristic on the existence of the void

The universe must be either (i) eternally in a manifest state or (ii) sometimes in a void state. If the latter, then it is a property of the void that something (‘all things’) must emerge. Therefore, the universe must sometimes be manifest. This resolves the philosophical problem of why there is anything at all. Further, from the properties of the void, (ii) would imply that the universe must phase between manifest and void. We conclude that the universe either (a) is eternally manifest or (b) eternally phases between manifest and void states. Note that this is proof, not mere heuristic.

But now the argument may be heuristically extended. Even on #1 above the void exists for it is there (a) beside everything else or (b) since it is the complement of everything with respect to itself. The argument is of course heuristic but given the argument it would follow that the void exists and therefore that the universe is the realization of logic.

### Proof

There is a range of conceptions, kinds, and methods of proof. A main conception of proof or argument is establishment of truth. However, what constitutes a good argument varies according to endeavor and culture and has varied over history. Inductive proof is establishment of what is reliably true, and it is typical that a ‘truth’ established inductively may need revision. Deductive argument is establishment of certain truth—typically certainly true initial ‘facts’ or premises, and deduction which is truth preserving. There is a range of well known ‘logics’ classed according to form of expression—the logic of propositions in which the form of the proposition has no role in deduction, the predicate calculi in which predicates and quantifiers do feature in deduction. Modal logics are those in which truth itself is qualified, e.g., possible truth and necessary truth. The logics so far are topic neutral. Then there are variant logics and logics that are not topic neutral, which we shall not detail here.

1. The variant logics, e.g., multivalued logics in which truth may have more than just its classical values of ‘true’ and ‘false’ and topical logics, e.g., temporal logics may be treated later.

Here, there are these concerns. (i) Are our logics exhaustive, e.g., are there other useful forms of symbolic expression and, while it is convenient, ought we limit expression to the symbolic? (ii) What is the wide perspective role of proof in the human endeavor, and in the cultural disciplines of the abstract and concrete sciences? What attitude ought we to take to proof if proof-based progress should halter? Though we ought not abandon proof we may seek adjuncts—hypotheses, intuition, imagination, ‘child’s play’, physical and computer experiment, hypothesis—formal and existential, taking a stand vs being perceptive, direct exploration…

### Metaphysics

Metaphysics will at first conceived as knowledge of the real.

Though this has been regarded as problematic by Plato and, in the modern era, at least since the British Empiricists and Immanuel Kant, the arguments above, in their form in the main text, show that there is some true metaphysical knowledge.

The aim in the in this work is to extend and develop metaphysical knowledge.

Before continuing with the main development, let us consider two elementary but useful examples of metaphysical knowledge.

#### The creation

In consideration of the concept-object named ‘the universe’, it was shown in the section on ‘[the universe](#_The_universe)’, that there is and can be no act of creation of the universe.

This cuts through significant vagueness regarding the issue of creation; the distinction between creation, origins, and reasons of or for being; and reflection on the nature of the universe—eternal or of limited duration. The latter clarification occurs because reasons for existence are themselves eternal but it remained, in [the universe](#_The_universe), to discover reasons and whether they are necessary or contingent—this was done in [the void](#_The_void).

It was made possible by an abstract definition of ‘the universe’, which makes no reference to the contents of the universe and thus avoids the problematic issue of the idea of ‘all objects’ without reference to any specification of the collection of objects (one form of this issue is the problem of ‘unrestricted predication’).

#### Form and change

As an example of necessary metaphysics, being over and above the void must have form, for without form there would be no in-formation. That there is experiential being implies that there is change, for experience is experiencing.

Thus, form and change are conditional upon basic characteristics of being.

However, are form and change unconditionally necessary?

Form and change would be unconditionally necessary if and only if experiential being were unconditionally necessary. However, while it is a fact that there is experiential being, it is difficult to see how experiential being is unconditionally necessary without the considerations of the earlier section on [the void](#_The_void).

However, from the section on [the void](#_The_void), experiential being is necessary in all phases of the universe but the void phases (while this was only suggested in the section on [the void](#_The_void), we observed in that section that it would be demonstrated in the main body of the work). Thus—

Change and form are unconditionally necessary.

Observe that form is necessary only in non-void phases of the universe, but change is necessary to all phases (there may sub-phases of stasis, but such phases would be devoid of intrinsic significance).

### Possibility

#### Possibility and its kinds

Given a concept, it is possible if existence of the object is not ruled out.

In the following, logical possibility is placed first because the other kinds presume it—e.g., whatever is naturally possible is also logically possible, but the logically possible need not be naturally possible.

The order of the sections after the one on logical possibility is based on ease of understanding rather than inclusivity.

#### Logical possibility

If existence is not ruled out by the form of the concept, the kind of possibility is logical.

#### Natural and scientific possibility

If not ruled out by the nature of the domain or world under consideration, the kind is natural. Natural possibility presumes logical possibility (the logically impossible cannot be natural). Scientific possibility is the natural possibility for our cosmos. Physical, chemical, and biological possibility are examples of natural possibility.

#### Sentient possibility

What may be achieved by sentience and its designs is sentient possibility (experiential possibility). On our account of experience, sentient possibility is natural possibility, but I place it in a separate section to emphasize its importance.

While what may be achieved by sentience is natural, what may be achieved by its design is often thought of as artificial rather than natural. However, that distinction is dependent on a narrow meaning of ‘natural’.

#### Mathematical possibility

Mathematical possibility began historically as a kind of natural possibility, was transformed in its historical development to a kind of symbolic possibility, is seen by some thinkers as possibility for ideal kinds of worlds—perhaps as the physics (plural) of some worlds, but will be transformed, under the real metaphysics, again, into, at least in interpretation, as ultimate natural possibility.

#### Metaphysical and ontological possibility

Since the universe according to the real metaphysics is the realization of what is logically possible, metaphysical possibility and logical possibility are identical.

However, the term ‘metaphysical possibility’ is used in another sense. Recall the two arguments in [experience and the world](#_Experience_and_the) that the world is not the experience of a single experiencer. One was that the world is more complex than the experience of a single (ordinary) experiencer. The second was that the structure of experience is built up from shared experience. These arguments were not logically necessary and therefore not metaphysical arguments in the sense we are using ‘metaphysics’. But they are not just arguments from our world as we experience. They are more general and would obtain for a broad class of worlds—the [robust worlds](#_Robust_worlds).

Whenever there are situations that are logically indistinguishable, we might use our pragmatic knowledge of our world to make a pragmatic distinction. However, to make a metaphysical distinction of the kind just described may be more satisfying in that it approaches logical distinction closer than the argument from just our world.

That is the significance of metaphysical possibility in the second sense described here. It is not the most general notion of metaphysical possibility—which we might call ontological possibility—but it is possibility based on further very general but robust considerations to make distinctions that apply not only to our world but also to a range of robust worlds and are therefore more satisfactory than the merely pragmatic when applied to our world.

Metaphysical possibility (in the second sense) is a kind of conceptual possibility that is more restrictive than logical possibility but is conceived so as to apply to classes of robust worlds.

#### The importance of the concept of possibility

The importance of the concept of possibility here includes (i) as part of the foundation for development of the real metaphysics (ii) as unifying logic, science, and mathematics.

#### Empiricism and rationalism in logic, science, and mathematics\*

But logic and mathematics are commonly regarded as axiomatically and perhaps rationally founded, with their realism, if any, in their reference to an abstract world. On the other hand, science is seen as concrete, empirically founded, and realism in the world of the concrete. How, then, may they be seen as unified? It may be seen thus—

There is one world or universe. Our concepts are abstract to the degree that they omit detail that is essentially distorted. Thus, the concrete and the abstract are not different kinds of real—there is no concrete world is distinct from an abstract world. Logic is the requirement on concepts—forms of expression—to be realizable at all. Its form is rational, but it is empirical over the realizability of concepts—the relation between concepts and objects for the realizability of the objects. Logic stands over the requirements of concepts to be realizable in the world owing to particular characteristics or special contexts. These requirements make up science when the contexts are concrete and mathematical when the contexts are abstract. But the abstract and the concrete are not different worlds and thus mathematics and science are the same endeavor at root. But since mathematics is abstract, its formulation is effectively symbolic and axiomatic, while it is empirical in its discovery in symbolic and axiomatic terms, which give it its power, its applicability, and its difficulties in grounding. It is not that concreate reality plays no role in the discovery of mathematics—the mathematician may use intuition, physical and numerical experiment, but these are suggestive rather than definitive of the mathematics. Science, on the other hand, because it is concrete, is studied empirically in direct relation to the world; but it is also rational in the formulation of its theories, where axiomatic formulation may be efficient but is not as close to being essential as it is in mathematics. Again, however, experiment is suggestive of theories, not definitive. Perhaps logical and mathematical systems may be overturned, but this, if true, would, on account of the abstraction, be far less likely than in science. The advance of logic and mathematics, at present, seems to be primarily in new modes of expression and new theories.

#### Logic, science, and mathematics as one

In this section logic, science, and mathematics will be shown to be one (umbrella) activity. We begin without the presumption of the fundamental principle (the universe is the realization of logic).

Logic is the restriction on concepts for their realization at all (in some world).

Science with its theories is a system of high-level concepts (laws and theories) over facts or data or percepts that are low level concepts. That is, our theories of science are theories of realizability in our world. If there are other worlds (note that we are suspending the fundamental principle for a moment), then the theories of the sciences would be the theories for realization in the particular worlds.

In terms of our present understanding, mathematical systems can be seen as theories of realizability in abstract worlds that are allowed under logic. Note that this does not involve a Platonism that says that mathematical systems are theories of some (perhaps ideal) world—it says just that the systems can be seen that way.

But now, under the fundamental principle—the universe as the realization of logic—given that mathematical systems and scientific theories presume logic, it follows that logic-mathematics-science can be seen as the collection of conceptual systems that are realized in and define all the worlds.

#### The abstract and concrete sciences

That is, while logic and mathematics are commonly seen as abstract and the sciences as concrete, there is no real or true abstract-concrete distinction.

Rather, they can all be seen as ‘science’, but with different modes of study. The mode of study for logic and mathematics is abstract, while for the conventional or concrete sciences it is concrete.

And from our new perspective, they are all rational in being conceptual, but all empirical in that they are studied as relations among concepts. Logic is studied the requirement on realizability of concepts in some world, mathematics as realizability in a symbolic world (which, from FP, means realizability in a real world), and science as realizability of high level – low level concept systems in some world.

We may regard metaphysics, logic, and mathematics as abstract sciences (indeed the distinction among them is not ontological), and the conventional sciences as concrete. And, indeed, there are here no ontological distinctions. The distinctions are rather level of detail and mode of study.

The ideas of abstract and concrete objects do not constitute an ontological distinction; the distinction is in the way we apprehend them. So long as we do not experience the entire universe—and while in limited form we do not for that is part of the nature of being limited—our study of some parts of it must be purely in terms of symbolically expressed concepts (even if suggested by concrete and intuitive example).

#### Necessity

An object is necessary according to a kind, e.g., logical and physical, if its non-existence is ruled out.

#### Another proof of the fundamental principle

Whatever is eternal, is necessary (in time).

The universe—the manifest and the non-manifest—is eternal.

The universe—the manifest and the non-manifest—is necessary.

Either the manifest or the non-manifest is necessary (where ‘or’ has the inclusive meaning of ‘one, the other, or both’).

(This necessity is not relative to some state of being—it is relative to the being or non-being of the universe. In this sense, it is absolute necessity.)

At least one of the manifest and the non-manifest is necessary.

If either the manifest or the non-manifest were the only one of the two that were necessary, it would violate the symmetry of absolute necessity.

The universe must phase between the manifest and the non-manifest.

In an argument similar to that above, a restriction of the actual states of the universe to anything less than the logically possible, would violate the symmetry of absolute necessity. Therefore—

The universe is the realization of logic.

### Limitlessness

The universe will be said to be limitless if the only limit on realization is logic.

And a logic will be defined in terms of some form of conceptual expression.

But our logics, even where they are true, are by no means the only logics. For (i) we almost certainly do not know all symbolic forms of expression and (ii) almost certainly, the symbolic forms, though very convenient and relatively susceptible to explicit rigorous analysis, are not the only forms of expression (that they are effectively all the forms of expression may have some support but is shown false under the real metaphysics).

Thus, logic and the real metaphysics which is grounded in logic are an open adventure.

### The real metaphysics

#### The ideal

From existence of the void and otherwise it is shown and given heuristics that the universe is limitless.

It follows that the universe has identity and that the universe, and its identity are limitless in variety, form, and change (extension and duration—i.e., the universe is eternal and unbounded), peak, and dissolution of being—e.g., the universe is more than limitless arrays of cosmoses with limitless physical laws, it is all that, and more, in transient contact with the void.

The universe of experience is without limit.

The limit of death is real but not absolute.

The individual inherits the limitlessness of the universe. Individuals merge in peak being.

While in limited form, we are an endless and open adventure.

Beings are simultaneously limited and limitless and that limitlessness is the transcendent peak (Brahman), while the limited self is Atman.

But this knowledge does not give us a way of the adventure.

We know it but do not experience it directly (yet).

#### The pragmatic

Our experience, our science, our valid tradition are points of contact with and instruments of negotiation of the real that is shown by the ideal.

They are limited, but in terms of negotiation of the world, they are what we have.

They may improve, but yet fall short of the ideal of perfection.

#### The real

But the ideal metaphysics reveals an ultimate. It also shows that in our limited form our experience, science, and valid tradition are our best instruments.

The ideal illuminates and directs the pragmatic; the pragmatic illustrates and directs process toward the ideal; yet they are one—for the abstract is immanent in the concrete and part of it, and the concrete is the filling out of the ideal. The ideal reveals a highest value, peak being, for which the concrete-pragmatic is the way. The ideal shows a goal—the goal of the highest value; the concrete—together with its negotiation—supplies pathways. Together, and in terms of this ideal, the join of the ideal and the concrete perfect—and this perfect system is named the real metaphysics.

The real metaphysics closes the problem of depth in foundation and supplies an approach to the issue of breadth but leaves the discovery and realization of breadth ever open. While breadth is ever open to beings while in limited form, it is potentially to be completed in action. For limited beings, knowledge and action are interwoven—are not distinct even as concepts. I.e., to regard knowledge and action as fully distinct, approximates their true nature.

This does not negate our tradition of philosophy, science, logic, and mathematics and their particular values but places them in context. For example, while the real metaphysics dissolves many issues of the tradition of epistemology, the dissolution is in the realm and context of the real metaphysics. That realm is the realm of the universal and the immediate in its relation to the universal. But there is a purely local realm, perhaps a realm defined by choice rather than the real, in which the problems of epistemology will continue to have significance.

#### Joy and Pain

It may seem incongruous to consider joy and pain under metaphysics, but feeling is not divorced from cognition and to consider a metaphysics separate from feeling is to have that metaphysics not be about the real.

The paths must have feeling of quality particularly enjoyment and pain. The best enjoyment and the best address of pain are for those who can do so, to be on a path. But to be on a path is not just to follow but to share in its discovery and realization, which are moved by feeling of form, particularly cognition.

As noted in [sources of the way](#_Sources_of_the), “… pain and fear are essential aspects of being, though imperfect in their function—and some imperfection is due to ignorance. Therefore, pain, material pain and existential fear, is an opportunity for knowledge, for closer contact with the real and resolution of the imperfection that arises out of ignorance”.

Joy and pain—kinds of feeling—are discussed in [sources of the way](#_Sources_of_the) and [some basic varieties of experience](#_Some_basic_varieties). Let us now take the discussion further. Nothing here is a suggestion that one should not seek therapeutic relief from pain or cultivate joy directly.

We know what pain is—it is information that something is amiss. But what of useless pain—the pain of advanced cancer? The mechanism is not perfect.

Setting aside the external conditions, and except if intolerable, pain and fear are an opportunity. In trying to just feel and neither reject nor judge, we avoid the cycle of escape, which escalates pain and the fear of pain and of fear. And more, even though it is not ‘perfect’ we miss the chance to be real—to just be with the reality of fear rather than in struggle with it.

What is joy? Let us think that its nature is revealed in living rather than defined in advance except to say, simply, that it is a positive feeling. Should we cultivate it? How? How might we balance our joy with our process? Perhaps the best is that joy which is a result of being on a proper path—the self in balance with the world, the immediate in balance with the ultimate, transience with permanence. It is often a tenuous balance; it may be a struggle. But to seek joy itself, rather than as part of process may destroy joy. Is there a place of equilibrium—of contentment? Let us just say that no promise is made; the process is a key.

Are not feeling and cognition to be regarded in balance? In the ideas of this section, they are already so.

Though the word ‘enjoyment’ has a root in ‘joy’, we may use it to refer to the appreciation of our states of experience.

### Metaphysics and its conception

In [metaphysics](#_Metaphysics_1), metaphysics was conceived as knowledge of the real—as knowledge of being.

Initially, doubt was cast on the possibility of such knowledge. However, knowledge of the real has been established as described above. Is it appropriate to give this the label ‘metaphysics’? Certainly, it is part of metaphysics. However, ontology—knowledge of being—would seem to be a more precise label.

This leaves over various activities that have traditionally been labeled ‘metaphysics’ (see [topics in metaphysics](#_Topics_in_metaphysics) and its subsections). But it can now be seen that this material as well as [ethics](#_Ethics) and [cosmology](#_Cosmology) may be brought under what have just labeled ontology.

The concept of metaphysics as study of the real has been given good reasons.

That might seem to exhaust all knowledge, but it does not for there is still much left over to study in terms of traditional criteria of epistemology, science, and aesthetics. But that material is labeled ‘metaphysics’, neither here nor in the traditions of metaphysics.

However, it has been shown that the study of the real has universal range.

In the language of Immanuel Kant, the noumena are revealed to a significant degree by the phenomena and inference from the phenomena. In an extended sense of the term ‘noumena’, even the pragmatic phenomena are noumenal.

### Attitudes in the face of continuing doubt

From the magnitude of the conclusions of and from the existence of the void, we ought to continue to doubt the real metaphysics. And some persons will continue to doubt it anyway. I do. Doubt is healthy—if held together with commitment.

But it is important to note that the existence of the void and therefore the real metaphysics are consistent with all experience, which includes all science and reason.

Therefore, from the significance of the existence of the void and the fundamental principle, we may regard it as one or both of

1. A fundamental metaphysical postulate, and
2. An existential hypothesis or postulate as the basis of attitude and action. This would be more than merely ‘existential’, for the expected value of an outcome based on the postulate is higher than the alternative.

### Ethics

Ethics shall include all issues of axiology.

#### Universal

If enjoyment is a value, then being on a path to the ultimate is an imperative.

#### Local\*

Local ethics is ethics for local contexts.

There ought to be a balance between local and universal ethics.

The real metaphysics shows concretely what is to be balanced and suggests how the balance may be quantified, at least roughly, in principle, and by experience and correction.

The individual is being and is the first locus of being, action, and transformation.

In realizing limitlessness, the individual is the final place of being.

### Cosmology

Cosmology is the study of concrete detail and variety, which is instrumental on the way to the ultimate

### Realization

Realization is the way to and becoming peak being.

In limited form it is transitory.

There is a peak above all transitoriness.

It is a form of experience and seeing.

Meditation is the way of experience and seeing; physical realization and meditation are complementary.

### Reason

Immanuel Kant saw reason and understanding as components of knowing. Understanding is direct knowledge; reason is inference from direct knowledge.

Here, I use ‘reason’ as the two as one.

We have seen, above, how knowledge (content) and reason (process) emerge as one.

In the ideal they are one.

In the pragmatic we treat them as distinct, for while knowledge is about the world, reason is about—the means—of knowledge.

That is pragmatic. But even from that point of view, we see that reason is about the world, for knowledge is part of the world. Even in the pragmatic realm, knowledge and reason (and experiential and reflective action) are one.

### Instruments of reason

The essential instrument is being—individual beings thinking, feeling, acting, learning, both individually and in sharing.

Knowledge, reason, action, exploration, and being emerge together.

Culture encodes reason in its knowledge, logic, concrete and abstract sciences, and literature, art, history, the humanities which include philosophy. A detailed account is given in [a system of human knowledge](../resources/system%20of%20human%20knowledge%2C%20reason%2C%20practice%2C%20and%20action.html).

It is important to give good regard to the cultural [system](../resources/system%20of%20human%20knowledge%2C%20reason%2C%20practice%2C%20and%20action.html)(s). However, it is essential to see the systems in process, to see that there is no ultimate a priori, and for the individual and the group to be the intelligence, feeling, and body of discovery and realization.

Criticism is essential. It is a way of refinement of culture. However, we often regard our critical thought and paradigms too seriously, for (almost) every critical philosophy is based in limited paradigms. The overcoming seen in [the real metaphysics](#_The_real_metaphysics) would not have occurred if we had accepted the widespread default critical limits of our cultures. But it is also essential to see that the overcoming of the cultures, which are in some ways best expressions, is not to play a common fashionable game of ad hoc minimization. A way of transcendence begins with open immersion in the culture, where openness is perceiving rather than judging and judging is holding the range of judgments in perceptive balance rather than satisfying oneself with ‘taking a stand’. A time will come to take a stand, but it will emerge from reason and not the thought that taking a stand is inherently good.

While criticism is essential, imagination is even more so. For it is imagination that gives us ways forward, while criticism that helps select what may be good (experiment and action function as selection mechanisms as well).

Imagination is often as if a child’s play. There ought at times to be utmost freedom of thought. We are already critical enough. We will see, in the developments, how imagination has a central role in seeing what may be realized and then, via criticism in interaction with imagination, the likelihood and worth and means of realization.

# Metaphysics

## The aim of the way of being

If we consider the variety individual and collective human aims and achievements over history, it is not clear that is a single, coherent, higher aim or destiny (or that the words ‘higher’ and ‘destiny’ have significance).

One purpose of the division on metaphysics is to order our understanding of the world so as see the many activities as part of a single higher aim. It is a part of this purpose that individuals should be able to see their lives as part of that aim and to be able take part in the way of being—

The aim of the way of being is shared discovery and realization of the ultimate from and so far as possible in the immediate.

This will also be seen to be the aim of being.

Let us now turn to the development of a metaphysics, beginning with consideration of being and experience.

## Being and experience

On being and choice of being, that being is experiential and relational being, and world as interpretation (allowing but not requiring existence of the void and its implication that the universe is the realization of possibility)

## Introduction—on metaphysics

Continues study of being—explicitly as metaphysics.

The concept of metaphysics used here, its possibility in principle and by construction so far, and possibility by construction of extension to ultimate knowledge of the universe as ultimate.

## Possibility, logic, science, and method

## The real metaphysics

Its development

Application to experience as real, universe as field of being, the nature of being, the ultimate, and realization.

## Ethics

The arrangement and heading level of this and the remain sections under metaphysics is open.

## Cosmology

## Topics in metaphysics

## A system of human knowledge

# Realization

## The aim of being

## Means

1. Will include the real metaphysics, reason, and action.

## Path templates

## Resources

# Into the world

## To step into the world

## Past, present, and future as one

## Renewal

~~The way has developed pathways to the ultimate. It provides vision. If, as may happen, one’s perspective becomes dulled, it is an occasion for renewal in the ways of being.~~

1. The section develops ways of renewal and sustenance and a time frame for renewal.