

Is Human Reality an Illusion??

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Recently, I have written two essays, “The Fundamental Human Problem – Perceptual Limitation” and “Justifying the Spiritual – Unification Perspective on Self and Reality.” Both of these documents support the proposition that reality is totally connected and integrated to the point of a single entity and identity. While we humans are included in and defined by this unified reality, we exist and conduct ourselves as if the tiny portion of reality that we perceive in fact constitutes Reality. This peek-a-boo reality to which we are committed is what we refer to as the material/objective reality reflecting the material/objective perspective. This perspective assumes that reality is made up of massive numbers of independent, discrete entities which relate to one another in terms of rules/laws that we can identify through independent scientific investigation. The problem is that there is little justification for asserting that discreteness exists in a totally connected and integrated reality. Discreteness only seems to be justified when we credit our extraordinarily limited human perceptual capabilities as being sufficient. But, since all of our cognitive processes depend on our perception, and since all of our behavior depends on the combination of our perception and our cognitive functions, we humans remain mostly confined to our material-discreteness conception of self and reality.

If, in fact, there is no discreteness, then the material perspective that informs all human worldviews is inaccurate at a fundamental level, and all humans are living an illusion. Paradoxically, this is a successful illusion because all other species on Earth participate in this same illusion, and because all species have evolved within the confines of this illusion. But it is still an illusion! The further irony is that it is our science, which is based on the investigation of our assumed material reality, that has advanced to the point of revealing this illusion.

What do we do as creatures of this ongoing and comprehensive illusion? We must start by recognizing the insurmountable dilemma of our situation. There is no escape; we have to live within it. But respecting this inherent condition, we nevertheless can restrain our “abuse” of what are really the “other parts” of us – at a minimum, one another and the other species on the planet. We must become much more respectful, responsible “takers.” No surprise, this is what our alternative perspective on self and reality – the spiritual-unification perspective – teaches us. Unfortunately, modern complex societies have largely abandoned this lesson as they have peripheralized the spiritual-unification point of view as well as many of the “vehicles” that transport humans to the unification experience.