

Shaping Patterns

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1 To Begin

The path of a life can be traced in many ways: time (events), space (places), or agents (critters). The track of some lives shows a fundamental effect of Good, others of Evil. How to build a life that will produce a trace of Good or Evil? How to know the effects of choices on the track of your life? How to ensure a track of success given the unknown nature of the future? These questions are the basis of most religion and philosophy, which deal with how to judge the track of a life, not construct it. Here is an attempt to describe a Path to construction; a Path that leads to tools that can construct a life of Good or Evil, success or failure, as the builder sees fit.

This is not a how-to manual. There is no language to completely describe the patterns of Reality, which form the building blocks of a life; attempts to describe specific patterns require more information than the pattern itself. Instead, this document is a description of a way to enable one to find the patterns alone, and then discover how to alter the patterns. Morality is not covered here, and does not play a role in the patterns or their alteration. Alter patterns only as you must, and do only Good, but who can define the Good?

Since there is no language to describe the patterns, or the means of alteration, this document is a collection of words to try to define the beginning of a Path, and some steps along it. Examples would have no meaning to others, as no language can capture the totality of an event, place, or agent. Just as a disciple must reach Enlightenment from within, so must the patterns be learned and altered from within. The Path presented here is only one of many; other paths lead to the same end, and are valid.

Learn the patterns, and the altering of them, and receive a power that is often only dreamt; the ability to build a life of your choosing. Use the power wisely, for death and despair await a student condemned by poor choices. No matter your skill and might, there will always be those better, faster, stronger, and they will defend the Good.

2 Order in the Chaos

Start with two basic concepts: order and chaos. Order imposes structure and stasis. Chaos destroys structure and imposes change. Correctly balanced, chaos and order result in a system that will maintain itself, but can change when necessary: an adaptable, evolving system with self-repair.

2.1 Views of Reality

Order and chaos are the basis of a way to view the world. A view that allows for construction and maintenance of a happy life. It is not the only view, nor is it more “correct” than another view. This view is powerful, as it provides a framework to see and create stability and change where desired. Ensuring that desire creates a Good world is beyond the hope of any view of the world; that can only be done by the agents themselves.

2.2 Order Leads to Patterns

Order is not hard to see, but it can be hard to understand. No one can start from a set of axioms and work out the order of the world. Instead, assume that the order exists, and look for the patterns that are created by the interplay between order and chaos. There is no need for a mathematical type of certainty, so long as the Path works, absolute truth is irrelevant.

Patterns can be seen across space, time, and agents. They can be seen in the laws of sciences, and in the reactions of people. Patterns, once found, can be used to predict the next microsecond, hour, or millenium. Predictions, depending on the underlying patterns, can be very general or very specific; this does not dilute their power.

2.3 Four Steps Along a Path to Construction

The first step along this path is to acknowledge that the patterns exist. Second, to find the simple patterns all around. Third, to link the simple patterns to the greater ones. The final step is to alter the patterns. Master the first three steps, and you will never be surprised. Master the last step, and you will never be defeated.

3 Finding Patterns

3.1 Start small

Patterns occur everywhere. Finding them is simple: watch. Watch the world in an active sense. Watch what happens. Watch how things move, change, and interact. Watch how people, critters, and other agents move and interact. Accumulate these observations, and extract the patterns. This is automatic, if you allow it. Minds are incredible pattern machines; they extract and match patterns from the staggering array of observations (with all senses) fed to them. Concentrate on the watching, pay attention to environments with all senses, and the patterns will be found without effort. Do not expect to be able to voice the patterns, for they exist as encodings in the structure of the mind, not as words or conscious thoughts.

3.2 Scale up

As patterns are found, they will be encoded into working knowledge. Larger and larger patterns, with modifications for special cases, will be built over time. As similar patterns begin to recur, the mind will match the patterns and outcomes will feel inevitable, boring. There will be less and less surprise as the patterns grow. Over years, this will remove much of the fear and uncertainty of life, as the flow of events and agents becomes like a river on a map - the direction and outcome are known, even if every rapid and pool is not seen until just before they hit. With experience, the rapids and pools become part of the patterns, and you will always have the resources to handle the obstacles.

Surprise is never totally lost, for patterns change through space and time. Old patterns are reshaped into new, and novel patterns emerge from the complex system that is Reality. Accept the surprises of the future as you

review the patterns of the past. Revise your patterns as Reality shifts, and soon enough the changes will themselves form patterns of patterns. Above all, do not fear to look for patterns everywhere and in everything; patterns and change exist at all scales.

3.3 Listen for Matches

When the patterns become encoded, and the mind can match future to current, and current to past, there comes a time when the mind reacts without conscious thought. Concerns, actions, and plans come unbidden; follow them. Listen to the inner knowledge that *knows* things, without an explanation for how it knows. Such knowledge stems from the matching of patterns you no longer (if ever) consciously see. Pattern matching will inform decisions great and small; a sense of rightness or wrongness will be felt for the choices available. Pick the Right Choice, and success will follow.

With the recognition of the patterns comes also the ability to see life-altering decisions. Some decisions are always seen large (which university to attend); others appear small until the patterns sound a warning (a word in a single phrase in a single conversation). At the start, it can take time to spin out the ramifications of choices. As patterns resolve and the Path is followed, decisions come faster, until life-altering decisions can be made in fractions of a second with a sudden flash of insight into the decision's importance, and which of all possibilities is the Right Choice.

Ignore such insight at your peril.

3.4 Special Attention for People

Pay special attention to the patterns of people. People are the most significant agents in Reality, and their patterns hold the most complexity and power. Understand these patterns, and you will begin to recognize people you have never met; a single, brief introduction will suffice to know most of a person's personality and capabilities. Individual histories always take time to learn, but the outcome of that history (the pattern of the person), can be broadly recognized in seconds. Refinement of a person's pattern can take a lifetime.

3.5 Beware Stagnation

A warning: **never stop learning new patterns or rebuilding old ones.** Ever. There is an infinity of patterns, and patterns shift through time and space. Do not ever assume that the first pattern impression will be the last; static patterns are deadly. This is especially true of people; stereotypes (patterns) allow enormous information to be encoded in a single entry, but never restrict a person from moving beyond a stereotype; individuals have a unique pattern that is a blend and modification of larger, fuzzier patterns from the whole population.

4 Altering Patterns

4.1 Creation of a Pattern

Patterns are created by the interplay of order and chaos. They are, therefore, altered in the same way. The trick is to know how to control the interplay. Actions, thoughts, and intentions control the interplay and balance of order and chaos.

Alter patterns as little as possible, to minimize the unintentional consequences. Expanding ripples of consequence can destabilize any complex system; therefore, keep the ripples small by applying only the smallest changes, and allowing consequences to die down between changes.

4.2 Shape Formation

Begin with looking for how patterns form. This will only make sense once patterns have been seen, and encoded into working knowledge. Once pattern formation is seen (heard, felt, smelled, etc.), experiment with altering the formation of new patterns. Speak differently, act differently, think differently, and see how the forming patterns change.

The altering of a forming pattern is the easiest, and hence the place to start on the final step of the Path. Once you know how to alter forming patterns with speech, action, and thought, the way is prepared to begin altering existing patterns. This is much harder, as existing patterns can rarely be modified instantly, but must rather be guided to new shapes over time.

4.3 Pay Attention, the Abyss is Near

Be aware that in some cases, thought alone can wreak irreversible changes on patterns. There may not be range limits on this. There may not be power limits on this. Larger or simpler patterns are stable and hence change by slow evolution. Complex, new, or small patterns can be altered, erased, and created by thought at all scales.

Be careful, for shaping patterns is the edge of the Abyss; death and worse could follow failure or foolishness.

5 To End

At the end of this Path, patterns are known and shaped to the desire of the student. The desire of the student is shaped by knowledge of the Good. Thus, a Good life is constructed from the raw material (events, places, and agents) of Reality.

Although presented as a Path of four steps, there is no clear distinction among the steps. While learning there are patterns, learn to shape them. While learning to shape patterns, learn existing patterns. Many, perhaps most, sentient critters learn only the first steps of this Path, and never learn to shape patterns. They cannot build their life, and are doomed to an existence shaped by “random chance” – events controlled by others, not by them.

You are a sentient critter; see the patterns, shape them, and build a Good life.

6 Appendix: Notes on Some Phenomena

6.1 Deja Vu

The recognition, typically in a brief flash of “memory”, of the already-predicted outcome of a pattern as it happens. Occurs as a result of recognizing a temporal pattern sub-consciously, and then recognizing the repeated outcome consciously. Ranges from unknown to common, depending on the scale and frequency of repeated temporal patterns. Not to be feared, and an indication of pattern recognition.

6.2 Consistent Good and Bad Fortune

Outcomes believed unlikely, but occurring in anomalously high abundance for random chance. Result of alteration of probability distributions by tweaking of forming patterns; small changes in pattern formation yield large changes in the resulting outcome probabilities. Also works to create poor luck. Origin of ability to produce your own luck, and the basic skill for constructing life. Indication of pattern shaping.

6.3 Fate or other Bizarre Sequences

Often regarded as evidence of divine will or plan. Easily explained as outcome of patterns shaped during formation or evolution. Random chance is sometimes invoked, and explains some occurrences. More occurrences than estimated for a random distribution, indicating a shifting of probabilities due to shaping. A more extensive version of the basic skill for building life, which can be more readily discerned.

6.4 God and Morality

This Path does not deny God, nor does it affirm it. God, morality (what is Good), or the opposites thereof are not part of this Path. This Path is a way to a toolkit for constructing life. The origin of the toolkit, Reality, and Good are larger questions than this Path can address. Tools take on the morality and purpose of the critter that wields them. Wield these tools well.

6.5 Plans and How to Ignore Them

Plan for the future. Modify the plan when it is actually implemented. Planning is essential, but plans are useless. Planning provides an opportunity to check the forming patterns of Reality, and ensure that you have the resources to modify them as you need. Plans inhibit freedom, and cause failure. Do not fear tossing a plan when the patterns shift, as they will from moment to moment. Revise and replace plans as the patterns shift; never stop planning, as plans will always be outdated before they can be used.

6.6 Shaping with Thought

This can be done, or at least shifts concurrent in space, time, and intent with thoughts can be recongnized. This is an art, with no way to relay the details, for language is inadequate. Start by removing the distinction between yourself and Reality – extend your will into Reality. Use your extended will to read the patterns and shape them. Do as little as necessary, and most attempts will (appear to) fail.

6.7 Teach Others for Fun and Profit

Teach others to see the patterns, and shape them. Teaching must be done indirectly, by advising others when they need it. Advise them to adapt, to prepare, and to see the patterns. Use language suited to the student, not the teacher, and avoid abstraction unless the student is ready. Prepare a student, and the teacher gains an ally that multiplies power, allowing for greater control of the shifting patterns.

Do no avoidable harm to others, for eventually harm will be done to one who will respond with annihilation. Intentional, malicious harm will bring annihilation more quickly.