

IM JUST a BIT ToKed

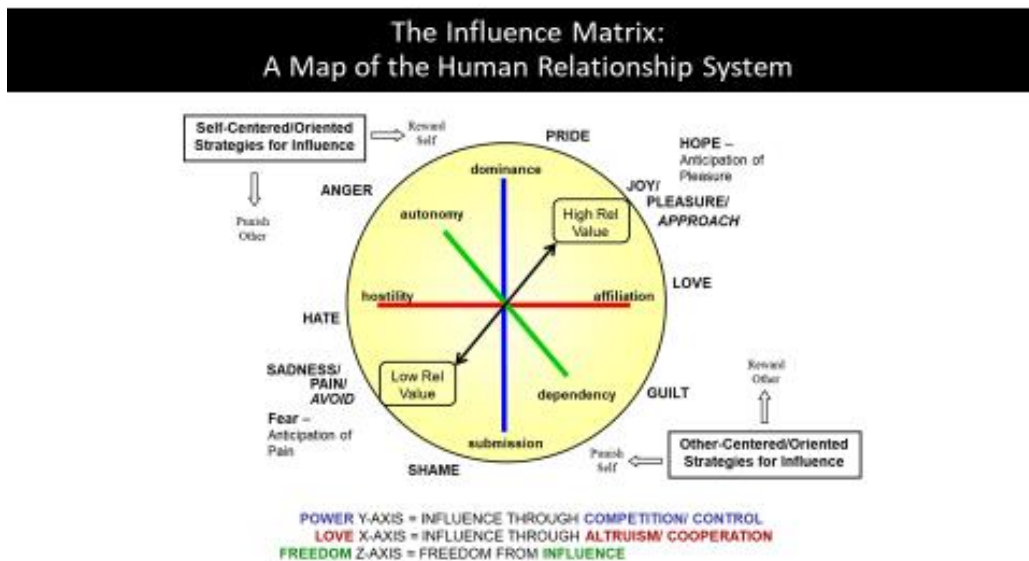
I am working on more user-friendly ways to help people understand the utility of the “unified theory” (or “framework” or “paradigm” or “philosophy” whatever the hell we want to call the sense-making system I developed 😊). In this essay I am trying to adopt the role of a “friendly educator and guide” so that you can learn to use the sense making frame as an “operating system” for being in the world and understanding science simultaneously.

So, let me ask you to start this little “sense making journey” by saying the sentence outloud: “IM JUST a BIT ToKed.” This sentence is an acronym that includes the four key pieces that together make up what I have called “the unified theory of psychology”. The unified theory is a system of thinking that: (a) clearly defines the science of basic and human psychology; (b) assimilates and integrates the major paradigms; (c) is organized to help guide the professional practice of psychological assessment, intervention, and consultation; and (d) builds clear and commensurate conceptual bridges between scientific knowledge about the world and humanistic ways of being in the world.

Here is what the sentence means:

The “IM” refers to the Influence Matrix. The IM is a map your “relationship system”. It lines up somewhat with what is called “attachment theory” in the world of psychology. Here, let it refer to your intuitive felt sense of being in the relational world. The center of this is your sense of *relational value and social influence*. This is represented and known as “the black line” or the “RV-SI” line on the Matrix. Relational value is your felt sense of being known and valued by important others. Social influence refers to the more instrumental sense that you have the social capital to be able to get others to act in accordance with your interests. The felt sense of self-in-relation-to-other can be assessed on three “process” dimensions, which refers to how you intuitively position yourself in relationship to others (the blue, red and green lines). The power dimension refers to how you position yourself in relationship to comparison and rank and dominance relative to submission or sense of inferiority. The love dimension refers to your sense of joining and affiliation and intimacy and belonging versus hostile separateness, divergent interests, and conflict. The freedom dimension refers to the degree to which you are engaged with others, and whether you feel a healthy balance of autonomy and interdependency or you are hyper-dependent (excessively enmeshed with the feelings and needs) or counter-dependent (isolating and pushing others away). This system has a bipolar dimension to it, in that it can be either “secure” or “insecure”. When secure, you feel comfortable, relaxed, open, curious and safe. That is, you feel known and valued and that your social interests and influence are at least “good enough” and not being threatened. “Insecure” means that you are perceiving threats and loss to either relational value or social influence. That is, you feel devalued, disrespected, ignored, rejected, controlled or some other “negative” relational dynamic. Your emotional world is largely colored by your current sensed placement in the relational world. When you feel known and valued in a good way, you feel joy, happiness or contentment. If it is a function of accomplishment, you feel pride. If it is because new connections are forming or are becoming deeper you feel love. In contrast, when your self is threatened unfairly by others, anger and irritation emerges. If you worry about being connected, you feel guilt that maybe you have done something wrong or selfish and want to repair that. If your deeper sense of being known and valued is threatened, then you will feel deep sadness, isolation, and alienation and anxious agitation. Core shame is the sense that one is worthless and deserves to be devalued. Rage is the destructive resentment that is oriented toward those who consistently devalue us. Your

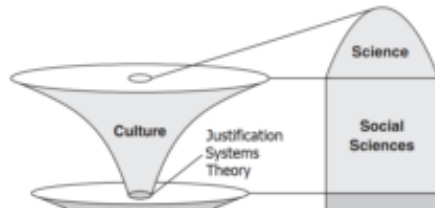
phenomenological self is most commonly organized predominantly by the IM. Your felt socio-emotional position in the world is, arguably, the center of psychological health and flourishing or psychoneurotic illness.



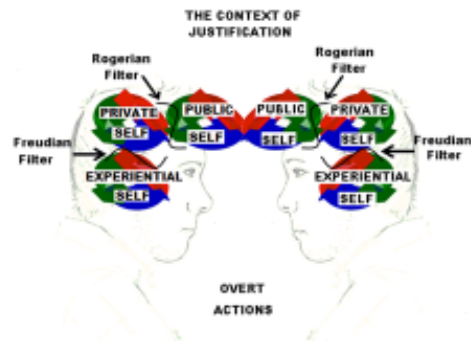
The Influence Matrix maps the human relationship system as an experiential “perceptual-motivational-emotional” guidance system that tracks relational value and social influence on the self-other process dimensions of power, love, and freedom.

JUST refers to Justification Systems Theory. This models your talking self. IM JUST captures the key dynamic feature of JUST, which is the fact that your talking self is structured as a system of justification. That is, it is a verbal sense-making system that attempts to narrate what is and what ought to be. IM JUST captures the idea that, in the social context, we strive to be “justified”. That is, we are just, good, right, smart human beings. Generally, people who challenge that, attack, judge, or are markedly different are bad, foolish and wrong. JUST explains the origins and design features of your “justifying interpreter system” via the Justification Hypothesis. This highlights that one of your central “games” as a person is that you develop the capacity to justify your actions on the social stage. Indeed, that is largely what it means to be a person. JUST also provides a map of human consciousness. First, there is the experiential IM self, the phenomenological felt experience of relational being described above. Second, there is the private narrator. This is the talking, verbal sense-making part that is most deeply connected to your “adult identity”. Third, there is the public self, which is the image and identity that you share with others in the social field. The last portion of JUST is that it provides a theory of human Culture. Culture is the “beliefs and values” part of society that coordinates its parts. It is the landscape of justification and the large scale systems of justification that coordinate p[people and legitimize the shared sense of what is real and what is good.

Justification Systems Theory and the Tripartite Model of Human Consciousness



JUST offers an updated tripartite model of human consciousness and maps the evolution of human Culture as large scale systems of justification, which evolved from social into formal modes of thinking, which ultimately produced modern scientific knowledge.

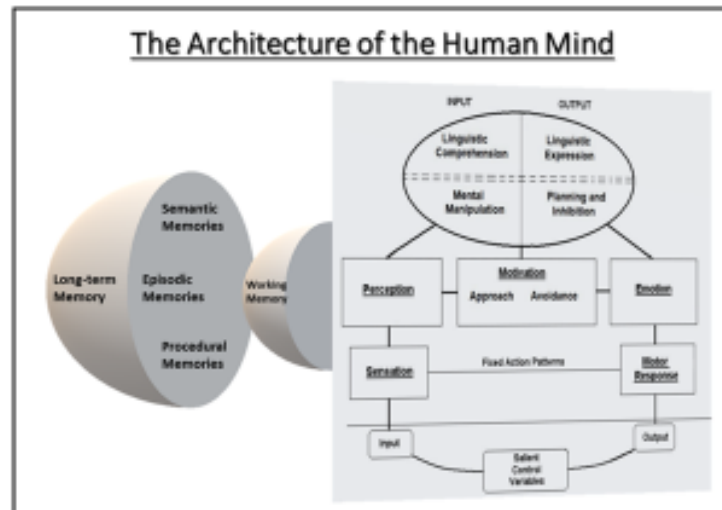


BIT refers to Behavioral Investment Theory. This is you in your “behaving body”. Think about how you get along in the environment in general. First, there is your remarkable ability to learn how to behave as a whole being, whether it is driving a car, or juggling or just walking. Your “procedural system” refers to all the motor-control talents you have. BIT also helps frame and explain your basic perceptual capacities, such as how you bring information through your senses and turn them into a perceptual “gestalt”. Your IM grows out of this system. If you can recall Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and you will remember that physiological and safety needs are “below” relational needs for belonging and self-esteem. This is the domain of hunger and thirst drives, drives for sex, for survival and the like. BIT is a “cognitive behavioral biophysical developmental systems” theory, meaning that it combines across the mind, brain, behavior and developmental basic psychological sciences to explain what can be called “animal-mental” behavior, which refers to how animals act in the world and how they think and feel. The key point about BIT is that it means that your body is an investment system that is directed toward goal states and away from injuries and is calculating that path of investment on an implicit system of cost-benefits. Consider, for example, when you park the car your car in a parking lot, you automatically calculate the “path of least resistance” (i.e., shortest distance, given obstacles) to the front door. Your body is an intuitive behavioral investor that is attempting to maximize functional gain, given costs, including possible threats and lost opportunities. BIT gives rise to the root of the capacity to experience the world, which is found in the feelings of pleasure and pain. These are nature’s signals to approach and do more of, or avoid and do less of. Your system learns, via association and consequences, how to build behavioral repertoires that become part of your procedural or habit system.

Behavioral Investment Theory and the Architecture of the Human Mind



BIT provides a cognitive functionalist account of animal-mental behavior that synthesizes the cognitive, behavioral, and neurosciences and places them on an evolutionary foundation.



It also gives rise to a four-layered model of the human mind.

ToKed refers to the ToK System. It refers to a big picture, scientific humanistic worldview. Most directly, ToKed is a theory of scientific knowledge. It is a theory of science as a behavioral theory of reality. That is, the ToK System says that science is the attempt to objectively describe the world by using methods that try to factor out biases caused by unique preferences and moral values. This is done by people and via processes of justification. Although all human knowledge systems are systems of justification (as defined by JUST), Science was a different kind of justification system for knowledge. It was systematic, adopted an “externalist” reliable and valid approach to determining truth statements about reality. That is, rather than focused on the formal coherence or internal foundations or social pragmatic utility or tradition, science adopted an “empirical” approach to knowledge. The hallmark of this empirical approach was that general models would be developed and then tested via data gathering and prediction to determine the correspondence between the model and the data, relative to other models of how the world might work. It is external in the sense that the models must be “public” and they must be based on data that is public. A central strength of the scientific method is that it worked to factor out the local and social biases that were “baked in” to other knowledge systems.

According to the ToK, the metaphysics of science can be accounted for via the following: (1) concepts that link to form models; (2) experience of being in the world; (3) empiricism and (4) behavior. The ToK posits that the concept of behavior links the experience of being in the world with empiricism. That is, behavior, experience, and empiricism are all concepts that link across the interior and the exterior worlds. And it is this link that allowed the kind of knowledge that science was to shift from prior conceptions of internalist and social systemic knowledge to externalist and objective knowledge.

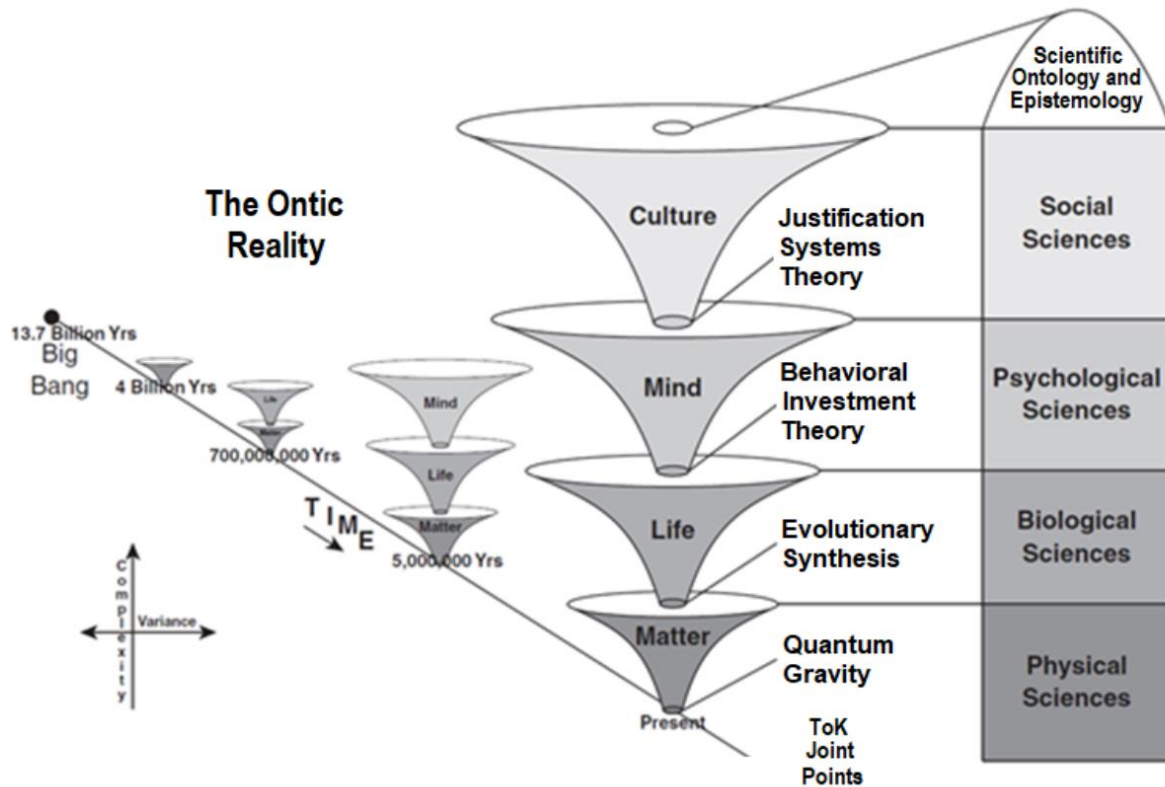
The scientific method is the process of building conceptual models of behavior, defined as changes in object-field relationships, and then corresponding that to the empirical observations. Note that the

word empirical evolves from experiences via the senses, to systematic methods of data gathering that are not dependent on idiographic subjective experiences, but can be collectively or publicly observed.

The idea of science is that this method produces the most justifiable relationship between “belief” and “reality”. Belief here refers to the scientific theories. More specifically, it refers to the scientific onto-epistemological process that builds scientific knowledge structures about the lawful, nomothetic patterns of reality. Reality refers to the ontically real, that which exists after all beliefs about it are removed. The ToK maps these relations. It maps the ontic reality on the left side of the diagram. It maps the emergence of science as a particular kind of justification system in the context of the evolution of culture. And it maps the idealized correspondence between the ontic reality and the macro onto-epistemological systematic organization and interlocking of scientific knowledge. In terms of how it might be of use to you, the ToK System offers a new map of the territory that perhaps can foster your understanding of both reality and science. What is new about this map is that it divides the universe into different dimensions of existence.

At one level, reality just exists and so any attempt to divide it up will be based on our human understanding and perspective. However, there are some maps that are better than others, and the ToK offers a new map of reality and our scientific knowledge about it. The ToK says that it can be highly useful to think about the human universe in terms of four different planes or landscapes of behavioral patterns.

If you have a family and a pet, consider the last time your family was having a conversation with your pet around. Let’s say your pet was a dog. According to the map provided by the ToK, the conversation you were having with your family d shared verbal understanding of reality exist on a plane of existence “above” the dog. The dog operates on the “animal-mental” dimension. What this means is that the dog mentally perceives the world and tracks the feelings and general group demeanor and engages socially, in terms of being attached to the family and responding to dominance and attachment cues. In other words, we can understand the behavior and experience of the dog via BIT and a relational model similar to the IM. However, the conversation about family dynamics, planning, and reflective choice exists at a meta-dimension relative to the dog. It would just be commonsense to say the meaning of the words and the nuances of the verbal exchange “go over” the dog’s head. To say this is to intuitively refer to dynamics from JUST and what the ToK depicts as the Culture-Person plane of existence.



We can be clear about this when we consider how you learned to operate on the Culture-Person plane. This emerged because you were “socialized”. That is, you grew up in a socio-linguistic environment and learned first to talk and then how to justify your actions on the social stage. As you matured into adolescents, that justification narrative self-control system evolved further and you became a self-reflective “agent” that could think about and cause your own actions. Infants, ants, dogs and monkeys all operate on Animal-Mental dimension, which is third dimension on the ToK that exists above Life. Life is the biological dimension of existence. It involves cells, plants and organ systems.

If you look around, you will experience yourself in the “physical world”. This is the world of three dimensions of space and one of time. The world of planets, rocks, rain and lightning bolts. Watching a storm roll in allows you to witness a complicated physical system. On the ToK, this is the Matter dimension of atoms and molecules at the small scale and of space, time and the universe at the large scale of galaxies. It is the fundamental stage upon which the complex adaptive behaviors at the Life, Mind, and Cultural planes of existence take place.

The ToK maps both the ontic reality of behavior on these dimensions and it maps our scientific “onto-epistemological” knowledge of theories of that reality in the form of physical, biological, psychological sciences.

One of the uses and advances of the ToK is that it offers us a new way to understand human psychology, both scientifically and humanistically. When speaking scientifically, we are referring to the laws or at least habits of nature. That is, the general patterns of cause and effect, and the best way to describe and explain those patterns from the vantage point of a general, third person observer.

As a unique, particular human being, you have a different point of view. You operate from the unique idiographic subjective perspective. All *your* knowledge comes in only through *your* senses and no one else's. Indeed, no one else can directly perceive your internal perceptions of the world. Think, for example of your dreams. Only you can know (assuming you remember) what you dreamt of. This is called the "epistemological gap" and a scientific humanistic philosophy must be one that accounts for it.

One of the advances of the unified paradigm for psychology is that it allows us new bridges between this gap. The reason it because it gives us a language system that allows us to conceptually line up the third person scientific with the first person humanistic and do so in a way that is accurate and can help us coordinate toward the future good.

And it is because of this that...

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