

Frameworks Uniting Science and Spirituality

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Preliminary Draft

We are witnessing the emergence of a new humanity, in which oneness, love, and peace will prevail. New paradigms are forming that redefine what it means to be human, clarify the true goal of life, offer new ways for humans to interrelate, and illuminate humanity's position within the cosmos. Although many people are attuned to this monumental transformation, the movement is currently only comprised of a tiny fraction of the world's population. But today's small number of buds will soon multiply to form millions of blossoms.

A major shift is absolutely necessary because humanity is trapped in a materialistic, technological world of its own making, one which is on the verge of collapse. Humanity's advancements are destroying natural habitats. Climate change threatens the continued existence of many species including our own. Social networks meant to unite the world are being used to spread lies and subtly sway individuals' minds. Younger generations are losing their ability to concentrate and to form healthy relationships, because they are constantly glued to smart phones and controlled by algorithms designed to capture every moment of their attention. Artificial intelligence poses both economic and existential threats. Intelligent machines capable of performing many types of jobs is likely to lead to massive unemployment. Machines that are more intelligent than humans challenge the very notion of what it means to be human. These and other existential challenges prompt the question: What does it mean to be human and what is the purpose of life?

Modern technology has so permeated our lives that it is impossible to live a normal life independent of it. Technologies ranging from electric lights, to televisions, automobiles, computers, and cell phones, have permeated our lives to such an extent that they have become indispensable; one cannot live a normal life in society without possessing them. Other technologies, such as jet planes, satellites, GPS, MRI's, and modern pharmaceuticals also add tremendous value to our daily existence. At the root of this amazing technological advancement lies scientific knowledge.

Our technological world is based upon science, and one cannot live in this world, use technology and then deny the realities of science. As a result, we believe in things we cannot see or personally understand. We take as fact the existence of molecules, atoms, electrons, and sub-atomic particles, despite the fact the average person has never seen any, nor do they understand the theories and mathematics which govern these particle's behavior and prove their existence. But because everyone sees and lives with the results of scientific progress, it is next to impossible to deny the truths which science asserts. A great amount of faith is placed in science and technology, even by those who deny particular theories of science for political reasons; even they believe in basic fundamental scientific truths.

Humanity's faith in scientific revelations has not only affected day to day living, but has also altered people's religious beliefs. Science has developed to such an extent that humanity can now act like the ancient gods. Humans can alter the makeup of life forms or even create new species through genetic engineering, a task previously assigned to the almighty God. Stem cell research promises the ability to regrow damaged organs. Whereas in the past, healing and faith were intertwined, today patients heal through surgery or pharmaceuticals. Nuclear energy brings the power of the sun down to earth. Men have walked on the moon, and satellites have traveled to distant planets. The sun, moon, and planets were once worshipped as deities, now they are places to explore. Science has enabled humanity to conquer the planets and act like the old gods.

Science has not only trampled on ancient gods, but also infringes on domains reserved in the past to the great religions of the world by offering explanations regarding the mysteries of life. Science has removed the need to employ God in explaining how the universe began and how life was created. The Big Bang theory and evolutionary theory replace creation myths found in all world religions. The more science explains the mysteries of life, the more faith humanity places in it, and accordingly less faith in religious dogma. In this way, science encroaches on the religious and spiritual domains, and removes the need for religion. Because scientific knowledge is limited to the material world, faith in science reinforces materialistic tendencies. Belief in a divinity is replaced with a materialistic belief that the goal of life is to accumulate more and more material goods and technological objects. But possessing objects can never produce the true happiness, joy and inner satisfaction that spirituality offers. Humanity's turning away from religious belief and its love affair with technological materialism has produced a spiritual void.

But this spiritual void need not be viewed only negatively. Rather, the void actually provides an opportunity for a rebirth of a new, truer spirituality. Emerging spirituality practices are not bound by religious doctrines and repressive institutions of the past. They allow each person to relate to the deeper aspects of the cosmos in their own unique way. We are already witnessing an advancement in consciousness, accompanied by unleashing of freedom and creativity. But in order for humanity at large to enter into newer emerging spiritual life, the barriers which science creates in limiting thoughts and desires to materialistic goals must be removed. The limiting belief that human beings and the cosmos are only physical in nature must be replaced with a new understanding that there is something more fundamental. A new vision of reality needs to arise; a new paradigm must emerge in which science and spirituality are intertwined. A new unified vision will perform the functions that creation myths and religious revelations have played in the past by reconciling humanity with the cosmos and providing meaning to life. A unified vision will be scientifically based while retaining harmony with both past and present spiritual revelations.

Ironically, the formulation of a new cosmological paradigm is made possible by advances in science, particularly in theoretical physics. Accepted theories such as general relativity and quantum mechanics indicate that the cosmos is not physical in

the manner that humans experience it, nor even as Newtonian mechanics suggest. General relativity reveals that space can warp and time can slow down. Quantum mechanics reveals that the fundamental particles of matter are actually solidified energy, and that particles can exist in different locations and states simultaneously. These fundamental scientific facts reveal that the quantum and space-time realms are extremely different than the material realm. And the conjectures of current cutting-edge theoretical physicists lead us into even more abstract realms. What's fascinating is that these newly proposed abstract realms mirror descriptions of the cosmos as revealed in ancient spiritual texts and by the teachings of modern-day spiritual masters.

The correspondence between physics and spiritual revelations has fostered the development of several new frameworks in which science and spirituality unite to form a single vision.

Some of these frameworks start with accepted or cutting-edge physics and build parallels between these theories and spiritual viewpoints. This approach is appealing and even inspiring to those who have already adopted spiritual paths leading toward higher consciousness, but they are not easily accepted by the masses or even by the physicists creating these theories. The challenge is to present a framework in a form which is persuasive to both the masses and to the scientific community. How might this be accomplished? The ideal scenario would be to develop a new framework, based upon a spiritual cosmology, which also proposes new theories that solves problems that physicists are currently unable to solve. If these theories were to receive the attention of physicists and also be proven true, then it would strongly suggest that the underlying spiritual cosmology must also be true.

There are unsolved problems which science has not yet been able to solve. For example, a lingering problem throughout the last century is how to reconcile quantum mechanics and general relativity. Others include: What caused the big bang? What is the nature of consciousness? What are the dynamics of spiritual experience? The solutions are likely to lie outside of the realm of the physical universe, outside the purview of science. If this is true, then spiritual revelations which do explain dynamics in realms beyond the universe might be required in order to provide answers to these unsolved problems. A new framework that proposed theoretical solutions which were scientifically proven true would be extremely compelling and give great credence to underlying spiritual realities. No doubt this is a very challenging goal, but one which is worth pursuing.

The remainder of this white paper explores several of the emerging frameworks. It presents a short overview of each framework, categorizes them, offers critical assessments of them, considers their social implications, and explores the possibility of combining elements from each into one cohesive framework.

Sections

Common Goals of the Frameworks

Overview of Each Framework
Categorization of Frameworks According to Criteria
Critical Evaluation of Each Framework
The Likely Reaction of the Scientific Community to a Framework
Spiritual and Social Implications of Each Framework
Combining Key Concepts of the Various Frameworks into a Unified Framework

The Frameworks

Cosmic Hologram	Ervin Laszlo
Existence Framework	Jude Currivan
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Common Goals and Assumptions

To create a vision in which science and spirituality are unified
To understand the universe's purpose — to acquire greater knowledge (information) and consciousness
Discover a stratum more fundamental than space-time
Information is basis of universe
Form a vision of oneness
Non-local connectivity
Humans co-create the universe
Diversity in Unity

Criteria Use to Categorize the Frameworks

The theories of physics serving as the framework's foundation
Are the theories proven and accepted science?
Are the theories speculative?

The framework's spiritual foundation
Ancient revelations - i.e., Vedas
Modern day revelations i.e., Meher Baba

Does the framework propose a new theory of physics?

Does the framework include a theory of consciousness?

Does the framework include a cognitive model of mind?

How Does the Framework's account for spiritual experiences, out of body experiences, etc.

Framework's Conclusions