

Paradigm

Arc 1

All life, no matter how small, seeks out other life.

All life craves connection; to find others for protection, for comfort, for continuity.

All life lives with a perpetual hunger for itself.

Huddled together in the darkest of caves, the pressing of bodies closer into each other offers warmth—a sense of family and not being so alone. Waiting the fearsome storm to come; life is those little moments of altruism and connection which make the difference between surviving and not.

Lives are sculpted around those who walk beside us. And when death is near, life clings to itself with a defiance and terror so ferocious, even that inevitable hand is, on occasion, stayed.

Nevertheless, when it comes to life, nobody gets out alive.

The inevitable must come—and come it does to us all.

The incomprehensible relationship between life and death is the greatest, most integral paradigm we share. Death cannot exist without life—and like two sides of a coin, life cannot exist without death. They are essential to each other; intrinsically bound in an infinite and yet, fleeting relationship that simply put, is the way of things.

When two equal and opposing forces exist in a moment, locked within a constant and unrelenting conflict, we experience a fierce battle, whose only hope for respite lies within a temporary and uneasy truce.

The violent swing between conflict and balance is like breath. A brutal fight to wring oxygen from the air around us and into our lungs, followed by the exquisite release of exhalation. And, just as breathing is fundamental to life, relationships formed through polarity are the foundation to all forms of paradigm that exist in reality.

Paradigms exist in nature, relationships, social and cultural dynamics, politics, business and within every other aspect of life. In its simplest form paradigm is viewed as a pattern: a system of behaviour or action that results in a predictable series of consequences. The ultimate consequence of life is death. And for a creature to die, a consequence is that it must have lived, even if that was for the briefest of moments.

So, at its most basic, we can understand our fundamental paradigm of life as—all living things die, and all death comes from life.

A pattern can be strategic or merely happenstance, yet when paradigm takes a specific form, the results can be predicted. As a paradigm becomes more complex the detail needed to match that complexity also increases. Therefore, to understand a paradigm, we need a level of enquiry that is calibrated to the complexity and detail of the pattern.

This means each aspect or step taken, will lead us to an inevitable and resolute conclusion.

At its most complex—if we could comprehend every aspect of all living things and all dead things, it would enable us to predict when each living thing will die (and which living thing will be born). This understanding would also present us with the ability to change the outcome (and origin).

As a binary relationship, life and death are locked into conflict and balance, balance and conflict. They are at odds with each other to the extent that any respite is temporary. It is only a matter of time before the disarray begins again.

For us, trapped within this binary dynamic, we naturally polarise into a crusade of our own. Swept into the warfare between life and death, we experience our own fight for survival. This emotional, psychological, physical and even spiritual struggle is crippling to the point where we wipe it from our thoughts, until we are abruptly and painfully reminded of our own mortality.

So intrinsic is this struggle to our very being, we have developed stories throughout human existence. Stories that centre around the hero's journey. Here, a flawed protagonist will encounter a life-changing problem and be forced to go on a journey. The outcome of this adventure is the discovery of their heroism and overall transformation as a person.

The hero's journey makes us feel better; more hopeful and less afraid of the world. Yet the hero's journey trope is flawed... because in life, nobody gets out alive. The hero must die eventually and through their own mortality is ultimately defeated—just as we all succumb in the end.

Real power comes when we embrace the other side of life. When we use the conflicting nature of life and death to create real and tangible value for ourselves and others. When you come with an expiry date—one you truly appreciate, hold in your consciousness as a very real eventuality and do not turn away from to hide—you become motivated to create value in the time you have.

Death is challenging. It is to our lives, as the grain of sand to an oyster. All binaries are problematic—there is always the death equivalent to anything alive. Yet, they are simple and so readily embraced by the majority of people. This is why people are so easy to polarise against each other.

Every problem we have in life can be traced back, in its most basic form, to a binary.

Ironically, the challenge of any binary is two-fold—the polarisation caused by binaries and the fact most people only see one side of the binary.

The single narrative around binaries is one of the greatest challenges we face in ourselves, in business, in life! Most people pick a side and burrow deeply into it, to the point where it becomes part of their identity. Organisations do the same.

By doing so, they develop a binary which consists of them and you, with one story arc in-between. One narrative that divides, resulting in isolation and prejudice.

The moment you identify a third factor to any binary, you will create relationship, rather than battle. Polarity is still at the core of the relationship between the three factors, but the conflict is converted to stability.

By moving beyond the binary paradigm, we essentially overcome the single narrative and its destructive influences. Binaries create the foundations of every paradigm, yet by focusing on more than the either/or perspective, we see what is holding that binary in place. We observe the cyclical nature of all things.

Therefore, transcendence of the binary approach—balance and conflict—simply requires a third factor. In terms of life and death, this third factor is neither alive nor dead—it exists beyond both, yet is related to both. The single narrative is no longer the simple solution, because the that third factor always reminds us of the binary we are in conflict or balance with.

This ternary relationship develops stability, where polarity is present, but is not the *all*—in terms of life and death, humans have speculated upon what that third *thing* is for millennia. The truth is this thing beyond life and death can never be known by anything that is bound by life and death. And whilst we cannot know it, we can relate to it, observe it in its effect and know it is observing and relating back at us.

As living creatures, we can catch glimpses of that third factor—in conflict or in balance. We can see it in relation to death and often equate it as associated with death. However, to study a paradigm fully—to know it fully—we must sit outside it.

Many people experience the nature of this third element of our life and death struggle as God. Others as science. There are those who see the Universe as a tapestry of mystical forces and those who look to the physics of it. Yet, you could also navigate your experiences with this third factor with a very different approach... your legacy.

Legacy is created in life but can last way beyond the lifetime. Legacy is no longer your responsibility after death but can transcend death. Legacy is connected to life and death, although it exists beyond both... is more than both.

Oyster, sand, pearl. Life, death, legacy. Rock, paper, scissors.

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When paradigm in one form is studied, quantified and modelled, its form can be replicated to achieve the same results in a completely different context. Such as the enormously complex paradigm of biodiversity within a successful ecosystem. The structure of the

ecosystem, formed through interrelated connections, cycles of consumption, types of resource, etc. cause the success of that ecosystem.

When these elements are applied within corporations, for instance, it helps them achieve greater stability, security and profit (assuming that calibrations and compensations are made for the changes in context, environment, etc.).

Every business, from global organisations to the sole trader, is constructed upon patterns—patterns of behaviour, relationship, transaction and so on. These patterns exist by design or by default, but they do happen without fail.

The challenge for people within organisations is understanding the polarity at play and appreciating the existence of a stability that exists beyond the ability to truly know it. Many organisations, business owners and human beings in general, adopt the solutions promised by faith/science/legacy whenever encountering any form of life and death.

So many a company leader, team manager or person turns to the science, the faith, or the legacy, without really ever knowing what these are and how they form a solution. The craft of paradigm exploration is like a hall of mirrors, where each mirror reveals a little more of the solution. The more layers, relationships, interaction and dimension (combined to develop greater complexity), the more mirrors there are to reflect and refract an answer back to you.

The polarity here, of course, is that with each mirror there is a minor distortion. Not enough to notice, but use enough mirrors and the results degrade beyond our ability to comprehend them. For some, a couple of layers are adequate to reverse the mirror image that is derived with just a single mirror (the polarity), but others can navigate their way around hundreds of layers.

Before any of this can happen, it is vital to remember a foundation, essential to the creation of a paradigmatic model.

Everything has polarity!

A person can dedicate their life to faith. A deeply profound way of understanding the conflict between life and death. Faith offers the something bigger, something more, something beyond desire we all feel as living creature.

A person can dedicate their life to the academic pursuit of science. A vast arena of knowledge that has immense practical application to the extent of driving humankind to where we are today. Science offers context to a world that, on the face of it, makes very little sense at all.

A person can dedicate their life to creating a lasting legacy by design. Strategic in planning and precise in application to develop a life's work, one's canon, which can last beyond a lifetime and touch the very core of many lifetimes.

Life and Death. Faith, science and legacy. Three solutions to a fundamental conflict.

The person who has faith has an unconditionally internal experience of themselves, the world and beyond, which permeates everything they are. Faith is an essential experience of knowing that comes from the very core of their being. It is truly personal and unquestionably real. Yet is unreal in the world, until they share their faith in some way.

The moment that person comes together with others to form a community of similarly faithful people, the experiences are validated and become real. That reality is created by polarity, by the conflict of the internal experience and the external difference between individual people.

Each person, like a mirror reflecting and refracting, slightly distorts the original experience of faith held by any one person in the group. The polarity becomes organised into religious groups that sit in direct conflict with the core experience of the one.

Now, anybody who identifies with a specific religion will react emotionally to this concept. That emotion comes from the polarity between them and their spiritual experience, sitting directly opposite to their religion and the ethos of it. The only reason that emotional jolt is not constant is down to a stabilising between a person and their worship. There are three factors in this paradigm.

Religions create demons.

Opposing forces that rest in a constant state of conflict to the church and the one.

These forces can be those of the horned-headed, cloven-hoofed variety, the injustices of the world, or even one's own feelings and instincts. For example, how much conflict exists between the many religions of humankind and the pro-choice movement? The LGBTQ+ Community? Hell, at one point, even the fact of being a woman was enough to have you burnt at the stake for witchcraft!

Yet, as people, as living beings, we come together and connect on a human level that transcends our differences, our beliefs and even our one sense of self. When that thunderstorm sweeps in, we snuggle into each other and hold each other tight.

Science has the same dynamic at a paradigmatic level. The pursuit of a scientist is to proactively disprove their own hypothesis. They literally set out to demonstrate they are wrong; doggedly persevering at all costs to show the world how they cannot be trusted... all the whilst being trusted because of their scientific endeavour.

The polarity of this are those who have faith in something and immediately find evidence to *prove* that thing is *true*. An experiment, a research paper, a study from somewhere is held up as testament to the existence of that thing they believe to be truth and need to convince others in.

The method by which this polarity is stabilised through a ternary is to diminish the validity of people who live spiritually. They become the demons of science, the charlatans, the woo-woo crowd, the God-botherer.

These terms are thrown arbitrarily into the world. They distract from those who are ostensibly the very thing they accuse others of being; those who through pseudoscientific randomness shift the blame to people who have no interest in science, because science cannot prove or disprove what they feel inside.

The very nature of polarity is, it exists in opposition, whilst at the same time being derived from the same source. The reason you remain wherever you land is because an equal and opposite force is there to greet you. Every thought you have exists in opposition to the world the moment you speak it aloud, until you develop a stabilising factor to support the thought and the word.

Life and death are in polarity. Faith and science are in polarity. Therefore, the act of legacy must exist in polarity. One connected to life and death, faith and science, whilst also existing in direct opposition to some other, as of yet unidentified factor.

And here is the fun part!

For all my knowledge and experience, for all I appreciate in the nature paradigm and life and death and faith and science and legacy... I cannot give you the answers you seek.

Deep within you, there is a knowing. A knowing of something you yearn for above all else. This may be a knowing you have clumsily ambled around in conversation with others, but never quite articulated, or maybe an aspect of yourself that you have never shared with anyone, including your most trusted confidants.

This desire is fundamental to your being, and you will know it implicitly and immediately, unless you are so repulsed by it, you have buried it away inside.

It could be as simple as more. More money, more resources, more things, more time, more fun, more pleasure, more control, more knowledge, and so on.

Yours may be an altruistic need for change, to help others who are in pain or suffering in some horribly cruel way. To solve the injustices of the world, in terms of the law, politics, or through your business. To better be in the world how you see yourself on the inside... to be an authentic version of you, whoever and however you are.

It might be to tell your story. To share with others the journey you have travelled to get from there to here, so those who are going through what you went through don't ever have to feel alone. You might feel an all-encompassing drive to reach out into the darkness, towards the lonely homes and dark corners of people's experiences and just let them know they are never alone in the darkness.

To create stories that educate or enhance or enchant. To connect people with themselves in ways where they feel no shame, or need to hide, or apologise for who they were born to be. To speak your truth in a way that nourishes and offers a gesture of kindness and compassion to those who are currently looking in the other direction.

Only you know what your innermost desire and most sacred need is and even you can only experience this in glimpses. The fulfilment of your yearning is a lifelong mission. It will

saturate your life and only be understood in completeness when your life has ended. Yet, you can know it better and how to be better equipped to nourish that need through paradigm.

To fulfil that reason for living, you will need faith in yourself and your paradigm. You will also need science to place the building blocks just where they need to be. This is not the science of fitting research to your desires, but one that underpins everything else in scientific enquiry: the numbers. The numbers and the geometry they form will be the basis for your paradigm.

Armed with faith and science, there is one more factor you will need. Legacy—one that you alone cannot achieve. For this, you will need to design your paradigm in a way that works for everyone. You will need to test it, refine it and test it again. For it is only through the experience, insights and feedback from others that your paradigm will truly impact all who encounter it.

If you think of your paradigm as a machine, you can build the cogs, the pivots and the handle, but all it will be at that point is a load of cogs that move and pivot when the handle is rotated. When others turn the handle, they will give your machine context, application and reflection that is beyond your current understanding.

As all who use your paradigm define its purpose for themselves, the results they achieve and the methodology that best serves them, you will discover how it can be best applied to help you in your mission. And the shared experience of your paradigm will become your legacy—one with the potential to far outlive you.

Without science, gravity still exists. Without faith, what lies beyond us still lies beyond us. Without legacy, you will still live within paradigms—they just won't be your paradigm. So just as science and faith have the greatest application for the world when shared, so does the legacy you are creating through paradigm with volition. Paradigm by design, rather than default.