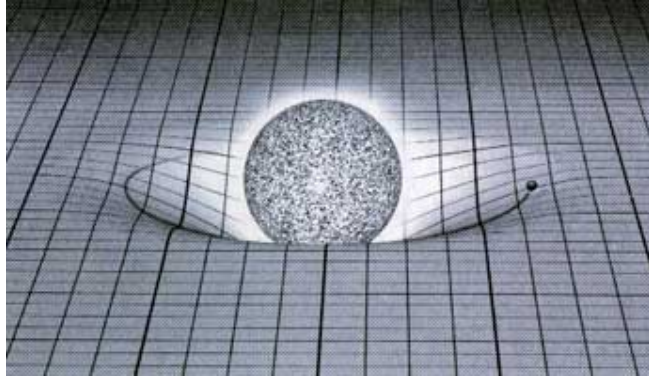


The Hidden Dimension of Real Space



"Space and time are modes in which we think, not conditions in which we exist."

— Albert Einstein

Every person has an intuitive sense of time and space, but for science, these concepts are still hypothetical due to our inability to grasp them with purely scientific tools. According to the theory of relativity, we can prove that time and space behave differently depending on different factors, such as gravity or the position of the observer, but no one is able to explain what they are in themselves.

"Space is a form abstracted from matter and exists only in consciousness."

— Ikhwan al-Safa (8th century CE Islamic Brethren of Purity)

We can indeed say that time and space exist only in consciousness, but does it really explain much? What is the point of saying that things exist in consciousness, if consciousness itself is even less understood than time and space? Furthermore, what both Ikhwan al-Safa and Einstein referred to as consciousness was the ordinary mind. There was no difference between mind and consciousness for them, because mind was all they knew. The concept of reality created by physics, no matter how sophisticated, is the product of a mind that is disconnected from its pure nature. Since the very tool physicists use in their attempts to understand reality is so limited, how can it explain secrets of existence which infinitely exceed and transcend the mind's powers of comprehension?

Outer Space

Physics is obviously concerned only with 'outer' or physical, space. The term 'outer space' is commonly used to describe the void that exists between celestial bodies, but for our purposes, we use it to describe any space that is external to pure subjectivity. Outer space is the relative



container of the physical universe, but it is not a perfect void. It is possible that it is actually made of 'something'. Even when space is not filled with air, it may still exhibit various properties or contain space particles, which can explain why it is affected by gravity and can bend or become curved.

We commonly perceive space as an external, non-material 'empty place', in which our bodies exist and move, and within which we perceive three-dimensional reality. But space is not an absolute emptiness in which all physical activity is taking place, but rather a relative void (a kind of transparent matter) that allows objects of a higher density to exist in its territory and to move through it more or less freely. Such space is not only found between the boundaries of objects, but can also be found within the very structure of matter on the molecular and atomic levels; there is space between and inside atoms as well. One thing is certain: outer space is an essential physical dimension, without which we could not imagine our human existence in this universe.

The objective of this article is not to discuss or analyze various interpretations of space and time from the perspective of physics or philosophy. It is, rather, to explore the nature of spiritual space and to see how the meaning it carries changes radically to reflect something infinitely more profound. The concept of time will be addressed in a separate article.

Outer, Mental, and Subconscious Space

When we speak of outer space, we usually refer to physical space, for it is the primary point of reference for all those who live in the material universe. However, the term outer space also includes various mental and subconscious modes of our existence. For instance, we need mental space to think. This mental space is the externalized energy of consciousness linked to the mind. The experience of energy and space are simultaneous and inseparable. This type of subjective outer space creates certain mental room in which the observer functions. In addition to mental space, there are also other more elusive manifestations of outer psychological states, spaces which reflect various subconscious states. Such states and spaces can be experienced in mystical and ungrounded 'spiritual' experiences, or occur spontaneously in the course of everyday life. Subconscious outer space is also experienced in our dreams. The characters in our dreams need space in the mind to move around in. In dreams, we experience a subconscious projection of physical space that exists only within our mind; when we wake up, that space vanishes and the usual physical space becomes our main point of reference. Confusing subconscious outer space with the real, inner spiritual space can be a big problem for seekers and can distract them from the true path to pure subjectivity. For instance, one of the definitions of a mystical state could be 'subconscious outer space without content', which can be very easily mistaken for reality beyond the mind by those who lack proper orientation in the inner realm. Such states are neither conscious nor do they have anything to do with our subjective reality.

Ordinary Space and Real Space

Our brain has been conditioned for millennia to experience space in a way which serves our need for survival. There is nothing wrong with this, since space as we ordinarily understand it is an



inherent part of our everyday experience, and not to live with this sense of it would be tantamount to madness. However, there comes a time in our evolution, directly reflecting our deeper entry into reality, when a more profound sense of space has to be awakened. This deeper space, or 'real space', radically transcends our normal concept of space and reflects a new dimension of our spiritual actualization. Real space is not referring to a certain room for me to move around in, nor is it about external points of reference: it is the spaciousness of our very existence realized in pure subjectivity.

Inner Space

As we enter meditation, our relative consciousness continues to maintain a certain attachment-identification with outer physical space as a point of reference. So there is a sense of meditating in a meditation hall, which is in turn located in a particular country. This is only natural. The problem arises when we begin to project our ordinary sense of outer space onto the state of inner exploration and expansion; we actually look for inner spatial experiences that conform to the criteria of outer space. This is one of the pitfalls in meditation – being stuck in false spaciousness. Here, we confuse the two fundamental dimensions of space: spiritual space and physical space.

Inner space is another dimension of space, completely distinct from outer space. To some degree, it can be seen as an anti-space, for on many levels, it has just the opposite characteristics and properties of physical space. Inner space is the space of absence. We call it real space because it is much more fundamental to our existence than outer space. Without inner space, outer space and the physical universe could not exist. When Newton posited that space was absolute, his intuition was correct, but from a higher perspective, he was looking in the wrong place: he did not have access to real space.

Inner space can be defined as a 'room' in which we exist. For our me to function, it must have an external point of reference. Even to think, we must have space, the space between thoughts, the space of consciousness. When we enter meditation and go beyond our usual outer spatial reference point, we enter the inner dimension of space, which is governed by very different laws. However, in order to enter real space, we must have access to pure subjectivity. If our perception of outer space is suspended, but we lack access to real space, we are limited to experiencing the space of the mind, which is a psychological representation of the outer space.

Real Space of Pure Subjectivity – The Space of Me

Our sense of space transforms when we awaken pure consciousness – that is, prior to the realization of samadhi. This space is the natural experience of anyone who has awakened pure me. One closes one's eyes and then begins to dwell in that space of consciousness beyond the mind and observer. One then tries to embody the space of pure me and then rest in that space. So it is evident that here one experiences pure me in a spatial way. When we truly embody it, this space is no longer perceived as something external to me; it cannot be separated from whom we are. However, due to our habitual tendencies, it is instead common to look at that space and



perceive it as just another outer environment of me. This externalization of space is a very old habit, and as they say, 'old habits die hard'. We have lived in the plane of physical space for so long that we tend to project our habits of perception onto our experience of pure subjectivity.

Who is looking at the space of pure me? On a very gross level, it is the observer who does this looking and who also interprets the perception of internal space as something outside of himself. However, as we go beyond the observer, and increasingly surrender to this very space, it is our inner intelligence (in this case transparent intelligence) that, because its surrender is incomplete, may still continue to objectify the space of pure me as its environment. To progress beyond this deeply ingrained habit requires even further surrender. One aspect of this deeper surrender is to drop the habit of looking at and objectifying the experience, and a second aspect is to reach deeper vertical absorption with eyes closed, as well as deeper horizontal absorption with eyes open. We are then presented with a very interesting and novel experience, for we begin to forget space as a point of reference. What is it replaced with? The sense of space is gathered (concentrated) into a single point of the non-spatial essence of me that subsequently merges with the vertical depth of being.

It is positive to experience the space of pure me (as well as those of conscious me and of the states of awareness or being) in meditation. However, these are not absolute experiences, but relative ones that need to be transcended. The space of pure subjectivity realized prior to absence is in-between the ordinary space of the physical reality and the real space of samadhi. One thing is certain: to remain attached to the spaciousness of consciousness or pure me of consciousness within the dimension of presence can be an obstacle that prevents us from realizing real space, the space of universal pure subjectivity.

Real Space of Absence

From the standpoint of ordinary experience, real space is like anti-space. Real space dissolves and transcends our sense of horizontal orientation in physical reality. Pure subjectivity realized in the dimension of presence is the meeting place between these two dimensions of space: the real space of presence and the real space of absence. It is real enough to be integrated into our identity, but still not sufficiently real, because our identity cannot free itself from the physical sense of space until it is merged with the source. So the space experienced on the level of pure consciousness is like a crossroads between the physical, psychological, and real spaces, and hence needs to be transcended.

Real space of samadhi can begin to be known by arriving at absorption in the source. This is an outcome of reaching the absolute state, in which pure me of being crosses over from the dimension of presence to the dimension of absence. Pure me of being opens the way for all of the other centers of the soul to then enter samadhi; should one remain just on the level of the absolute state, the rest of the soul would remain stuck in the dimension of presence. So while real space may be attained on the level of being, to move fully into the dimension of real space requires surrender of all of the centers of our existence.



What is the actual experience of real space? It still has the sense of being a 'space' because it is the internal environment in which our me exists. However, it is no longer a space of presence. The deeper we are absorbed in the vertical plane, the more physical space is forgotten. In this teaching, we refer to the 'shrinking' of space in absorption: the space of presence transmutes into the anti-space of absence. For instance, when pure me of consciousness attains deeper vertical absorption, it loses its quality of spaciousness and merges with the inner space of absence, where its own space-identity is dissolved.

It often happens that in experiences of being, a meditator becomes attached to a certain expansion around his body, which is in fact a spiritual equivalent of physical space, or horizontal spaciousness. This should be seen as an impediment in the work with being, for it distracts us from proper surrender and the opening of the deeper dimension of the spiritual space. As we become more deeply absorbed in pure verticality, the horizontal expansion is forgotten and dissolved, but then replaced with a much more profound realization of verticality, which is the real space of falling into the beyond.

The Dimensions of Real Space in Meditation

In our evolution toward awakening, we can identify various positive states of expansion. These expansions relate to the realization of two fundamental aspects of the real space: space-identity and space-I am. Space-identity refers to embodying the light of me through the various centers of the soul. Space-I am refers to entering the beyond through one or another of the portals of absence and transcendence. For instance, the experience of space-identity on the level of consciousness is very different than the ones of being or heart. And even within consciousness, the spatial experiences of conscious me and of pure me have very different qualities. There is also a different sense of space when pure me surrenders horizontally into universal consciousness, compared to when it surrenders vertically toward the source. Without a proper sense of orientation, we can easily become confused. When we surrender into being and come closer to complete absorption, the experience is very different than that of pure consciousness reaching vertical absorption (absolute consciousness). We will elaborate upon these differences in a separate article on the energetic dimensions of the soul. While the principle of embodying space-identity is universal in respect to each of the centers of the soul, the experience of each of them is unique. They are unique because each aspect (or dimension) of me and their connection to absence are also unique.

An interesting question to contemplate is whether attention has a quality of space. Attention, whether it be external or pure, is not spatial by nature. However, it might appear so when it is connected to conscious me or to awareness. Pure and bare attentions are internal. External attention is the link between our identity and outer space, which in this case includes both physical and psychological space. Even in subconscious states, attention is required to produce the recognition of the content of the mind, but in this case attention is also subconscious. The only type of attention which has spatial characteristics is bare attention, for the reason that it co-exists with the identity of me. Bare attention is an attention-identity, for its energy has been internalized into pure subjectivity.



Each dimension of me is spatial: each is comprised of an intricate combination of identity (bare attention) and the energy state in which the light of me can establish its natural state of pure subjectivity in the inner environment of creation. However, it is important to note that when bare attention is realized in separation from its surrender to I am – or even without incorporating the basic level of restfulness or being – it lacks a spatial dimension. In these cases, for instance, in the initial levels of conscious me and pure me, only recognition that is centered in the essence of me is present. This is like the zero-point of the space of subjectivity, which must be then expanded so as to prevent the over-crystallization of our presence. On the other hand, it is also worth noting that most commonly, due to the inability of seekers to meet the essence of their me, the energetic space of pure subjectivity opens up first and only then needs to be embodied through bare attention.

Negative Real Space: Space of Absence devoid of Space-identity

There are scenarios in our evolution in which we can enter a deeper absorption in reality and yet by-pass the realization of me. These scenarios are common to all the major paths of enlightenment that refuse to embrace the consciousness of our higher individuality. What is the nature of our experience in such scenarios? Will the realization of absence (or relative absorption) without the awakening of me lead to an experience of real space? It might do so to some degree, but only in a very limited way. To enter real space, we must not only reach absorption in the inner realm, but also embody universal subjectivity. And if we have failed to solidify our identity, there will be no one who can embody the beyond. What kind of space is experienced, then, if one has entered samadhi but our individual space-identity has not been actualized? We can call it 'negative real space', for it is a condition in which absence is not in harmony with presence. This imbalance causes one to miss the very purpose of our evolution – the actualization of the light of me in unity with universal subjectivity.

Primordial State and the Cessation of Space

The only time inner space is entirely suspended is when we are embodying the primordial state to the exclusion of everything else. When primordial me is experienced on its own, all of the other dimensions of me are suspended and all sense of space disappears. While being in such a state is natural and positive, it is not meant to be constant, because, for the sake of our evolution and existence in time, we must experience pure me, intelligence, and universal subjectivity simultaneously. In its complete absorption, primordial me is no longer in relationship with universal reality, but has rather returned to the non-dual essence of the original light. It is the cessation of space and time as we know it. They do not vanish entirely, but rather return to their original state as the essence of creation.

We can compare the primordial state to the gravitational singularity of space-time (or 'spacetime') in physics. Contemporary scientific theories suggest that before the big bang– or in the case of a star collapsing on itself (when it becomes a black hole) – gravity was infinite. This causes matter to become so incredibly dense that time and space are reduced to a single point and the usual laws of physics cease to operate. This is analogous to the primordial state, where



we arrive at kind of spiritual space-time singularity of consciousness, in which all the various manifestations of consciousness disappear back into the original state of primordial essence.

However, even after primordial me is realized, other dimensions of me are able to coexist with it, and these require the presence of real space. As we have said, real space has two main dimensions: the space of our identity (space-identity of me) and the vertical space of the universal subjectivity – in other words, who we are and where we abide (and continue surrendering into). The space of universal subjectivity is not something external to us; rather it is the internal depth of reality into which we evolve. The deeper we are merged with the universal space of absence, the more elusive the space of our identity becomes; in fact, the latter is no longer a space, but more a movement of dissolution into absence, meaning that the space of me also becomes anti-space. So the degree of realization of real space will be determined by the relationship between our individual pure subjectivity and universal pure subjectivity. Universal subjectivity is the ultimate real space that allows our soul to exist and to evolve in the reality of the beyond.

Spacing-out – Negative Absence of both Space and Me

To experience any space, me is required. In ignorance, me primarily experiences physical space, as well as some mental space. However, most humans are so unconscious that even mental space is absent; there is no space between their thoughts whatsoever. Mystical experiences, in which our sense of space is lost or distorted, are actually negative states in which me is suspended. Neither physical nor spiritual space is present in such experiences. Such suspension of me is an undesirable condition that should be avoided by seekers. Me must always be present, and space has to be experienced as the real space of pure subjectivity.

False Space in Meditation

One of the most common mistakes is to confuse the space of meditation with outer space. For instance, a meditator might feel like his body no longer has boundaries and that he has become one with the outer space. Alternatively, he may identify with the space around his body, which is actually a kind of expansion of his soul's energy body. In a further scenario, he may identify with a mental projection of his consciousness as being 'everywhere'. What all these experiences have in common is that pure subjectivity has not been met and one's real space-identity has not been established. This means that the bridge to real space is absent, and the meditator is limited to floating in ungrounded states of incorrect spaciousness. In order to evolve, correct understanding is required; one has to be clear that these are experiences of illusory space and need to be renounced. If they are not renounced, identification with them will block the possibility of the way to real space being opened.

Real space is infinitely more subtle than any of the illusory states of spaciousness. Even before realizing the real space of universal subjectivity, real space is already exceedingly subtle; just on the level of space-identity, the space of presence needs to be fully embodied through me as our pure subjectivity. Within our space-identity, the light of me must merge with the energetic



dimension to form a single unified state in which all traces of objectification are dissolved. Then, to begin evolving towards space-I am (the space of absence), one has to master the art of surrendering, and the doorway to I am has to be open. However, even prior to reaching absence, one must master a very precise surrender, which takes one to the threshold of pure verticality, where real space can finally open. It is also vital in this process that one not be distracted by various states of false space, so as to be able to cultivate pure surrender, preparing the ground for crossing over into the real space.

The Art of Perception: The Unity of Real and Outer Space

In the realization of real space, physical space is not eliminated. What a meditator must eliminate is his addiction to projecting his unconscious concept of outer space onto his inner experience, thus confusing the two quite distinct dimensions of space. A sense of outer space can often be suspended during meditation, but it is still present in the background of our experience. In activity, it is necessary to integrate real space with outer space, or else we either lose our connection to real space or become dysfunctional in the world. Integrating these two dimensions of space is crucial for us to realize the unity of the inner and outer dimensions of our existence.

In order to realize this unity, we must master the art of perception. The first level in cultivating correct perception is to learn how to see the world from pure consciousness. Here, one learns how to perceive and then how to function efficiently in the outer world, while fully remembering and embodying pure me of consciousness. Then, horizontal surrender to I am has to be included. It is when the pure me of consciousness reaches horizontal samadhi that one begins to see the world from being truly one with real space.

Later, as our evolution begins to include vertical absorption, we learn how to perceive the world from samadhi in the absolute (or initially, from a certain depth of vertical restfulness). At first, it feels like the absolute isolates us from the world, due to the high degree of internalization of energy and consciousness. However, as we integrate the absolute state, we begin to experience outer space as naturally contained in real space, and all traces of duality between the inner and outer are dissolved. Integration of real space and outer space is the prerequisite for the realization of true oneness.

There are many levels of integration between the space of pure subjectivity and physical space, and it is important to understand how different states of awakening are reflected in realization of relative oneness with physical space. Many seekers ignorantly look for the experience of unity with the world without striving to establish the foundation of pure subjectivity. Before we worry about experiencing oneness with external reality, we must become one with our pure nature, for this is the very ground of our existence. When we are spaced-out or in a mystical state, it may appear that the world is no longer outside of ourselves, but in reality, we are neither abiding within nor connected to the living world; we are in the 'space of nowhere'. Only after we have solidified our inner self can we attempt to integrate it with the outer dimensions of space. What complicates the matter is that there are many levels of awakening, and some of them, due to their relative natures, cannot serve as platforms for arriving at true unity with creation.



As an example, what Krishnamurti referred to as ‘choiceless awareness’ is also a spatial experience, one which lies in-between the realization of conscious me and pure consciousness. The reason that choiceless awareness enables one to experience relative unity with the world (in other words, a lower level of suchness) is because it enables one to experience a kind of simultaneity between the subjective and physical spaces, making them appear as one. The concept of simultaneity can help us to grasp the true meaning of attaining oneness with the world. How do we experience oneness? We recognize our pure nature and our external reality at the same time. So two dimensions of recognition are present simultaneously, and because we can perceive the inner and outer to be present at the same time, we lose the sense of separation between them.

To experience unity with the world, the space of pure subjectivity must acquire the qualities of stillness and being, or else its inherent fluctuations will prevent us from maintaining equilibrium between the inner and outer. To realize unity with the world does not mean that we lose the boundaries of our subjectivity, as occurs in mystical states. This unity is a reflection of a profound balance between the space of pure subjectivity and physical space. If this balance is disturbed in any way (such as through our inner instability), the sense of unity deteriorates or is simply lost. As far as ‘choiceless awareness’ is concerned, it allows one to experience a certain degree of unity with the world, but this unity is still imperfect because awareness does not give me absolute stability in our inner reality. Awareness may appear unconditional for those with an untrained eye, but it is still limited by its inherent fluctuations. It is neither rooted in I am (as pure consciousness) nor in the absolute (as absolute consciousness). To put it simply, awareness is not in samadhi; it lacks the quality of absorption in the universal space.

Establishing the ground of consciousness is a prerequisite for reaching unity with the physical space, but this can happen only when conscious me is awakened and integrated. Conscious me is the bridge between pure consciousness and perception. After it is awakened, it needs to be solidified and embodied, and then infused into our complete consciousness in order to reach a natural quality of transparency; the experience of solidified transparency on the level of conscious me with eyes open reflects the correct spatial actualization of this particular dimension of me. After conscious me reaches its natural condition and forms a bridge of perception between pure consciousness and the world, the final link in this chain of perception (the observer) can become integrated and rendered transparent as well. The transparent observer is the meeting place between our fundamental consciousness and the outer physical space. If the observer fluctuates or is over-crystallized, then that will corrupt the experience of unity with the world. So the observer must also realize its spatial dimension, but unlike conscious me, it does not possess the quality of being; it only has transparency. Due to its functional nature (it is both a function and an identity), and depending on circumstance, the observer needs to move between two modes of spatial experience: transparency (seeing or thinking effortlessly) and focused transparency (when concentrating on external things or thoughts).

Summary and Conclusion

To summarize this map of our progressive experience of space, there are several basic dimensions of space: physical space (outer space), psychological space (space of the mind), and



real space. Real space is first experienced on the level of our identity, for which we have created the term 'space-identity'. The spaciousness of our identity is caused by the fact that pure subjectivity is always realized within the confines of an expanded energy state which contains the light of me. Each state of awakening has a unique energy dimension which forms the spatial environment of pure me. For example, the space of pure me of consciousness is very different from the space of pure me of being.

So the first step in entering real space is to establish our space-identity, which is the bridge to the plane of universal subjectivity. Next, to awaken a deeper state of real space, we must begin the process of surrender and expansion ('in-pansion') into I am, which is the universal space of pure subjectivity. In doing this, we begin to grow into samadhi (the absorption of the individual into the universal), and the space-identity crosses over into the space-absence. In this passage, our sense of space becomes entirely transformed, for the space of presence dissolves into the anti-space of absence. The space of absence is like inside-out physical space. It is experienced neither outside nor inside of me, but rather felt as the innermost space-gravity that absorbs me into the fathomless beyond, while simultaneously giving me a firm ground of abidance in the now. Real space is the void of the absolute which is inseparable from the force of the absolute's gravitational pull. It is the space before space, the original space of existence. It exists prior to any ordinary space as we know it, and even prior to the space of pure consciousness, or pure me, and the space of identity. It is the ever-receding space of the original now at the root of continuous creation. Only in true samadhi can we gain conscious unity with that primordial space, the real space that contains the totality of the dimension of presence in its never-ending transcendence of all creation. This is when real space becomes the natural environment of our existence, as well as the open doorway to our evolution into the further actualization of our future self.

Blessings,
Anadi

For a full glossary of terminology please visit our website www.anaditeaching.com/glossary

