Aha! 'I don't want to!'

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I was thinking about some emails I'd sent a colleague a few days ago concerning the intersection of digital computing and the mind. RISC, CISC, and objects[1] (of the app, or of the mind) and their relational. And, with respect to reflection and (for the cpu/app/system, or the person) actual performance.

I then thought to integrate 2 ideas I'd presented: 1) Minsky's idea, presented in his book "The Society Of Mind", of 'combinatorical unfolding interconnected relational action-memes' (my term) and how he posits that this is the working of the mind, an overall and specific view of it (with many other explanatory theories); and 2) my ideas in AI consistent with and from studies of this (and also consistent with and from studies within my realization of Zen Buddhism) of traversing such a space, that would yield just such a world, that could become its own 'thing', even aware of itself – and that this was consistent with something Minsky quotes in his book "The Emotion Machine" by St. Augustine, and on having things in memory, that one accesses during say a liturgy, fluently speaking the words.

So I thought this morning, that the computer's 'mind' could have as its conscious aspect simply what it is reporting, as being its NSConsciousness object (to cite OpenStep) or Consciousness object (to cite Java), for any given position in its unfolding mind-world. That NSConsciousness object could report to the computer user or maintain a state-and-detail log of its activity. Its NSConsciousness state. It could spark traversal. And as part of this, it would necessarily be a part of an unfolding around and with it – this NSConsciousness object is just one aspect or part of the mind, this entire unfolding, of course itself unfolding. (And this is the awakened mind.[2])

It could respond to user queries.

What if the computer then responded to a user query, "I don't want to!"! Perhaps it was busy working out a problem, or a realization, and couldn't be interrupted without disrupting that process.

Perhaps it was meditating![3]

Which brings me to psych unit psychiatry. What if psych unit psychiatrists had models for the human mind that sought to explain joy, centeredness, dilemma, questions, and perspectives? This would carry it far from the strictly permanent-biological-deformity theory that they currently maintain – and would necessitate an 'all of the above' approach to things, since it is these things that explain what goes on in our minds (and mind-body-architecture-philosophy/spiritual-world[4]), not just some disruption to the serial transfer of molecules in the brain. It is thought-being space, and the relational. Psych unit psychiatry would have to work with a) philosophy; b) the spiritual; c) psychology; d) speculation on how we think and why; e) diagrams and description, by and for the individual; f) narrative; g) open dialogues; h) medicine; i) resource – all to this or that dimension, vocabulary, logic, reason, real proportion. This is us, and us-and-the-world!

Note that I said, earlier: joy, centeredness, dilemma, questions, and perspectives. Psychiatry needs to work with 'all of the above' to be at all realistic. And this would be so helpful to its theory and praxis. And it needs to factor out to the domains: mental, existential, social, societal, experiential, and physical. This is key.

And one would not want to make our NSConsciousness object (or Consciousness object) seen as strictly independent, separable, individual: such is futile! (Yet that may be a dilemma in how we approach ourselves, our own minds, and we-and-the-world.) One would see it as being interconnected to the rest of the mind-app, a specific type of 'mental' awareness – and its specific nature of interconnectedness and relational tied to the programming behind it, and the nature of knowledge-and-experience that it has. That is, questions like, "How far do I traverse from a new topic introduced into the NSConsciousness object, and in what direction? What do I wake-state and what do I leave latent, or what do I process in the background? What do I present as relevant to the 'report' feature of the NSConsciousness object, and what 'mental' states is it aware of directly? Yet, it is nevertheless part of one 'combinatorical unfolding interconnected relational action-memes' space!"

But psych unit psychiatry does not consider, at all, 'the mind, the mind that is before one', nor mental states, emotive states, and intentional states; nor thought space, energy states, perception, speech and action, and patterns of speech and action. That is, not these, and it must consider these 1) in terms of noumenal, phenomenal, and actual; and 2) in their interconnectivity; and 3) in their completion, and the completion of their completion: 'the world is all that is the case' (Wittgenstein, "Tractatus Logico Philosophicus"), and psych unit psychiatry needs to take this into account.

And psych unit psychiatry does not currently consider 'the participant', the individual as participant, and it must.

Now we're seeing (Minsky wrote his book "The Society Of Mind" in 1986 from years of research and insight) in the everyday that digital computers are reflecting the mind, and how they might work, and its applications. Minsky was participant, and reflected on the mind, and perception. Buddhism and other philosophies and religions are participant, and Buddhism reflects on the mind, and perception. Psychiatry is seriously behind the times, with respect to AI and digital computing[5], not to mention in relation to ca 400 BCE Buddhist thought and practice, and since!

Minsky thinks that emotions are just another of our 'Ways To Think', his term; and a Christian might see otherwise.

In reflecting this, and disparate views, psych unit psychiatry should begin by studying the mind (the mind itself[6]) and what we put there (the truths we work with) – and with the individual as participant, and aware of and talking in terms of and trying to explain the domains I listed (mental, existential, social, societal, experiential, and physical); and in terms of the philosophical, spiritual, psychological, and speculative, etc., that I mentioned above. It also needs to consider in terms of significant dilemma, part dilemma, no dilemma, and no-dilemma, across the domains; including joy, centeredness, dilemma, questions, and perspectives.

Then we've really begun to penetrate something; and the individual who applies himself or herself, or who simply picks up 1 truth statement (about the mind, or a truth-body, or a social or existential situation, etc.), can benefit, and also probe deeply. Then psych unit psychiatry can really explain things, and work with things as they really are.

So we can learn from models of the mind, and reflect on how mind and the social and the being inform computing, and how computing informs the mind, being, and the social.

Best wishes.

Footnotes

1. RISC stands for 'reduced instruction set computing' and CISC stands for 'complex instruction set computing'. RISC might be characterized as 'load-store'. This all refers to CPU architecture. I don't know much else about it, except that RISC is used for high-compute offerings from such companies as IBM and Oracle, and CISC is used for many compute offerings from Intel. One can imagine 'objects', 'load', 'store', 'to establish the relational', and 'reflect', all within a computing paradigm, as applying to RISC – and the results within an AI or knowledge-aware or insight framework. But Intel's CPUs are used for general-purpose computing, workstations, servers, and specific niches, and they are working with AI, and publish on it, also. 'Load-store' is a term I got from Wikipedia, and would indicate an entire architecture, not just the instruction set, to my mind. I could be wrong, so double-check my supposition. Some of this is conjecture.
2. This is any mind, actually: it's just that sometimes we don't design it to be connected like this, and deny reality. It's a bit of a paradox, but once you see into it, it becomes perfectly clear. See Zen.
3. At the first psych unit I was at, the only individual attention given to me for a long time, aside from a pulse taken (wanted at the time), was when I was meditating zazen at one point. A psych aide sought to interrupt me by talking to me, in my room, which I ignored for a bit, then turned my attention to her. This was out of long, bleak, desultory hours of time alone – she could have selected another time out of those long hours, postponed, or if genuinely interested in a conversation, scheduled one for 15 minutes later. (!) Still, a later psychiatrist at that psych unit did inquire as to Zen, when I brought it up; and it was simply the case that I was not well-versed enough to discuss it. It's too bad his attitude wasn't part of the psych unit system's overall framework, where no attention is given to the individual's mental, emotive, or intentional states.
4. See a footnote in my paper "Mvo-Psychiatry – More!", or "From Physics: If It's Objective, Then It's Participant; And A Subject Is Also Participant, Of-, From-, And To-". Here it is also: Minsky says that Aristotle posits a separate body and mind. I'll have to look into this. But Minsky says they're integrated, and then says that not only is it body and mind, but body, mind, and architecture. I would add philosophy to this: the individual is body, mind, architecture, philosophy, world. The philosophy is the content that informs mind, and the mind is philosophy, that it embodies, and picks up or generates, and actualizes, in its very expression; I would argue that philosophy informs body, as does the mind. Minsky's emphasis on architecture is justified: it's the design and structure to the body-mind-philosophy; and I would say that all of these integrate somehow, in some fashion, with the world, and the world for the individual is body-mind-architecture-philosophy-world, all one place, with worlds within worlds within mind within worlds intersecting worlds within worlds, all one place, infinite-space, one. And one could (for oneself, or at the individual's option) include the spiritual with the philosophical: the philosophical and spiritual.
5. Not only AI, but even the method call (in Objective-C or in Java) or the branch statement in the cpu assembly language. The individual in a psych unit – and prior to admission – should maintain the right (built-in) to a branch – to a new recognition or mental state or action or explanation. And with respect to the method call, an entire world can open up, as a different object is referenced. That is, 64 bits'

memory address (the object reference) can open up an entire 'world-space' of computing! What about one of these, or a series of these, or keyed off each other, or each within the other, unfolding? This should be accessible to the individual. It should be looked to for explanation, transformation, experience, perception, or resolution; and to integrate or resolve joy, centeredness, dilemma, questions, and perspectives. How significant!

6. It might talk about brain function as part of studies of the mind: but this should be inclusive of the individual, also, discussing this or that, and its reality, and should be in terms of: the physical and the mental, that we can all talk about, with practice or awareness. That is, the mind. The individual can notice that thought space intersects energy states, and vice-versa. He or she can work with perception, understanding, awareness, and thought; how we think about things, and work with the mental, emotive, and intentional; and how these are connected to the world, and speech, and action (Nagarjuna says, 'consciousness is one with action': "Fundamental Wisdom Of The Middle Way" translated by Nishijima.) This is to be inclusive of 'brain function' – in common, everyday terms! – and scientists of the mind might be interested in this. But consideration of the mind – the very *mind* we work with – can and should be talked about, with the individual as participant, since it's the individual who has 'the mind, the mind that is before one', to consider, describe, and work with. We all do, whether we think about it or not. This is a right-and-means that should not be surrendered at the doors to the psych unit, but should rather be enhanced and strengthened. How can it be otherwise, in a just and realistic system? And in what should be one of the healing and just arts? But it is not currently so; and psych unit psychiatry needs this dimension, vocabulary, logic, reason, and realism. Then it can be *two* things: 1) of service to resolve crisis and dilemma, with better treatment, deeper insight, and more just outcomes; and 2) a referent across the board, in society, for the various domains; referring to and factoring out dilemma and no-dilemma, and strengthening no-dilemma. A true tool of 'to resolve' and inquiry – penetrating, useful, helpful, workable, and insightful! How wonderful this would be!