

## CHAPTER TEN

# Harmony in Nature – Understanding the Interconnectedness and Mutual Fulfilment

We started by saying that the basic human aspiration of every human being is continuous happiness and prosperity. Exploring the meaning of happiness, we found that happiness is to understand and live in harmony at all levels of living. So far, we discussed the harmony at the level of the human being, the family and the society. While discussing the harmony at the level of society, we came across the relationship of human being with the rest of nature. In this chapter, we will discuss the harmony in the nature and see how the entities in nature are interconnected and mutually fulfilling.

### The Four Orders in Nature

If we look around, everything that we see can be put into one of the following four 'orders'.

- a. Material Order (*padārtha avasthā\**) – e.g. soil, water, air, etc.
- b. Plant/Bio Order (*prāṇa avasthā\**) – e.g. grass, plants, trees, flowers, fruits, etc.
- c. Animal Order (*jīva avasthā\**) – e.g. Animals and Birds.
- d. Human (Knowledge) Order (*gyāna avasthā\**) – Human Beings.

The big land mass of the continents, gigantic water bodies like ocean and seas, mountains and rivers, the atmosphere above, the heaps of metals and mineral below, the dense gases & fossil fuels deep below the surface of the earth – all fall into the Material Order or *padārtha avasthā*. In fact, if we look around beyond the earth, the material order is visible even in the form of stars, planets, moons and several astronomical bodies.

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\* Can be spelt as *padarth avastha*, *pran avastha*, *jiva avastha*, *gyan avastha*, respectively too.

Our land mass is covered with grass and small shrubs and they form the lining on the entire soil. Shrubs, plants, and trees form huge forests along with the flora in the ocean. All of this is the plant/bio order or *prāṇa avasthā* and it is the next big order on our planet. (The material order is far greater in quantity compared to the plant/bio order)

Animals and birds form the third largest order and we call them the Animal Order or *jīva avasthā*. Here again, we see that the plant/bio-order is far greater in quantity than the animal order.

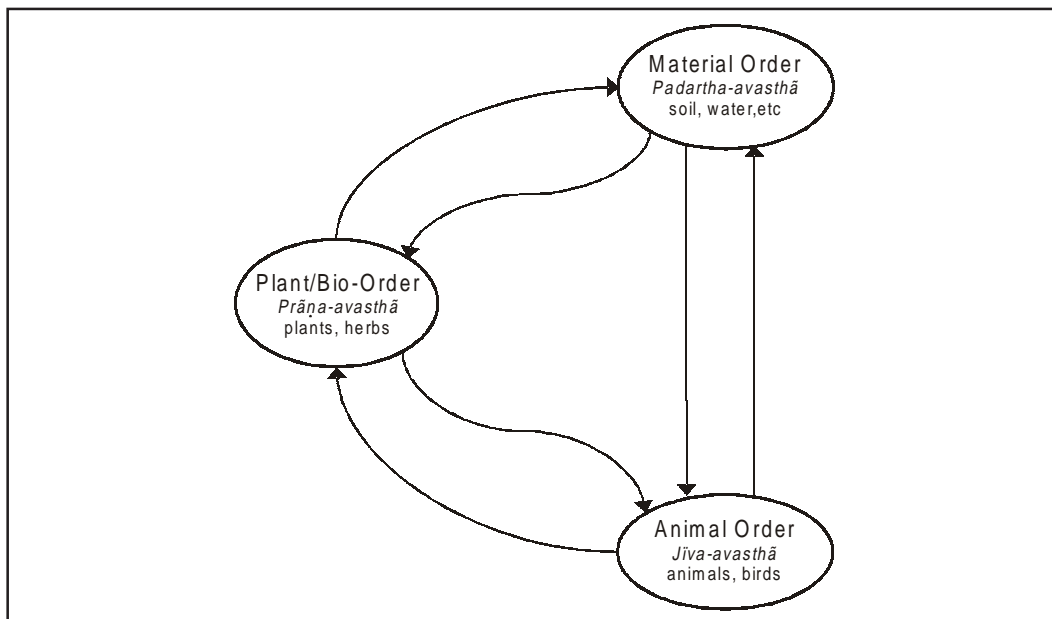
Humans are the smallest order and they are referred to as Human Order or *gyāna avasthā*. Animals are far greater in quantity as compared to the human order.

Each one of us can recognize all these four orders around ourselves and see that together these four orders comprise of all the units that we see and understand around us.

## Interconnectedness and Mutual Fulfilment (*Paraspartā aur Paraspara Pūrakatā*)

\* "*paraspartā*" means 'interconnectedness'. "*paraspara pūraka*" means 'mutually fulfilling'

Let us look at the first three orders namely the Material, Plant/Bio (*pranic*) and Animal Order. We can easily see that they are interconnected. Each order is connected to each other order. And the relationship between these orders is in such a way that they all fulfil each other and coexist with each other.



### Material Order and Plant/Bio-Order

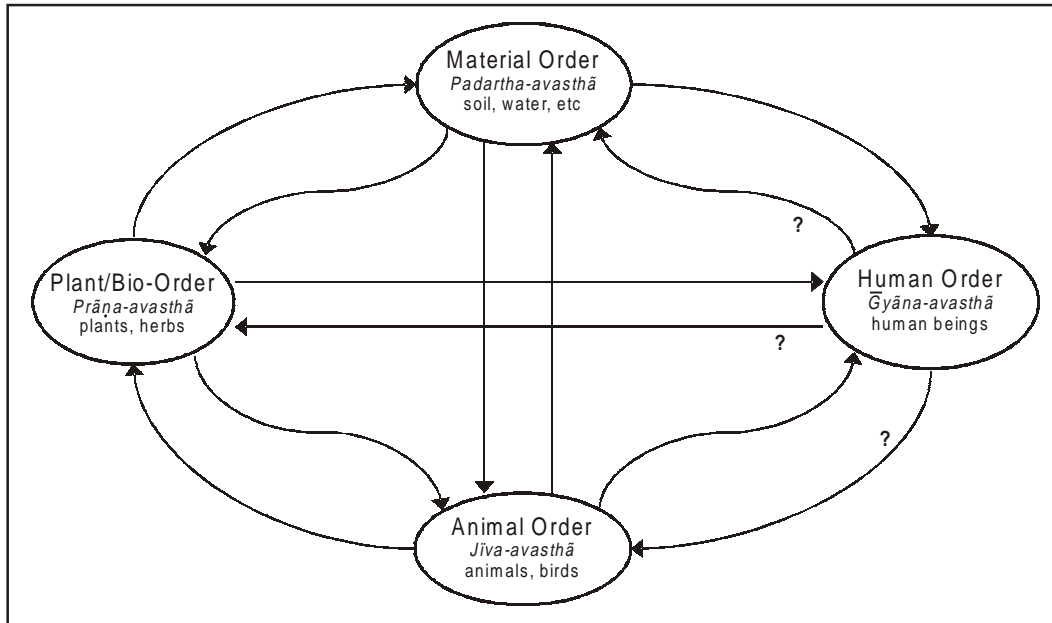
The Material Order provides the nutrients to the Plant/Bio-Order in the form of soil, minerals, etc while the Plant/Bio-Order decays and forms more nutrient, thus enriching the soil. The Plant/Bio-Order also decays to substances like oil and coal, which are stored deep within the earth as protection against the heat from the molten core inside the earth as well as the heat from the sun (*today, this is the material we are removing and using as fuel!*). Plants help move the nutrients through the various layers of the soil. The roots of the plants hold the soil together and prevent the soil from erosion. Plants produce oxygen/ carbon dioxide and thus help in the movement of the Material Order. Thus Pranic order and Material Order, naturally exist in a relationship of mutual fulfilment with each other. They also co-exist, they don't deny the other. There is a mutual interdependency and co-existence we can see here.

### Material Order, Plant/Bio Order and Animal Order

The Material Order provides the basis for movement of all animals, birds and fishes. Water, Oxygen and other gases are necessities for both plants and animals. At the same time, the Animal Order helps enrich the soil with its excreta and this excreta helps the plants with nutrients. The Plant/Bio Order provides food for animals, birds and fishes. The Animal Order helps in pollination of the flowers of the *Pranic* order. The relationship across all three orders is – naturally one of mutual fulfilment. None of these orders denies the other.

### Material Order, Pranic Order, Animal Order and Human Order

It is clear that the above mentioned three orders are fulfilling to each other. When we look at the connectedness with human beings, we find that each of these orders is fulfilling to the human order. This we can verify looking at the multiple uses we are drawing out of these entities. We humans also have a natural acceptance to be mutually fulfilling to these three orders. However, we are not able to ensure this mutual fulfilment. We are dependent on the material order for soil and minerals and metals, but only end up polluting the soil and depleting the fossil fuels; we are dependent on plants for our food and holding together the larger ecosystem, but we have destroyed forests and destroyed multiple species of plants and herbs; we are dependent on animals to carry out our production and transportation activities, but have made many species of animals extinct, and are today known for our cruelty towards animals.



We thus see that the three orders besides the Human Order are in harmony and are fulfilling to the human order. However, we as humans have not yet understood and learnt to live in relationship of mutual fulfilment with these three other orders. This is because we have not understood the harmony that exists between these orders. We have not even understood our own needs properly, nor have we understood harmonious ways to fulfil our needs. Consequently, we have disturbed ourselves and also the balance amongst the other three orders. This is evident when we see that we have pretty much plundered the body of the earth of all the heat absorbing materials like coal and oil and burnt these fossil fuels in our atmosphere causing a significant deterioration in the temperature regulation of our planet. We have significantly deforested huge forest masses and through it, altered the weather system of our planet. Our burgeoning cities and industries have spilled huge amounts of industrial and human waste into the water bodies and even drinking water has to be now chemically treated before it can be consumed by humans. The air we breathe has become polluted; the food we grow has become chemically affected. The effect of this disharmony is now affecting our lives in the form of diseases and maladies.

On the other hand, if we explore our natural acceptance, we find that we want to live harmoniously with nature. This is important for our own happiness. This is an undeniable and a very significant relationship for each one of us. This is a relationship we need to properly understand.

## Recyclability and Self-regulation in Nature

There are several cyclical processes that we can see in nature. For example the cycle of water, evaporating, condensing and precipitating back to water giving the weather phenomena. The quantity of water on the surface of earth remains conserved by itself, no need for human intervention. You have studied cycles of carbon, oxygen and nitrogen in nature in your school. The cycles keep these materials self-regulated on the earth. Breeds of plants and animals are similarly self-regulated in their environment. In a forest, the growth of trees takes place in a way so that the amount of soil, plants and animals remains conserved. It never happens that the number of trees shoots up and there is lack of soil for the trees! The appropriateness of conditions for growth of both plants and animals are self-regulated in nature keeping the population proportions naturally maintained. You will find that the population of grass, deers and tigers remains such that all can continue. This phenomenon is termed as self-regulation. You will appreciate that in a single breed of animals, the number of males and females generated through procreation is such that the continuity of species is ensured by itself. This happens with humans too, but inhuman practices have led to disproportionate numbers of men and women. Nature exhibits self-regulation in various ways across the plant/bio, animal and human orders, but we humans have disturbed it due to lack of understanding. We seldom see a problem of over-population of a species in nature (*some of what we see is man created!*), nor do we see any instance of some by-product from nature not being absorbed and becoming a source for pollution (*ex: nature does not produce plastic and foam*).

These two characteristics namely, cyclical nature and self-regulation provide us with some clues of the harmony that is in nature. These are visible signs we can see with our eyes, and understand. But, there is also more to nature than meets the 'eye'. This is something we shall explore next.

## Understanding the Four Orders

*\* As we navigate through this chapter, we need to keep in view that the aspects we are trying to understand here are not always seen through the senses or the 'eye'. We 'understand' these things in 'T' – so just 'seeing' through the senses is not enough.*

Let us look at the four orders in more detail.

Order	Material	Plant/Bio	Animal	Human
Things ( <i>vastu</i> )	Soil, Air, Water	Plants, Animal Body, Human Body	Animal Body + 'I'	Human Body + 'I'
Activity ( <i>kriyā</i> )	Composition/ Decomposition	Composition/ Decomposition + Respiration	(Composition/ Decomposition, Respiration) in Body + Selection in 'I'	(Composition/ Decomposition, Respiration) in Body + (Selection, Thought, Desire) in 'I' & need for Realization & Understanding
Innateness ( <i>dhāraṇā</i> )	Existence	Existence + Growth	(Existence, Growth) in Body + Will to live in 'I'	(Existence + Growth) in Body + Will to live with happiness in 'I'
Natural Characteristic ( <i>svabhāva</i> )	Composition/ Decomposition	Composition/ Decomposition + Nurture/ Worsen	(Composition/ Decomposition, Nurture/Worsen) in Body, + (Non- cruelty, Cruelty) in 'I'	(Composition/ Decomposition, Nurture/Worsen) in Body + (Perseverance, Bravery, Generosity) in 'I'
Basic Activity ( <i>kriyā</i> )	Recognising, Fulfillment	Recognising Fulfillment	(Recognising Fulfillment) in body + Assuming, Recognising, Fulfillment in 'I'	(Recognising Fulfillment) in body + Knowing, Assuming, Recognising, Fulfillment in 'I'
Conformance ( <i>anu-sangitā</i> )	Constitution conformance ( <i>pariṇāma anu sangitā</i> )	Seed conformance ( <i>bija anu- sangitā</i> )	Breed conformance ( <i>vanśa anu- sangitā</i> )	Right values/ <i>sanskāra</i> conformance ( <i>sanskāra anu- sangitā</i> )

The table above outlines the four orders and we will study the salient aspects in each of these orders:

**Things ( *Vastu* )**

**Activity ( *Kriyā*\*)**

**Innateness ( *Dhāraṇā*\*)**

**Natural Characteristic ( *Svabhāva*\*)**

**Basic Activity**

**Conformance ( *Anu-sangitā*\*)**

\* Can be spelt as *Kriya*, *Dharana*, *Svabhava*, *Anu-sangita*, respectively too.

## Things (*Vastu*)

Each order is composed of a number of 'things'. Each one of these 'things' is also called a 'unit'.

**Material Order:** It is clear to us that the material order is the most abundant in nature and exists in the form of all the soil mixtures, metal and compounds, various gases, water and other liquids etc.

**Plant/Bio Order:** *Pranic* order exists as the smallest seeds to the plentiful grass, the various plants and trees and the all the vegetation in the ocean. When we consider humans and animals, we can understand that they are as a coexistence of the Self ('I') and the Body. If we look at the body, we find that in its fundamental unit, there is a cell. The cell belongs to the *pranic* order. Thus, the body of both animals and humans is essentially made up of cells and this belongs to the *pranic* order.

**Animal Order:** The Animal order is made of various kinds of animals and birds. These entities display both a body (physico-chemical activity) as well as a conscious activity (Self or 'I'). The Animal Order thus is the coexistence of the Animal Body (*Pranic* Order) and the Self (or 'I' = consciousness)

**Human (Knowledge) Order:** The Human order is constituted of all the human beings. Each human being is co-existence of the Self ('I', conscious entity = consciousness) and the Body (*Pranic* Order).

## Activity (*Kriyā*)

Each unit in the order can be understood as an 'activity' (or *kriyā*). We will try and understand the activities (*kriyā*) that distinguish one order from the other.

An activity means something that 'has motion' and/or 'has a result'. The material order is active in multiple ways, and the same with the plant order or animal order or human order. You are sitting in a room. But you are active. You are thinking, desiring, the body has breath running, heart throbbing. The air in the room is blowing. The walls standing constantly also have activity. Isn't it? Yes, it is! The chair in your room is also active. It may not be very visible to our *eyes* but the chair is still active. We can understand this in the following ways

1. Let's say the chair is made of wood. If you leave the chair at rest, for let's say, 70 years, what would happen? You will say, the wood may *decay*. It means, the chair has been *interacting* with the environment. Or, the wood in the chair has been *interacting* with the environment. If it is interacting with the environment, it means the chair, or the

wood is actually active, even though we could not *immediately see it with our naked eye*. This is one way to understand ‘activity’ in a chair that is not *visibly* moving when seen by the naked eye. So, even if something is not *visibly moving* when seen through our eyes, it does not mean it is not “active”.

2. Now, if you take the wood in the chair and place it under a microscope, what would you see? You will see that the wood is actually made up of thousands of smaller particles. If you have a very powerful microscope (also called an electron microscope) you will see that there are many thousands of minute particles in the wood that are all ‘active’ i.e. they will even be visibly moving, when seen through the microscope.

Thus, we can see that:

- Things that we see are “visibly moving”, through the naked eye, such as a spinning top, a moving bus, a running man, are active, and
- All things that are “visibly stationary”, or not moving, are *also active*. like a stationary chair, and the walls and roof in the house, bus at the stand, etc.

*All units around us, including ourselves, are active, all the time. They are interacting with the environment. In the activity, there is a state or configuration and motion simultaneously. This remains all the time.*

We often look at units around us as a fixed and a solid ‘thing’. We can now see that these things are actually active...each unit is made of hundreds of smaller units...and all these units are active. So, when you walk on the road, its not that the road is stationary! The road is active, very active...made of thousands and thousands of particles that are all throbbing, all active.

### Activity in the Material Order

All material things (i.e. units in the material order) can be understood as an activity of ‘units’ coming together to form a bigger unit. We call this ‘Composition’. For example, the chair is made of smaller pieces of wood. Bigger units can also separate from each other to form smaller units and we call this ‘Decomposition’. Like a wooden chair can decay after a few years. Thus any unit in the material order can be understood as an ‘activity of Composition/Decomposition’.

### Activity in the Plant/Bio Order

The plant order is basically structurally made up of the material order. However, an additional activity of ‘respiration’ is exhibited by the plant order. For example: we all know that plants ‘breathe’. Plants are made up of smaller cells that also ‘breathe’ or ‘pulsate’. So, when we



look at all the units that make up the plant/bio order we will find that they can be understood in terms of Composition/Decomposition and Respiration. Not only do plants compose (forming new plants) and decompose (decaying), they are also breathing, or pulsating, which we call Respiration.

### Activity in the Animal Order

When we explore the Animal Order, we find two fundamentally different set of activities. One set of activities is the 'physico-chemical' or activity of the body and the other is the 'conscious' activity of the Self.

#### *Body in animals— Physico-chemical activities*

The body displays the same activities that we see in the plant. The body displays respiration, or breathing, or pulsating, as we call it. We can verify this ourselves quite easily and we can see that the body indeed breathes and also decays. The body is also formed at one point in time and keeps building cells as well, i.e. there is composition in the body. Hence, the activities in the body are the same as that in the plant/bio order, which are: composition/decomposition and respiration. Hence, we say that the body belongs to the plant/bio order.

#### *'I' in animals – conscious activities*

The activities in 'I' are fundamentally different from those in the Body. We have already seen for ourselves that 'I' is a unit that has the ability or capacity of assuming. Animals make assumptions. If you have a dog, and some stranger comes into the house, the dog may start barking at him. If this person stays at your house for a few months, then the dog stops barking at him, but will continue to bark at other strangers. What has happened here is that the dog's 'assumption' about this person has changed, due to which, *the way in which it responds* to the person has changed. We call this assuming. Only conscious entities or only 'consciousness' has this faculty of assuming. Plants and stones do not have it. This ability to assume is not present in the plant/bio and material orders.

*It is important to note that this consciousness or faculty of assuming is not in the Body.* The Body belongs to the plant/bio order, and is physico-chemical in nature. It just responds to physico-chemical inputs. The Body does not 'assume' things. The faculty of assuming exists in distinct entity we have been referring to as 'I' and we also call this 'consciousness'. In animals, we can predominantly see the activity of selection/taste in 'I', the activity at number 5 in the discussion in chapter 6. If a cow is given fodder to eat, it is enough for the cow. The cow does not question how the fodder is grown, and why it grows that way only? If a dog is given food from time to time, it does not bother how the house owner earns? So, we can see that in animals, only the activity of Selection/Taste is predominant. There is

hardly any thinking and desiring in animals. Also, animals do not have this need to know (natural acceptance) as we humans.

### Activity in the Human Order

We have already seen that human beings are co-existence of a physico-chemical body and a conscious Self, or 'I'. The activities in the human body are similar to that in the animal body; and we have seen this in detail as: composition/decomposition and respiration.

When it comes to consciousness or 'I', however, the human displays more than just an ability to 'select' or make choices as animals do. As humans, each one of us also has desires that we pursue, an ability to think and the ability to make choices. In this Desire, Thought and Selection, we exhibit more activities than any unit in the animal order. As a result, humans are in a separate order than animals. We make assumptions, but also have a need to know, or a will to know. Animals just *assume*, humans can also '*know*' or have the *need to know*.

Thus, in human beings, 'I' has the activities of Desiring, Thinking, and Selecting/Tasting, with a *possibility or need for Understanding and Realization*. Only humans have the this need to now and that is why it is called *Ġyāna Avasthā* the Knowledge Order.

Thus, underlying every entity/unit, there are activities like physical activity, chemical activity or conscious activity ('I') and all units/entities can be understood as one of these activities or co-existence of these activities.

### *Innateness (Dhāraṇā)*

Each unit in existence exhibits an innateness, an intrinsic quality that cannot be separated from it. We refer to this principle as 'Innateness' also called '*Dhāraṇā*' of that unit. This is *intrinsic* to the unit. What exactly do we mean by this?

### Innateness of the Material Order

Look at all the material order. It is possible to convert material things from one 'form or a way of being' to another 'form or a way of being'. However, it is not possible to *annihilate* it. We cannot make it *cease to exist*. The particles that make up that unit continue to exist. For example, when you burn coal and it has finished burning and only some ash is left and smokes have gone out, it is not that the basic material, the fundamental particles in coal, have '*ceased to exist*' or '*disappeared*' from existence! They may not be *visible to the eye* at that moment, but they *continue to exist*, they still are in the form of other matter or in the form

of gases, etc. We can see this for any material unit. This is there with all material units. You cannot destroy matter; you can only convert it from one form to the other. Thus, “to exist”, or ‘existence’ is intrinsic to all material, it is innate to it. We cannot separate the ‘existence’ of a thing from the thing itself!

### Innateness of the Plant/Bio or *Pranic* Order

Because the *pranic* order is a development of the material order, it also has the innateness of ‘existence’. In addition, it also exhibits the ‘growth’. This principle of ‘growth’ cannot be separated from any units of this order. If it is of *pranic* order, it will grow. For example, if you have a plant, you cannot stop it from growing. It will continue to respire and keep changing in this way. The only way you can stop it from growing is by cutting it, but when you do that, it ceases to belong to the pranic order, instead decays and then belongs to the material order! So, as long as you have a plant, it will grow. Further, just like in the case of coal; you cannot destroy the fundamental particles that make up the plant. You can only convert it from one form to the other. Thus ‘existence’ and ‘growth’ together are the innateness of the *pranic* order.

### Innateness of the Animal Order

The Animal Body is a development of the *pranic* order and therefore this order inherits the innateness of the previous order namely ‘existence’ and ‘growth’. This is at the level of the body, which is physico-chemical in nature.

In addition, all units in this order have the ‘will to live’ in ‘I’. Indeed no unit in this order can be separated from this ‘will to live’. It is intrinsic to every unit in this order. For example, you cannot separate this will to live from a dog. This “will to live” in the dog is in ‘I’ (consciousness) and not in the Body. Thus, on the one hand, the fundamental particles the body is made up of cannot cease to exist (existence) and the ‘live body’ cannot stop pulsating (growth); on the other hand, the will to live cannot be separated from ‘I’. Thus the animal order imbibes ‘existence’ & ‘growth’ in the body and a ‘will to live’ in ‘I’ as its innateness. The will to live is also called as *‘jīne ki āsā’*.

### Innateness of the Human Order

When we look at the human being, we find that ‘existence’ and ‘growth’ are fundamentally present in the body, just as in the animal body. At the level of ‘I’ however, in addition to the will to live, a human being’s innateness is the ‘will to live with happiness’. We can all see this and verify this for ourselves. We can verify in ourselves and we can verify this in others. As long as it is a human being you cannot separate him/her from the will to live and the need for happiness. Each one of us not only wants to live but also wants to ‘live with

happiness'. This is the innateness of the human order and it characterises the human order. We also say '*mānav sukha dharmī hai*', i.e. *the will to live happily cannot be removed from a human being*.

This is what we have been discussing in this course! All along, we have been exploring into ourselves and when we do, we find that just surviving is not enough for us; we also desire happiness and its continuity! We don't desire to *not be happy*, even for an instant. It is our basic need. So, we have been looking into the causes of unhappiness, and when we did, we discovered that the basic cause for our unhappiness is that we are living only with assumptions, only at the level of desiring, thinking and selecting/tasting in 'I'. This is insufficient for us, since it leads to conflict and is driven by beliefs/preconditionings. Hence, we have to exercise our need to know, which is what we started with. We said that we need to have the right understanding, which is the knowledge or understanding of the harmony at all 4 levels of our being [Realization and Understanding in 'I']. We have been trying to ensure this through self-exploration, i.e. by establishing a dialogue between, 'what we are' and 'what we really want to be' which is essentially the verification on the basis of our natural acceptance.

## Natural Characteristic (*Svabhāva*)

When we look at the different orders, we find that each order has a certain *value*. In a fundamental way, this is the 'usefulness' or 'participation' of the order in existence. This 'value' or 'participation' is also referred to as "natural characteristic". The 'characteristic' the order displays is 'natural to itself'. This is the same as the *value* of the entity, or its participation also called '*svabhāva*'.

### Svabhāva of Material Order

The fundamental characteristic or '*svabhāva*' of 'Composition/Decomposition' enables units or entities to come together and form a bigger unit. Bigger units transform to smaller units. Particles of soil combine to form a brick. Bricks combine to form towers. This is a case of composition. When the tower falls, it breaks down to small particles of soil. This is decomposition. This is the way material entities participate with other material units. It is on this account that we are able to construct buildings, roads, vehicles etc. And the good thing is that they go back cyclically to the original state based on their characteristic.

### Svabhāva of Plant/Bio Order

We can see in this order that *pranic* units nurture or worsen other *pranic* units. To nurture means to be supportive, to aid other *pranic* activities in the growth of pranic units. For

example, vegetable is a pranic unit and our body is also a pranic unit. If I eat vegetable, it helps my body grow. Similarly, if I eat datura, the thorn apple, another pranic unit, it will worsen my body. If I eat the same vegetable in larger quantity than required, it will work to worsen my body. To *worsen* means to be a deterrent, repressive to the other *pranic* activity. Hence, we say that the *svabhāva* or 'value' or 'natural characteristic' of the plant/bio order is to 'Nurture/Worsen'. This is the 'value' of the *pranic* in existence for all the orders.

### Svabhāva of Animal order

When we look at the animal order, the body of the animal belongs to the plant/bio or *pranic* order, and hence has the same 'usefulness' or 'value' as the *pranic* order. Thus 'nurture/worsen' is the *svabhāva* of the animal body.

The *svabhāva* of the Self ('I') of the animal order is non-cruelty (*akrūrātā*\*) and cruelty (*krūrātā*\*). We can understand these values with the following definitions:

**Cruelty (*krūrātā*)** – The feeling that it can fulfil its needs through violence and forcefulness.

We can observe the above in animals and may find more-or-less predominance of one of the above in certain kinds of animals. For example, cows may largely be living with a feeling of non-cruelty(*akrūrātā*); while animals like tigers and lions may exhibit cruelty (*krūrātā*).

### Svabhāva of human order

Similar as to the case in animals, the human body also belongs to the plant/bio order and hence has the same *Svabhāva* or value/natural characteristic as the *pranic* order. It either nurtures or worsens other *pranic* units. As in the example above, when I digest the vegetable, I absorb the plant and it worsens, while my body is nurtured.

The *svabhāva*/value of the Self ('I') in human beings is 'Perseverance (*dhīratā*\*)', Bravery (*Viratā*\*) and Generosity (*Udāratā*\*).

**Perseverance (*dhīratā*)** – Being assured that the all encompassing solution is to understand and live in harmony at all levels of existence, living with this commitment without any perturbation.

**Bravery (*vīratā*)** – Being assured that the all-encompassing solution is to understand and live in harmony at all levels and *I am ready to help the other to have the right understanding*. This is the commitment to help the other have the right understanding of the harmony and living at all levels of existence.

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\* Can be spelt as *akrurata*, *krurata*, *dheerata*, *veerata*, *udarata* respectively too.

**Generosity (*udāratā*)** – Being assured that the all-encompassing solution is to understand and live in harmony at all the four levels and I am ready to invest myself, my body and wealth to help the other have the right understanding.

As human beings we participate in the innate order of things with our ‘values’ of Perseverance, Bravery and Generosity. This is also our ‘participation’. *This is our natural characteristic.* This is what is natural to us. This is *naturally acceptable* to us. This is what we have been talking of, in this course! However, we find that human beings are not living as per this natural characteristic; even though we have a *svabhāva*, we are not living according to this. This is the basic reason for the contradiction and conflict that we see in human being. This is what leads to a state of unhappiness. Only when we live according to our basic human characteristic as mentioned above, we have a definite character, Otherwise, it is *not definite, it is uncertain, unlike* other three orders as discussed above.

## *B*asic Activity

As an extension to the discussion we had about the activities in all the four orders, let us understand here how the activity in the different orders is different at the basic level. In the material and *pranic* order, there is only recognising and fulfilment. Such units do not have the activities of assuming and knowing. Take for example, hydrogen and oxygen recognise the relation to each other, and combine to form water. A brick and the other brick have a definite relation, recognise it and get arranged to form a building. A plant recognises the relation with sun and water, and fulfils it by acting accordingly. Such activities take place in a similar way all the time, there is no selection involved here. A plant does not choose to turn or not to turn to sun, absorb or not to absorb water. Similarly, the fan in your room does not choose to rotate clockwise or anti-clockwise. It turns as per the winding in the motor! No choice.

When we look at animals and humans, we find selection taking place. We do select, no need to take any examples here. Animals also select. We saw one example above. We can see several such examples in nature. You get a puppy in your house and start calling it ‘Tommy’. The same voice falls in its ears repetitively, but the response changes with time. After some time, it assumes that when you utter that word, it has to come to you. And the recognition thus changes as per the assumption, followed by fulfilment. Do humans behave the same way? Well in a more sophisticated way. This is because the assumption in animals is related predominantly to the body. Like if you give your puppy to eat after uttering its name, it will assume faster the relation to that word. But it is not the same with you. If the same person calls you also Tommy, you will feel offended and may turn hostile to him. Your behaviour is more sophisticated as the assuming not only involves selecting/ tasting but desire and thought too. At the same time, human beings have the faculty to know and not only assume. The

animal does get to know. We do get to know. We ask 'why?', 'how?', 'what?'. Human beings have all the four activities, knowing, assuming, recognising and fulfilment.

## Conformance (Anu-sangitā)

Each unit 'conforms' through the principle of conformance or anu-sangitā. This is better understood via examples from the four orders:

***Material order:*** The continuity of the fundamental nature of the material unit is preserved through the physical and chemical processes. Take iron for example. Each atom of iron conforms to the constitutional structure of 'Iron'. There is no atom of iron that will be unlike the other atom of iron, if it were, we would not call it iron. We call this 'constitution conformance'. The material order exhibits constitution conformance. We can verify this for all things in the material order. For example: oxygen, nitrogen, other gases, gold, silver, aluminium....all of them *conform to* and are *always according to* the *constitution* of their kind. Hence, we say that any matter conforms to its constitution or has 'constitution conformance'. We also say 'padārtha avasthā parinām anusangī hai'. This constitution conformance method is the mechanism by means of which the continuity of a species in the material order is maintained in nature/existence.

***Plant/Bio or pranic order:*** A neem seed will always sprout a neem plant. All of us know this. Even if you never went to school, you know this. Everything in the neem plant, its flowers, its fruits, its leaves, the taste of the leaves, the colour of the leaves, all this information, this basic information of every neem plant is stored in the seed. Thus, we say the plant is always as the seed, or we can say, 'as the seed, thus the plant'. We can take numerous such examples, and we shall always find that plants exhibit this – as the seed, thus the plant. Hence, we say that a plant conforms to the seed, or has 'seed conformance'. We also say 'prāṇa avasthā bij anusangī hai'. This 'seed conformance' method is the mechanism by means of which the continuity of a plant species is maintained in nature/existence.

***Animal order:*** Have you ever seen a cow chase a rabbit, kill it and eat it up raw? Have you ever seen a dog only eating grass and nothing else? We see that a cow is always like a cow, and a dog is always like a dog. Animals, we can see conform to their lineage. How animals are, their behaviour, is according to the lineage they belong to, the lineage they come from. As the lineage, so the animal. Hence, we say that an animal conforms to its breed, or has 'breed conformance'. We also say, 'Jeeva avasthā vāṇś anu-sangī hai'. Cows, dogs, lions, elephants, are all according to their lineage or breed. This breed conformance method is the mechanism by means of which the continuity of an animal species is maintained in nature/existence.



**Human Order:** In humans, we see a distinct shift from how animals are, as far as *conformance* is concerned. A cow's offspring is always like a cow. A lion's offspring is always like a lion. Is a barber's offspring necessarily a barber? Is a mathematician's son always a mathematician? If your mother likes music, is it necessary that you also like music? The answer is no! We can clearly see that we humans are not according to our lineage or race, as in animals. We may pick up something from our parents as we grow up, but we are usually very different in many ways from them. We humans are according to our *imagination*; according to our desires, thoughts and selections in 'I'. The desires, thoughts and selections we have in 'I' can come from anywhere. It can come from past memories, it can come from our parents, the environment, the media, anywhere. In the case of humans, we can say 'as the education, so the human'. We are according to our desires, thoughts and selections. Together, we call these '*sanskāra*'. Hence, we say that a human being conforms to his or her *sanskāra*, or has *sanskāra conformance*. Or, we also say *gyāna avasthā sanskāra anu-sangi hai*'. Today, we can see that there is a difference in our *sanskārs* - it keeps changing, and hence, we demonstrate indefinite behaviour. It is only with right understanding, with knowledge that we have definite *sanskāra* and can thus exhibit definite behavior.

We have thus been able to study the different aspects of each of the four orders that constitute nature. In fact, based upon this study we can now identify the different orders in nature.

## Human Beings - Our State Today

Order	Animal	Human
Things ( <i>vastu</i> )	Animal Body + 'I'	Human Body + 'I'
Innateness ( <i>dhāraṇa</i> )	Existence+Growth in Body + Will to live in 'I'	Existence + Growth in Body + Will to live with happiness in 'I'
Natural Characteristic ( <i>svabhāva</i> )	Composition/ Decomposition, Nurture /Worsen in Body, + Cruelty, Non-Cruelty in 'I'	Composition/ Decomposition, Nurture/Worsen in Body + Perseverance, Bravery, Generosity in 'I'
Mode	Reaction	Response
Needs	Physical facilities	Physical facilities + Relationship + Right Understanding/ Knowledge

**Ask yourself this question:**

***“Do I want to live as in the left side column, or in the right side column? What is naturally acceptable to me?”***

Now ask yourself another question:

***“Am I living more like in the left side column, or as in the right side column?”***



We can make the following observations based on the table above:

- What is written for 'I' on the right side makes the basic needs for us as human beings. Without these, there is no definiteness in our conduct; without this, we don't have satisfaction, we don't have a continuity of happiness.
- We can't do away with our need for continuous happiness, because it is our innateness, it is intrinsic to us, it is our *Dhāraṇā* – it is inseparable from us. So, surviving alone is not enough for us, we want to live with happiness and its continuity, and this is not possible without having the right understanding/knowledge.
- We can't live with cruelty or just avoiding to be cruel, and *still be happy*, because, that is not our natural characteristic, it not our *svabhāva*, it is not our natural acceptance, it is not naturally acceptable to us. Our natural acceptance is for perseverance, bravery and generosity, and this is our *svabhāva*, this is our natural acceptance. Unless we are according to our natural characteristic, we are not according to our natural acceptance, we cannot be happy. We can *try* many things, but it is not possible for us to be happy.
- Our basic need is not just physical facilities, but relationship and right understanding/knowledge as well.
- To live as in the left is called living in animal consciousness and to live as in the right is called living in human consciousness.
- Unless we exercise our need and capacity to know, we shall continue to create problems for ourselves and the rest of the orders in nature, since we have far greater faculties and the ability to have a large impact on our environment.
- This is the difference between "*what we are*" and "*what we really want to be*".

If we as human beings do not exercise our capacity to know, then we end up being more like animals, and hence we get defined as social animals! We become worse than animals since we have more faculties and greater impact over everything. No lion in his lifetime can kill 60,00,000 people, but there have been some human beings in history that have done exactly that! Just living is not enough for human beings. We want to know, and live with happiness. We can see in human beings that this will-to-be-happy is related to this will-to-know, this is why human being is said to be in Knowledge Order- *Ġyāna Avasthā*. This Knowledge, this right understanding is what we have been discussing all along. We need to start the process of self-verification in us, we have to start becoming more aware, and start exploring into the proposals at all four levels of our living.

Today, we don't know *what we are*, we don't know *what we want*, hence we don't know *what to do*, we largely only learn *how to do*. We don't know 'what to do' and are busy working out 'how to do'. Irrespective of how much you know of 'how to do', as long as you don't know 'what to do', you end up getting dissatisfied. Thus, before producing something, we don't see if it is really needed, and what use it is for us, and what impact it will have on the environment ("*what to do, why to do*"). Instead, we end up producing more and more of it, in different varieties, shapes, sizes and packages! (All this being "*how to do*").

Technology deals with the latter part – 'how to do'. It's to do with *technique*. Technology does not give us the answers of *why to do*, and *what to do*...this answer comes from right understanding and the *values* we understand on this basis. Thus, it is only with right understanding that we identify and understand what is *valuable* to us, what is of *value* to us, and we can then use technology as a means to ensure what is valuable to us.

## What is the Way Out?

The way out would be largely clear to you now. We need to work in the direction of development of mankind from animal consciousness to human consciousness. And this entails working for the right understanding. We have been talking about it throughout the book. We saw how due to lack of right understanding, the human order, though it wants to be fulfilling to one and all, fails to fulfil the human order itself. It fails to take care of its own body, what to talk of other units in nature. Knowledge is the basic need of the human order, and it needs to get on to the focus of its every thought and action.

## Summary

- There are four orders in nature: material order, plant/bio (*pranic*) order, animal order and human order.
- There is interconnectedness among all the orders. The first three orders are mutually fulfilling to the rest three orders, only human order is not able to be fulfilling to the other orders.
- There is recyclability and self-regulation in nature.
- We can understand the four orders in terms of the things under the group, their activities, the innateness, the natural characteristic, the basic activity and the *conformance*. The table provided in the chapter gives a comprehensive look at each of these aspects.

- A critical appraisal of where we stand today shows that humans are largely living like animals.
- The way out is consciousness development of mankind.

**REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What exactly is implied by the term - 'nature'? Explain.
2. What are the four orders in nature? Briefly explain them.
3. What do you mean by mutual fulfilment in nature? Cite a few examples.
4. "Other than human order, the three orders are mutually fulfilling to each other." Explain with examples. Why does human order fail to be mutually fulfilling to itself and to the other orders?
5. Write a short note on the recyclability and self-regulation in nature.
6. What do you mean by 'innateness'? What is the innateness in the four orders?
7. What is the *Svabhāva* (natural characteristic) of a unit? Elaborate on the *Svabhāva* of a human order.
8. Explain the activities in the four orders of nature. How are the activities in the human order qualitatively different from those of other three orders?
9. What do you mean by '*conformance*'? Explain the *conformance* in the four orders.
10. Suggest ways to enhance the fulfilment of human order with the other three orders. Mention any two programs you can undertake in light of the above.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

# Harmony in Existence – Understanding Existence as Co-existence

So far we have been talking about units, be it a human being or animal or plant or any material entity. All the units together constitute nature. All the units of nature exist in space which is an important reality to understand. Existence is nothing but the nature in space. In this chapter, we will explore the harmony in existence in the form of co-existence of all the units in space.

### *An* Introduction to 'Space' ( *Śūnya* )

We had started our exploration at our innermost level of being – with (our) Self ('I'). Our natural acceptance has been a key mechanism for us to explore the harmony of (our) Self and the harmony with the Body. Exploring further, we discovered that we feel related with others and we experience the feelings (or values) in our relationship. We then saw that this feeling of relationship starts from our family, and then slowly extends to the world family. Beyond humans, we explored the harmony in nature and we discovered that every 'thing' that we can see around us can be understood as a part of one of the four orders of nature namely the material order, plant/bio or *pranic* order, animal order and the human order.

These four orders are interrelated, in harmony, and our natural acceptance is to live in harmony with these orders. So far, we have been discussing what are called 'units'. We define a unit as something that is limited in size. Like a small blade of human hair to the biggest planets we know of, they are all limited in size, i.e. bounded on six sides. So, all the 'things' we have been studying so far: the human beings, animals, lumps of matter as well as various atoms and molecules, are all 'units'. We can recognize them as such, they are 'countable'. But there is another 'reality' we have not yet studied or explored. This is the space (*śūnya*, or spelt as *shoonya* for simplicity). Let us try to understand the significance of this reality in order to complete our study of the whole Existence.

If I ask you a question ‘What is between you and the book you are reading right now?’ Your answer may be “Nothing”. If I now ask you what is between the earth and the sun, you answer may still be ‘nothing’, or, some of you may say ‘empty space’ or ‘space’. If I ask you where is the earth? Where is the sun? What is the answer? That’s space.

Yes, we are talking about space! We normally don’t pay attention to this ‘reality’, because it’s not a ‘unit’. You can’t touch it, smell it. We normally just ‘see through it’. But the fact is, because you can’t ‘touch it’ or ‘see it’ as you would see a unit like your body, your friend, or a piece of rock, doesn’t mean it does not exist! Space exists everywhere. Note that space does not just exist between the earth and the sun, but is all around you. It is between you and the book you are reading right now, it is inside you, it’s around you. When we start paying attention to it, we can each see that what we call as space or emptiness, is actually everywhere! We don’t really generally bother about it (except perhaps in an academic sense in subjects like physics or astronomy), because, space does not seem to play any role in our daily life.

So why are we talking about it here then? Well, we want to understand all levels of our living, and when we go to explore that, it turns out that what we call as ‘existence’ or ‘all that exists’, includes space as well. We may think that space has no role in our life, but let us ascertain this impression of ours. Let’s find out.

## Co-existence of Units in Space

### ‘Units in Space’

When we look at the existence around, the first thing we see is space. You may not note it, but it is there. And then you see the units in space. Between every two units, there is space. As we saw in the example of book and the reader, the same holds true for every other unit, be it material, or plant, or animal or some human being. The units exist in space. If we were to define this, we would say that there are two kinds of realities in existence and these are: Space and Units (in Space).

So, we say, Existence = Space + Units (in Space).

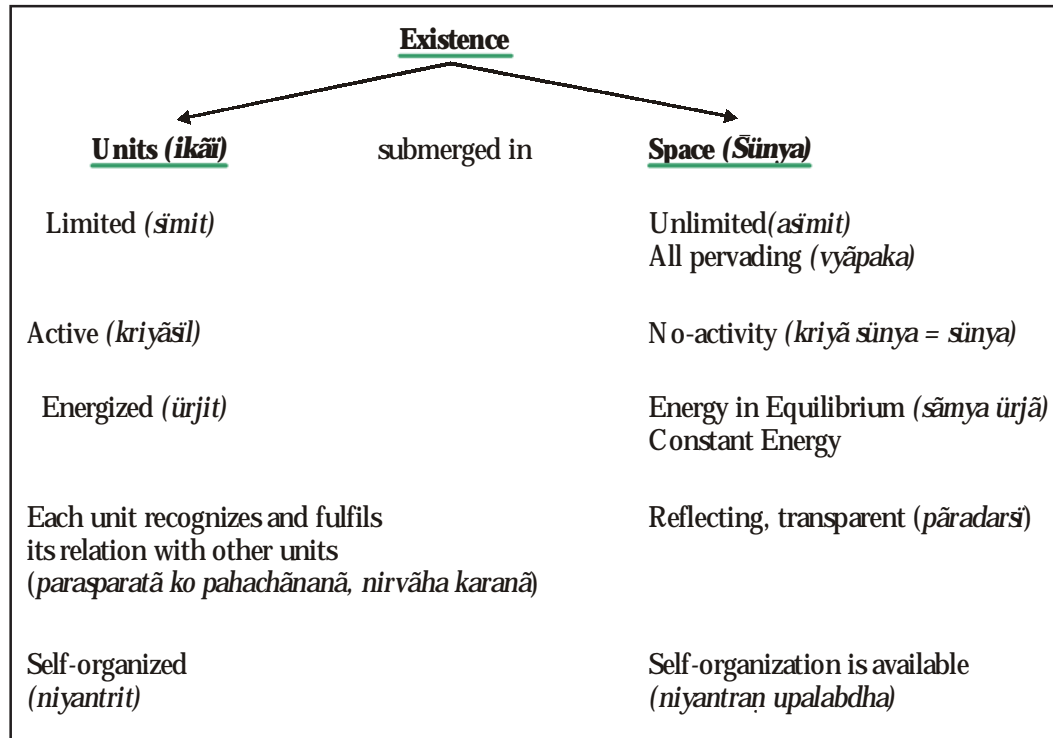
Each unit of every order viz., material, plant/bio or *pranic*, animal and human order, ‘exist in space’ or they ‘are in space’. We also say they are ‘submerged in space’.

Since nature consists of the four orders we have been discussing, we can say ,

“Existence = Nature submerged in space”.

Nature = Four orders (Material, Plant/Bio or *Pranic*, Animal and Human Order)

We can understand this reality from the smallest particle to the largest galaxies. Let's explore this further:



All nature is submerged in space. Space is not a 'unit' but it exists, as a reality. Let us look into the various attributes of units and space:

## 'Limited' and 'Unlimited'

Nature has four orders and there are units in each order. Each unit is limited in size. The size ranges from being really small (atom) to really big (galaxies). Each and every unit is finite and limited in size, be it the smallest particle or the biggest galaxies. Space, on the other hand is Unlimited. Space has no 'size' as, unlike units, it is not bounded. Space is not bounded on any side! So, there is no beginning or end to space, as there is to units! For example, when you take a book, you know that it starts and finishes. We say the book is 'limited' in size. When we take space, there is no such thing. For example, there is space behind you, inside you, between you and the book, between the book and the earth, in the book, in every page of it, inside the page, and beyond the earth....all the way till you can imagine. Even if you say space ends <here> and there is "nothing" after that, that "nothing" is still space or empty space as we call it! We find that space pervades; It is all-pervading. Units, on the other hand are not all-pervading. That is how we recognize them as units!

## 'Active' and 'No-activity'

We can understand each unit as something that is dynamic and active. Be it a physical activity, physico-chemical activity or a sentient activity. Each unit or entity of all the four orders is active. We already explored this in the previous chapter, "harmony with nature" where we explored activities in the four orders like: composition/decomposition, selection/taste, etc. For example: you can yourself see that 'thinking' is an activity you do, and so is 'desiring'.

Space on the other hand has no activity. Only units are active or in other words, when 'something' is active or has activity, we call it a 'unit'! There is empty space between you and the book right now and it does not have any activity. *The particles of gases and dust in between are active, but space is no-activity. That's how we come to know of it.*

## 'Energized' and 'Energy in Equilibrium'

What we normally call or consider as energy today, is the 'transfer of energy'. For example: when you place water in a vessel on the stove, we say the 'heat energy from the flame was transferred to the water in the vessel'. What about the water before we put it on the stove? Was it energized? What about the stove before we lit it, was it energized? We may normally think 'no, it was not', but the fact is, it is! Anything that is a unit, has activity. Anything that has activity, is energized. All the particles in the water and the metal stove are active, very active, and energized. We can't see this very easily or we don't see the 'physical effects' of the unheated water or unlit metal stove, but they are still energized! Space, on the other hand, is not a unit, it has no activity. Hence, we don't say space is energized but we say 'Space is energy in equilibrium' or it is 'constant energy'. All units are energized in space. *This energy is available to all units. In other words, space is equilibrium energy; all units are in space; all units are energized and active being in space.*

## 'Each Unit Recognizes.....Space is Reflecting & Transparent'

When you pour water into the soil, the soil soaks it up. We call this as, 'the water is recognizing its relationship with the soil and fulfilling it'. (When we use the term 'recognizing and fulfilling' for ourselves, humans, we use it also in the sense that we are 'aware' of the 'recognition' & 'fulfilment'. Since the activity is basically the same, except awareness, we use or extend the same words for things like soil, plants, etc.) When we look around, we see that even in the physical world, there is a relationship between all things around us. The air recognizes its relationship with the soil, the soil with the water, the water and soil with the tree, etc. There is relationship and we see all around us. This is the meaning of each unit



recognizing its relationship and fulfilling it. As humans, we have seen that we too want to recognize our relationship with the four orders and fulfil it. We called this 'living in harmony with all the four orders'. We can easily see this, understand ourselves if we pay a bit of attention that each unit recognizes and fulfils its relationship with the other unit.

What about space? Well, space is not a unit. *Space is reflecting.* What that means is, every unit is reflected in the other units in space. It is due to this reflection that there is a relationship, and this is why all units are related to each other. This is why, we as humans also feel or are related to one another and this is the basis for our relationship with the four orders. All the units are related to each other being in space.

*Space is transparent.* It is the same as saying reflecting. What this means is that in space there is no obstruction. Hence, all these objects or units are able to recognize each other in space, are related to each other being in space, since space is transparent.

## 'Self-organized', and 'Self-organization is Available'

Every unit is an organization. A unit recognizes other units and combines to form a bigger organization. Starting from the atom, to the big galaxy, this organization goes on, as a self-organization. At every level, we get a self-organization. Sub atomic particles recognize each other and come together to form atoms. Cells recognize each other and form organizations like organs and a body. Planetary bodies, solar systems, galaxies are still bigger organizations.

We can see for ourselves, very easily. Take for example, a stone. It is self-organized. The stone maintains its own organization. Or take a piece of iron, it is self-organized.

We are not organizing it. We are not supplying it organization from outside.

Think of a cow. It is self-organized. The body of the cow is self-organized; and so is the '*Jivana*' of cow. It does not create havoc for others around it. It has a definite behaviour.

Now take humans. When we look at it, we see that we are self-organized at the level of the body. We are not organizing the body. We *are not doing anything for the coordination* between the heart, kidneys, lungs, eyes, brain, hands, legs, etc. All these are functioning together. Our input is needed only to provide the required nutrition, and to assist the body when we fall sick/get injured. At the level of 'I', we are not self-organized, but being in space, self-organization is available to the Self ('I'). That's why we are in pursuit of happiness, which is essentially being in harmony. Whenever we are not in harmony, we are unhappy. This prompts us to explore the real meaning of happiness, and we keep striving for being in harmony.

We can clearly see, via countless examples from the four orders that all these units are self-organized. *No one is organizing them from outside. No one is supplying this organization.*

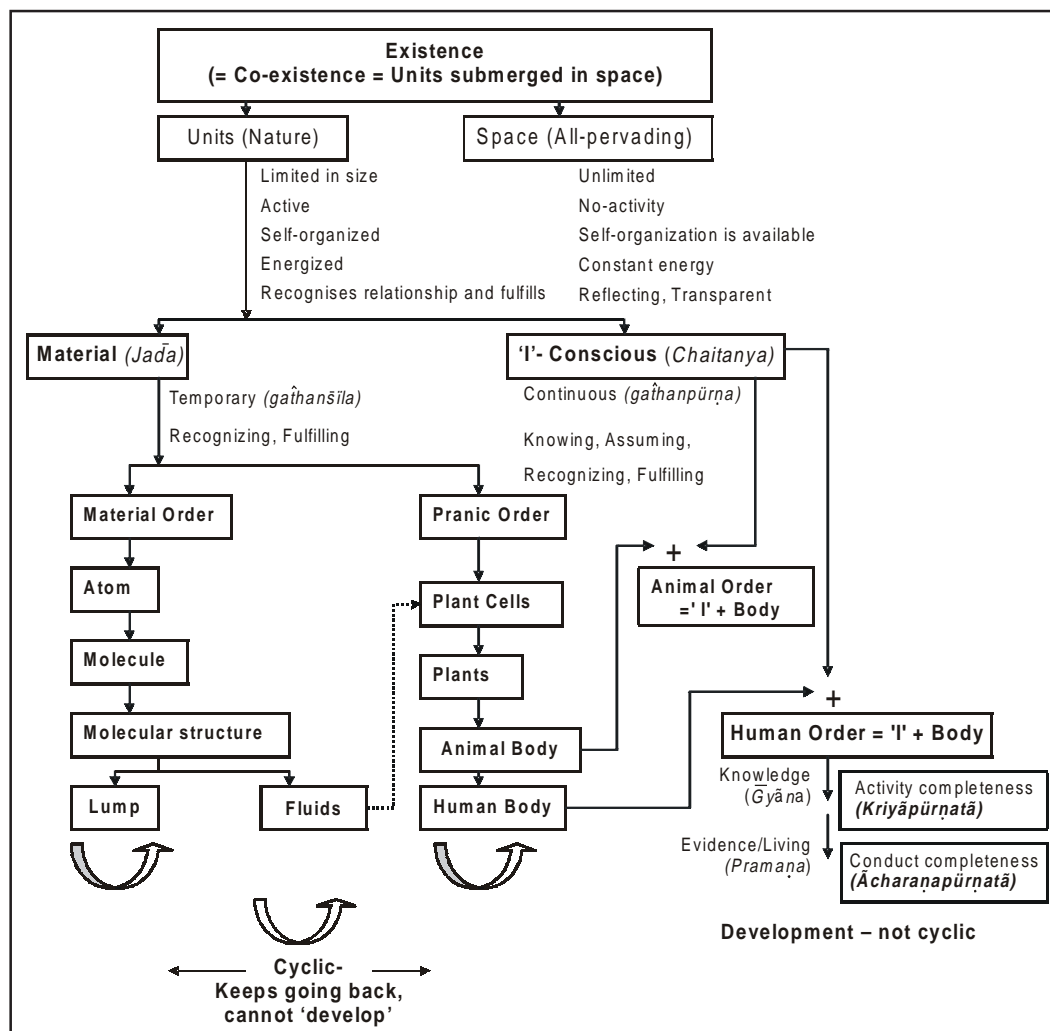
This self-organization is available to units being in space. Hence, for space, we say 'self organization is available'.

To sum up

- There are two kinds of realities in existence: space and units in space.
- These units are in co-existence with space and in co-existence amongst themselves .
- We can thus understand the whole of existence as Nature submerged in Space. We can understand this harmony.
- Each unit is
  - ❖ energised and active in space
  - ❖ self-organized in space
  - ❖ recognizing and fulfilling its relationship with other units in space
- Space is in continuum. It is all-pervading and is no-activity.
- We are also units in space and there is acceptance in us (in 'I') for self-organization.

### 'Existence is Co-existence'

Now that we have studied ourselves, our family, society, nature and space, let us see the interconnectedness between all these units and space. We find that being in space, the units are mutually fulfilling to other units. This is being in co-existence.



The figure above depicts all the four orders (material, plant/bio, animal and human) and their co-existence with space. We have already covered the relationship between units and space in the previous section. We saw that units co-exist in space or units are submerged in space. In this section, we shall explore into units and see how they are inter-related in existence.

\* You keep referring to the figure above as you read through the rest of this section.

### Material and conscious units

You will see in the figure above that we have categorized units into two types:

- Material or *jada*
- Conscious or *chaitanya*

What does this mean? We have already been discussing this, so let's go over it:

Material units are those that are only *recognizing* and *fulfilling*. There is no *assuming* in them. There is no potential in them to *know or assume*. Everything in the material order: stones, minerals, soil, petrol, etc; everything in the plant/bio order: plants, shrubs, grass, animal body and human body fall into this category of 'Material' or *jāda* kind of units. It is interesting. If we consider the animal and human body, we find that there is only recognition and fulfilment. There is no assuming in the animal and human body.

We had discussed about this in chapter five. Let us recapitulate it. Taking an example, suppose you take a blade and cut your finger. If the blade is sharper than your skin then the skin gets cut and will bleed. No matter how many times you try this. If you ask a friend to do this, the result is the same. The skin does not respond in different ways depending on who is cutting it. But what happens at the level of the Self, where *assumption* is involved. Let's say you have gone to the doctor's clinic and the doctor takes a blade to make a cut in your skin. Since you know that you have gone to the doctor to be treated, you cooperate with the doctor and allow him/her to make a cut on your skin. Now, if you assume that the person is not a doctor, you are sitting in a bus and someone takes a knife and tries to cut your skin, what would you do? You would be alarmed and resist the person. Of course, if he succeeds in putting a knife to your skin, your skin will still bleed!

It becomes clear, that

*At the level of the body there is only recognizing and fulfilment.*

*At the level of 'I', there is assuming and knowing, in addition to recognizing and fulfilment.*

As indicated earlier, we call 'I' (*Jivana*) a conscious entity or *chaitanya* or consciousness. We call the body material or *jāda*. Each one of us can distinguish the units around us based on this categorization. Why are we doing this? Simple: to better understand the things we live with, including ourselves!

If we understood which units assume and which don't, then we would know how to interact with them. In our interactions with the material order, such as a stone, we know that there is no assumption involved, and we can be assured of its behaviour. While interacting with animals or humans, we know that there is assumption involved, and hence keeping this in consideration, we can improve our interaction and relationship.

*Thus, Material or 'jāda' units:*

- Have the activities of recognizing & fulfilment.
- Are *temporary* in nature, they undergo *structural* changes. We also call them *gāṭhanṣila*.

*Conscious or chaitanya units*

- Have the activities of knowing, assuming, recognizing & fulfilment. Currently, assuming, recognizing and fulfilment are predominant in humans. We have the *capacity* to know, and we explored this via our natural acceptance. 'Knowing' means having the 'right understanding', understanding the harmony at all four levels of our being.
- Are *continuous*, there is *no structural change in them*. There can only be a qualitative change in them. We also call them *gāṭhanpurnā*.

*Material units: from atoms to the human body*

Now that we have explored that basic classification in units, let us explore into the material (*jāda*) units. Material Units are the basis for all material things – soil, metal, rocks, liquids, gases to the basic cells and all the way to animal and human bodies. The material units undergo changes through physical and physico-chemical processes. In the material order, an atom combines with another atom to form molecular structure. The molecular structures can exist either as lumps (*pinda*), or fluids (*rasa*). Fluids are the basis of a plant cell (*pranic* order) and such cells combine to form plants, the animal body and the human body. Thus, we can see that in the material units, starting from the smallest fundamental particle that is stable, the atom, a sequence of natural events takes place, and solids (like stones, minerals, etc.), fluids (like water, fossil oil, etc.), plant cells (that go on to form the innumerable variety of plants we know of), animal bodies (of various species) and finally the human body, (in which we find a lot of variety in physical appearance) – all these are formed. All these processes are taking place in a self-organized, natural manner. There is nothing controlling these processes, these processes occur naturally in co-existence.

These events, these processes starting from the atom all the way to the highly complex human body are all happening in a *self-organized manner*. We humans are not *creating these processes or units, neither are we responsible for controlling* this entire process. When we understand this self-organisation, we are also able to understand our relationship with them and its fulfilment.

*Conscious (sentient) units, the animal order and the human order*

We have been talking about the material units so far, up to the animal and human bodies. What of animals and human beings? What else is left to have an animal and human being, the way we know them? The answer is: conscious/ sentient units! We also referred to these units as the Self or ('I'). We have already discussed that animals and human beings are as co-existence of the conscious/sentient ('I') unit and the material body. We have been exploring this in the chapters so far.

Animals or Animal Order = 'I' + Animal Body

Humans or Human Order = 'I' + Human Body

*What is my role in existence?*

**Let us do the following:** Take a look at the picture of existence we have a few pages earlier. Now answer these questions for yourself:

What have I done for any of these to exist?

What have I done for space to exist?

What have I done for material and conscious units to exist?

What have I done for atoms, molecules, lumps, fluids, and plants to exist?

What have I done for animals and humans to exist?

What have I done for the existence of my own body? My teeth, hands, eyes, feet, etc?

What I have done for my own existence?

Have I created any of this at all?

Am I controlling or directing any of this at all?

Am I the one directing the formation of molecules, the growth of plants, or the beating of my own heart?

We are not doing any of these. We are not creating any of these!

What is my role in this existence then, if I have not created, or am not controlling any of these?

All I can do is learn to live with all this! And how would this learning be possible? This is what we have been discussing from the beginning of this book: understanding the harmony at all four levels of our living. This is happiness; this ensures the continuity of happiness in us. When we are able to have the right understanding, we live with the understanding and are hence able to fulfil our relationship with the four orders.

We have been discussing the need to have the understanding of harmony at all four levels of existence so far. The detail of this is as follows:

Existence is Co-existence. Co-existence is in the form of:

Every unit is submerged in space (Harmony in Existence)

Every unit is related and mutually fulfilling to every other unit (Harmony in Nature)

Human being is related and wants to be mutually fulfilling to every other unit (Harmony in Society)

'I' is related and wants to be mutually fulfilling to every 'I' (Harmony in family)

'I' is related and wants to be mutually fulfilling to Body (Harmony with Body)

Different activities in 'I' are also interrelated and active to be in harmony (Harmony in 'I')

(realisation and understanding ensure harmony in desires, thoughts, expectations)

Understanding the self ('I'), the activities in 'I', and their interrelation, understanding the reality of 'I' as being distinct from the body is called **knowledge of Self ('I')**.

**The knowledge of Self ('I') or *Jivana* is called *jivana gyāna*.**

Understanding the harmony at all the levels above means we have understood existence.

**This is called knowledge of Existence or we also call it *astitva darshana gyāna*.**

Having understood 'I' (*jivana*) and the entire existence, we understand our relationship with every unit in existence and fulfil it, leading to mutual happiness and prosperity.

**This is called knowledge of human(e) conduct, also called *mānavīyatā pūrṇa acharaṇa gyāna*.**

The knowledge of these three put together is called right understanding: understanding of existence, understanding of the Self, and understanding human(e) conduct. This is the same as understanding the harmony at all four levels of our existence.

When we have this right understanding, the activities of 1) Realization and 2) Understanding – which are currently dormant in 'I' also get expressed, ***hence we also call this 'activity completeness' or 'kriyāpurnatā'***. All the activities in 'I' are now expressed, not only desiring, thinking and selection, as is the case now.

When there is completeness in the ability of 'I' to live with right understanding at all the four levels, leading to mutual fulfilment, ***it is called 'conduct completeness' or 'ācharanpurnatā'***.

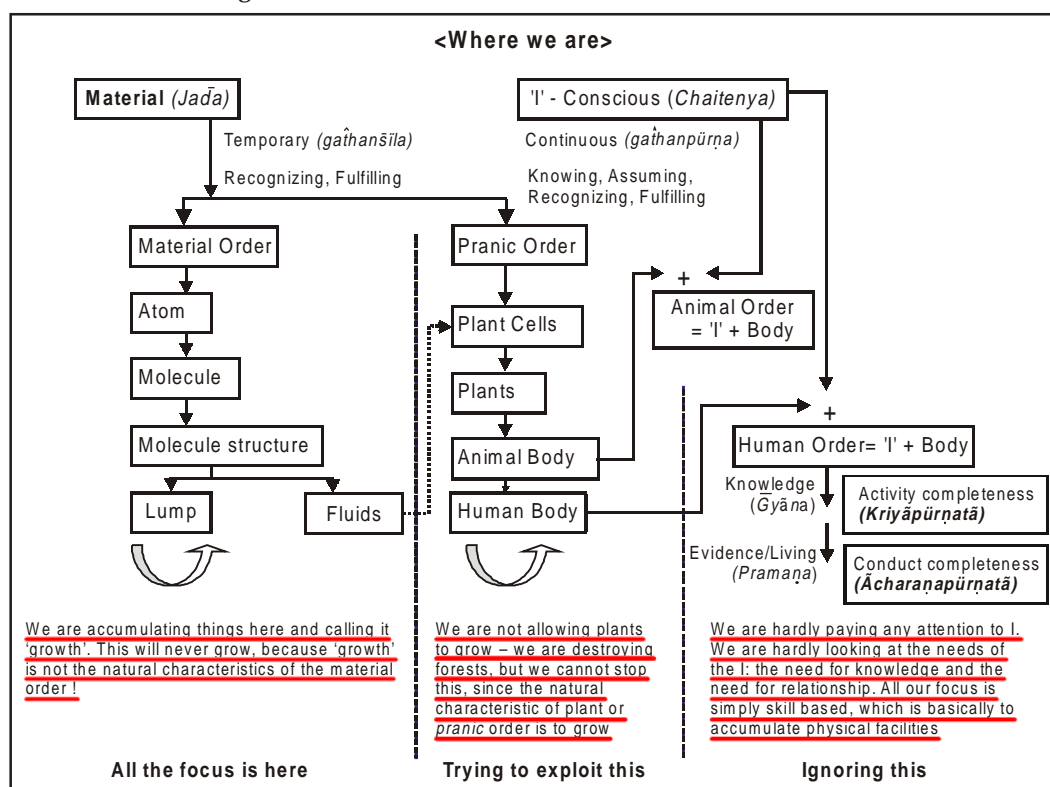
Thus, we can see that each material and conscious unit is submerged in space and being in space, each unit is energised, self-organized and recognizes and fulfils its relationships with other entities. This is the entirety of existence and it is harmonious.

So, Existence is in the form of Co-existence. It is in Harmony. We don't have to *create* this harmony, it already exists. We only have to *understand* it to be in it. This means that having the knowledge of existence and knowledge of self ('I') gives me the knowledge of humane conduct (*how to live in existence, with the four orders*). With this knowledge, I can live with humane conduct. This is the pending task we have to complete!

## What are we Doing Today?

"Growing what does not grow", "stopping what anyway grows"!

Look at the diagram below:



\* We are trying to grow in the left side (material order) and somehow trying to stop growth on the right side (plant order) –which does not.

We can understand the basic nature of all units. We can understand the natural characteristic of an order, and then know what to do with it. For example:



Material Order – is characterized by composition-decomposition. This is its natural characteristic, its participation. It does not ‘grow’. i.e. stones do not ‘grow’, gold does not ‘grow’, money; the paper it is printed on does not ‘grow’.

Plant/*Pranic* Order - is characterized by growth and maintaining the form of growth. Ex: a plant grows, a shrub grows.

Now, if you want ‘growth’, would you focus on material order, or on the plant order? The answer seems obvious: if we wanted growth, we would look towards the order that has growth as its ‘natural characteristic’ and work on it. We find that this is in the plant order as in existence, naturally, without us having to do anything about it, plants or the plant order anyway grows.

Now, if you look at the diagram we have above, you will find that today we are putting all efforts into the material order. All the ‘growth’ we talk of is here: by making more cars, eating more chocolate, building more roads, making bigger buildings and robots, we think we are ‘growing’. *But this is not possible, since by its natural characteristic itself, the material order does not grow!* Howsoever, we try for growth here, we *cannot* be satisfied, because at the end of the day, it is only **accumulation**. *Hence, we can accumulate money, but we cannot grow money!* On the other hand, that which naturally grows i.e. plants, we are trying to stop! We seem to be trying very hard to stop the growth in plants today!

Thus, our attempts at growth are quite mixed up today. There is an inherent problem in the kind of ‘growth’ we are talking about. We are focusing on the material order or *padārtha avasthā* which does not grow and not paying attention to the plant order or *prāṇa avasthā*, which anyways grows. We don’t have to do anything for it! This is because we do not have the right understanding. We do not understand the natural characteristic of these orders and *our actions are not aligned according to the natural characteristics of these orders*. Thus, when we talk about growth now, we are not really ‘growing’, we are only ‘accumulating’. And that is the reason for the problem. Today, we think, we all have to struggle to survive; that if I have to have growth, or what I am trying to grow does not grow by natural design, I have to snatch it away from the other. Thus, we only end up having a lot of competition, and no growth in the real sense. Now, if you wanted growth you would plant trees, say, a banana tree. In a few years it would have grown so much that you will have more than you can manage. There is growth taking place in existence anyway, even if we don’t initiate it, there is no need to compete for it.

It is also clear that we are ignoring the needs of the Self (‘I’) and mainly focusing on physical facilities, which are in the material order.

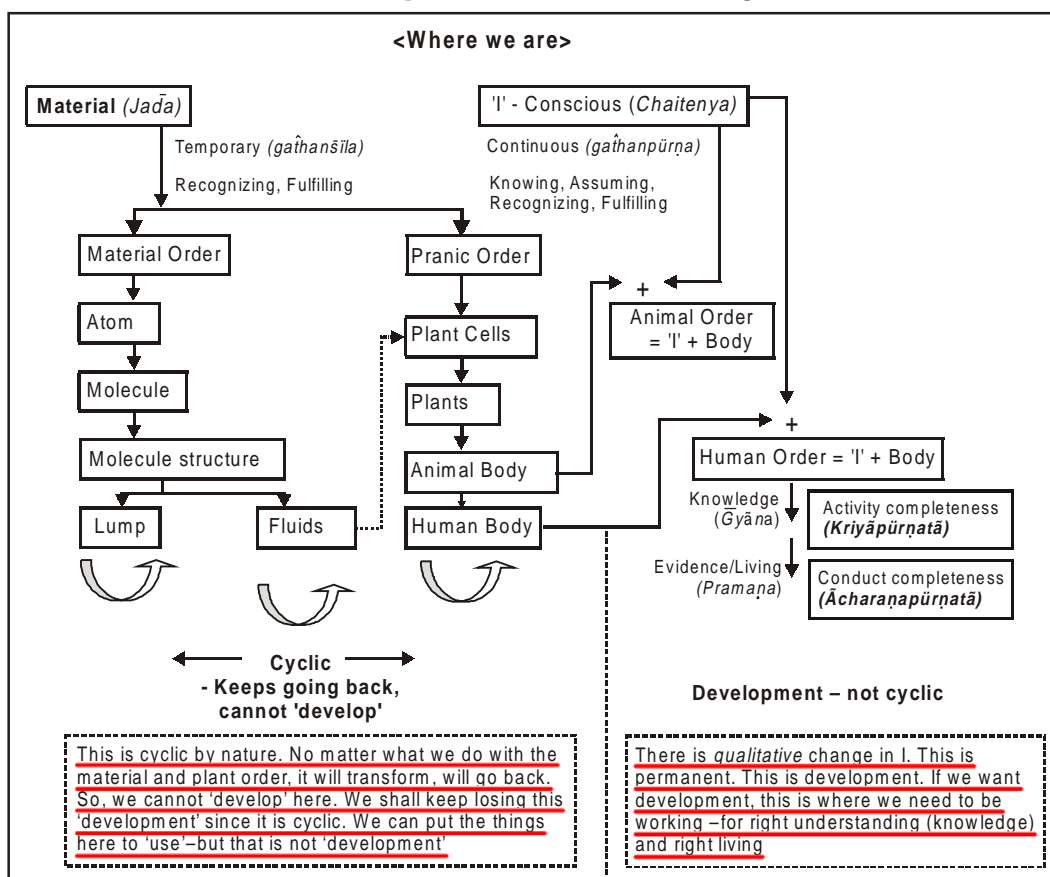
**Accumulation in the material order cannot be a substitute for the needs of knowledge/ understanding and relationship in ‘I’. Work on the material order needs to be done in the *light* of understanding in ‘I’ and the needs of ‘I’.**

### “Developing where it cycles back”, “not developing where it does not”

Let's start with a question:

If you had 'development', would you want it to be reversible or irreversible? Whatever you gained out of development, would you want it to stay, or go away/back to where you started from?

The answer, one can guess, is we want development to be irreversible, to stay with us, to be permanent. So, if something we do is in a cycle, i.e. if we go back to where we started from, we would not call it 'development'. Take a look at the figure below:

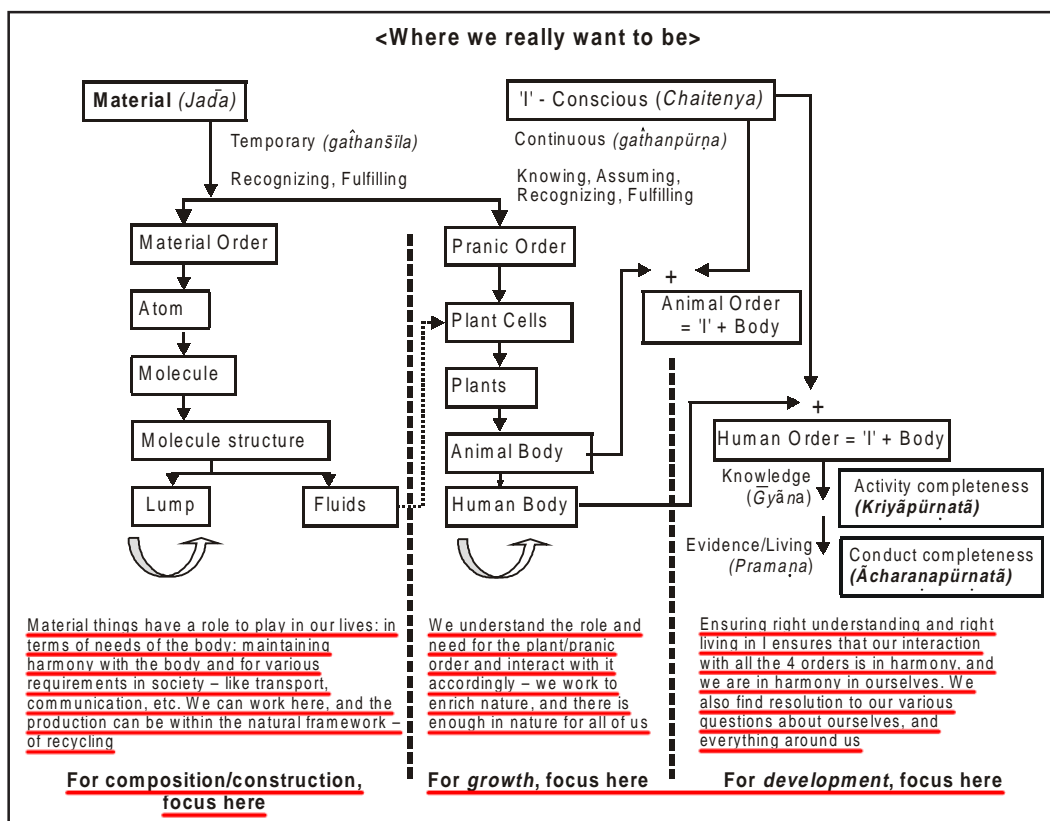


What we are doing today in the name of 'development' is to focus on the material order and the plant order. Now, by nature, these are cyclic. They undergo composition/decomposition. Hence, if we work on this order, it is in a cycle, it is not 'development', each time going back to where we started from!

Where does 'development' take place then? Development has to take place in the human being – in 'I', by knowing the reality, knowing the entire existence and living in accordance with it.

## Where do we want to be?

We want to interact with the material order with a view to make things that remain as constructed, like our houses, implements. We want to use them for composition. We want to use plant order where growth is required. And for ourselves, we want to develop as responsible human beings. This is depicted in the diagram below:



## Summary

- There are two kinds of realities in existence: units, and space. Space is a reality and can be understood.
- The units are in co-existence being in space.
- We can thus understand the whole of existence as *Nature submerged in Space*.
- The units are limited, active, energised, recognize and fulfil the relationship with other units, and self-organized. Space is all-pervading, no-activity, equilibrium energy, reflecting (transparent), and, self-organization is available in space.

- Existence is co-existence. Being in space, the units are in harmony, and fulfil the relationship with each other. This can be understood for all the four orders.
- My role in existence is only to understand the co-existence to reach the state of *kriyāpūrṇatā* \* and live accordingly to attain *ācharanpūrṇatā* \*.
- With lack of right understanding, we are investing ourselves to grow things that do not grow, develop things where it cycles back.
- We need to work on the material order for composition or construction, on plant order for growth and for development, we need to work for right understanding.

#### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. “Existence = Nature submerged in space” - Elaborate this point.
2. Differentiate between units and space. How are units self-organized in space?
3. What do you mean by co-existence? How are units in co-existence being in space?
4. Draw the chart showing in detail, the different categories of units of nature in co-existence in space. What is your role in Existence?
5. Where is the scope of development in nature? How have we come to wrongly place our developmental programs?
6. What is the role of material order and bio-order in the fulfilment of human needs? How does understanding of existence help in right identification of the above?
7. How will the understanding of harmony in Existence influence the R&D programs in science and technology?

\* Can be spelt as *Kriyapoornata* and *Acharanpoornata* respectively too.