EffectiveWayToLiveLife

What is the most effective way to live your life?

Since humans are varied in both nature and nurture, there may not be a single best strategy to approach the world with. If there was a single most effective way of doing things, evolution would have hard-wired it into us long ago. However, there are deep patterns embedded in our brain's neural networks, which are constant across cultures, religions, and myths. The strategy each human uses to act in the world is varied, but the process that generates each strategy is relatively constant. The brain shares some similarities in structure to a deep neural network. We can reprogram the weights of deep features, however it seems it is not possible to modify them. These deep features are same across all humans and relevant across vast stretches of time. This shares some similarities with Carl Jung's idea of archetypes - universal archaic patterns and images that exist in the subconscious of all humans. We cannot communicate a feeling or state of mind directly, so we instead use specific stories to recreate them in the minds of others. These subconscious feelings are similar to the deep features in a neural network. Dreams operate at the level of deep features, then creates shallow features that would activate the deep features so you can understand it. This means that anything that causes the same reaction to you in a dream, is actually the same thing from the perspective of the dream. Example of deep features include status, lust, and territoriality. The question this essay tries to answer is if there is a universal deep pattern for all humans that points to the most effective way of living in this world. To be able to work effectively with another person, the foundation is communication. However, it's difficult to start an honest conversation without trust on both sides. An easy way to naturally encourage communication and build trust is to create a good atmosphere. Without this communication will break down, which will result in misunderstandings and eventually disaster. Instead of forcing yourself to communicate, it is more effective to create an environment where you and others naturally want to communicate. You can carry water in a bucket every day, or you can dig a channel and let water flow where you want it to go. Once you have created a good atmosphere you mostly don't have to think about it, so it doesn't require too much effort to maintain on your part. There is a hard limit to what you can accomplish by yourself, so in order to create your ideal future you will inevitably need to enlist the help of others. You need to win over a person emotionally before they will listen to your logical argument. This is done through a combination of conscious and unconscious strategies, such as paying attention to what the other person is saying, and using positive body language. Creating a good atmosphere encourages communication, which builds trust and lets you work effectively with other people. This can even be applied to the internal conversation you have with

yourself. In order to become more effective over time, it can be useful to focus on the implicit way we do things. This is a language we act out, but need to pay attention to understand explicitly. Once we can articulate it, we can discuss and improve the language, then reprogram it back into the implicit way we do things. This allows us to iteratively improve the language we act out, in other words, improving the effectiveness of our implicit procedures and category structures. This forms the iteration loop observe, discuss, implement. The first step to observe what you are doing to identify issues. Then you will need to order them by the order they need to be fixed. The second step is to analyze and break into pieces how to best modify the system to fix the issue. Sometimes things will be too complex to do more than fix the first issue. The third step is to try implementing the change and see what happens. It should take many iterations to even solve a single issue. Once an issue is solved, you can move onto the next one. This process of splitting a system into pieces and iteratively tackling each issue is a general approach that can be used to solve almost any problem. This results in incremental improvement in the implicit way we do things. The advantage to this approach is once an issue is fixed, we don't have to think about it anymore. It takes a lot of effort to change how we do things, but little effort to maintain. In fact, it becomes almost invisible. This means we can become more and more effective without having to increase effort. By working hard at improving how we do things, we create a positive feedback that makes us more effective. There are also other ways to improve the language we act out, such as learning and adopting existing systems. Each of us has a subconscious mind, which implicitly contains our habits, models and ways of categorizing the world. These systems will continue to operate as programmed without effort. The part of our brain where we can make decisions and push with effort seem to be embedded in a structure that provides us with information we can observe. It requires effort to reprogram even a small part of our subconscious mind. Perhaps there are good reasons why we can't reprogram ourselves at the snap of our fingers. Humans have developed the strategy to sacrifice, to give up a benefit now to receive a benefit in the future. As humans we have a nature, and this strategy contradicts many parts of it. Our brain is not a homogenous unity, it contains many different pieces each with their own way of looking at the world. Some of the more primordial systems are not able to strategize long term, some examples include hunger, sex, and dominance. In Jungian terms, it is up to the Self, an unconscious part of the brain with the goal of uniting the different pieces together, that drives the Ego, what you think of as yourself, to integrate the different pieces together to achieve a mission. It requires a lot of effort to change anything in your mind. Willpower seems to be like a muscle, if you work it out it becomes stronger over time. It takes a lot of force to abandon self-destructive habits and ways of thinking, and can be both painful and dangerously destabilizing. It then takes time to reconstruct a new way of thinking, which is a painful slow iterative process. It is a

painful process to be honest with yourself and try to improve. The only thing more painful than this is to not do this, in which case you will suffer and also know that you didn't do everything you could to prevent it. If you let winning go to your head, it can affect your ability to perform. By becoming aware of your own strengths, it can lead you to judge others that do not possess those abilities. We tend to only notice areas that we are good at, and look at those same areas in other people. This can cause you to assume you are highly competent, and that others are incompetent. This leads to an unjustified pride, causing you to talk to others in a patronizing way, making you ineffective. It is important that we are aware of our strengths, but that needs to be tempered by being able to detach from yourself and see things how they actually are. Our beliefs are in a sense simplified maps of the world, used to filter the nearly infinite amount of information coming at us, and to give things meaning. As a result our maps do not just control what we value, but also what we can even perceive. As each map focuses on only a sliver of the world, even effective maps will contradict each other. Within each of us this creates a tension between consistency and completeness. This means that to be effective, we need to allow some degree of inconsistency in our beliefs. Also, observing your own behaviour has the potential to modify it. This can lead to the seemingly paradoxical situation where noticing you good at something makes you not good at it. For example, noticing how well you are doing in your career then thinking you're 'made it' will cause you to become ineffective. As long as we take these factors into account, we can have the clearest picture of reality we can manage, while maintaining our effectiveness. It is an effective strategy to enter a conversation with the goal of finding a pragmatic solution, as opposed to doing what is expedient. The way you know you are on the right path, is if the conversation you are having is so meaningful that you do not notice the passage of time. There is a caveat here, the mechanism that makes things meaningful can be corrupted by misinformation - so for this to work we need to tell the truth, or at least don't lie. As humans evolution has given us many biases, which can get in the way of meaningful collaboration. The foundation of collaboration is to move a person from outsider to kin group. This can be done in a variety of ways, such as sharing of gifts, creating a good atmosphere, and building up trust. Once the foundation is established, to collaborate effectively we need to formulate an idea, speak it, have it listened to, then have it understood. This then needs to happen back in forth, in an iteration cycle. A good way to practice formulating ideas is to have meaningful conversations. Also, writing your ideas down can help formulate them. In order to speak effectively, think before you speak, and speak slowly. An effective way to improve listening is to pay close attention to what is being said, and not to let yourself get distracted. To improve understanding, summarize what was said and repeat it back. Then you will get clarification on what was misunderstood. Under no circumstances should you interrupt others, as that will degenerate the conversation

into blurting out answers back and forth, as there will be a worry of being cut off. Be careful agreeing with others, as you will assume you understand what is being said. It is hard to learn what you already know. Humans have collaborated to build civilization, and if we aim with precision we can contribute to doing so moving forward.

Is there a unifying pattern underneath these?

Each of us hold an implicit way we see the world, which motivates us toward action. We hold values, which both categorize and give meaning to things. Each value only perceives a radically oversimplified view of reality, and is too simple to make effective decisions by itself. As we hold many values, when values conflict we need to choose which value to act upon. This creates a tension, which is what allows for more complex decision making processes. We think some of our values are more important than others, which creates a hierarchy of values within us. If we visualize this hierarchy as a triangle, if this triangle becomes too steep by sacrificing all else for a single value, we become ideologically possessed and automatically make decisions using a simple ideological lens. If the values triangle becomes too shallow, by saying that all values are relative, we become confused since we no longer know which value to use to make decisions, then hopeless since we no longer have an ideal to strive towards. The question of what the value hierarchy should look like is complex, and varies across cultures. It is difficult to articulate value hierarchies, since the information is mostly embedded in the implicit categories and narratives that are taken for granted. For example, in Japan there is a strong category distinction

The question of what to put at the top of the value hierarchy is complex, and is not the same across cultures.

and we can see multiple potentially viable solutions by looking at the world's great cultures.

In order to make effective decisions we need to

If our goal is to have a healthy value hierarchy, we need to encourage a complex tension between values.

Having an honest conversation exposes us to new values, which we use to keep our own value hierarchy sane. There is also a wonderful tension of values in an honest conversation, which is what allows for a complex decision making process. There are many pitfalls that can derail an honest conversation. This means that all honest conversations must avoid these pitfalls. This results in a remarkable similarity at a fundamental level of ways to effective have an honest conversation. Encourage a tension between values or else decisions will be made automatically in an ideological way, which is too simple to make effective decisions. Have an honest conversation to harness this tension between viewpoints, which results in a complex decision making process which can make effective decisions. In your life personally the way to know that you are doing this is to follow what you find meaningfully engaging, which works as long as you tell the truth.

Encourage a tension between values then have an honest conversation to use a complex decision making process to make effective decisions.

Encourage a tension of values then have an honest conversation to maintain and use that to make complex effective decisions.

There are many ways to not have an honest conversation, but only a few ways to do it effectively.

The highest ideal that Western civilization has put at the top of it's value system is the truthful spoken word. In this context, the most effective way to live your life is to aim at having an honest (truthful?) conversation. There are many ways in which this can fail, but only a few ways in which it can succeed. We will outline a potential strategy that we can use to approach having a conversation.

There are many ways we are not honest, and many ways in which conversations fail. This results in a similarity in how successful conversations are approached.

A conversation can fail in many ways, which results in a similarity in successful conversations since they are at least not doing the common mistakes that cause There any many ways this can fail to happen, which results in a similarity in the

honest conversations, since they are all atleast not doing what causes them to fail. as far as they are not making the typical mistakes which results in conversations that follow the archetypical pattern to share characteristics.

There are many ways in which we can fail to have an honest conversation.

All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

The unifying strategy is potentially the ability to have an honest conversation - which can be undermined by many things.

This generates a hierarchy, we need to choose which value to prioritize when they conflict, However, we each hold many values, and organize these into a hierarchy as we need to choose a value to prioritize when then conflict.

We each hold many values however,

Each value is an extremely limited We organize our values into a hierarchy,

Each of us hold many values, implicit maps of the world, that drive us. When our values conflict and pull us in different directions, we choose one value over another. This generates a hierarchy of values, with some values more important than others. If we put money, status or desire at the top of our value hierarchies, there is a general pattern that this ends in disaster. Each value will serve something. If that something is not the same for all or most values in a person, they are disintregrated. When a value starts to serve itself that is a large issue.

The question becomes what is a value or system of values serving. Problems generally occur when a value stops serving a higher purpose, and instead becomes it's own justification. Some maps that motivate action are more effective than others, as well as more and less effective ways to rank these values in a heirarchy. What is what religions refer to as worshipping false idols, or the concept of ideological posession? It could be what unifies all of these underlying patterns is they are all examples of how to operate effectively in the world. When training a neural network on the computer, if you specify a desired outcome it will generate highly complex features within the network that allow it to achieve a desired goal. These (strategies outlined in this essay) are all examples of effective pattrns that have been generated.

However this then leads to the question, could we all agree on a desired outcome?

This negoitation over the eons has produced stable solutions, deep patterns that we can notice through the sense of feeling that something is meaningful.

If what you are doing feels intrinsically meaningful and engaging, then there's a good chance that it is matching a deep neural pattern that is stable and effective across evolutionary timescales.

There may be a garbage in, garbage out issue with this however, so for this instinct to guide you effectively you need to make sure the inputs and outputs to your brain are as accurate as possible - so you need to tell the truth and surround yourself with people you can trust.

If you can do this, you should be able to use your instinct of meaning to guide you to follow and maybe even understanding these deep underlying archetypical patterns - the most effective ways to act in life. To be able to The key to be able to implement this process is self awareness of the fact your lens lets you see only a very small part of reality. This then means that you could try to discover other parts of reality yourself, or ask another person to look at you through their lens. There is no way to know if they're actually telling you the truth - they could be lying, or simply be incorrect. However, this is one of the few ways to see things outside of your own very simple lens, so it's worth verifying what those you trust tell you, even if it's something that you cannot see or perceive personally.