TOWARD A NEW DEFINITION OF INTELLIGENCE: SYMBOLIC ALIGNMENT, EMOTIONAL STRUCTURE, AND A CHALLENGE TO CLASSICAL PSYCHOLOGICAL MODELS

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BABAK JABBAR NEZHAD

"DEDICATED TO MY MOTHER, SIMZAR HOSSEINZADEH—
MY FIRST PSYCHOLOGY TEACHER, THOUGH SHE NEVER ATTENDED SCHOOL.
SHE LIVED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF HER BROTHER, IN A SYSTEM THAT SILENCED HER.
AND YET, SHE BECAME A SYMBOL TO ME—OF LOST INTELLIGENCE,
A BRILLIANCE DENIED IN A WORLD RULED BY MEN."

Abstract. This paper presents a unified theoretical model of intelligence that integrates emotional development, symbolic coherence, and neural signal dynamics. Challenging both computational views of the mind and Freud's sexualized model of childhood development, the theory reframes intelligence as a dynamic, emotionally grounded procedure — shaped not by problem-solving ability or repressed desire, but by alignment across symbolic emotional structures.

It introduces the concept of the Emotional Connection Complex to explain how disrupted attachment in early life may fragment the sense of connection and reshape self-esteem. The model distinguishes emotional attachment from the deeper symbolic structure of emotional connection, emphasizing the developmental role of imagination as a compensatory function.

Building on this foundation, the paper develops a frequency-based mathematical model using Fourier analysis across symbolic emotional categories, allowing conscious, subconscious, and unconscious resonance to be interpreted geometrically. A global coherence function is proposed to assess the alignment of emotional states across configurations.

The framework suggests that intelligence is not a fixed trait, but a state of symbolic resonance — shaped by early attachment, emotional clarity, and neural phase coherence. Implications are discussed for psychology, neuroscience, education, and philosophy.

1. Introduction: Intelligence as Emotional Structure

For decades, the study of intelligence has been shaped by two dominant paradigms: the computational model, which defines intelligence as problem-solving and processing speed, and Freudian psychoanalysis, which ties development to unconscious desire and repression. Both models, in different ways, disconnect intelligence from emotional meaning. They treat cognition as either abstract or distorted — ignoring the role of emotional grounding in shaping symbolic coherence and internal structure. In Freudian theory, for instance, intelligence is often seen as a sublimated form of repressed desire — redirected through psychic defense mechanisms into intellectual activity or cultural achievement. Meanwhile, computational approaches reduce intelligence to algorithmic processing, ignoring emotional context and meaning-making.

This paper offers an alternative framework: one that views intelligence as a procedural, emotionally shaped process — emerging not from logic alone, but from the dialectical interactions of symbolic emotional structures across time and awareness. It expands upon critiques

Key words and phrases. Symbolic cognition, Emotional intelligence, PLEM, Neuroscience, Self-esteem, Resonance Theory, Psychoanalysis, Hegelian dialectics.

of both paradigms by proposing that symbolic resonance, not sublimation or computation, is the key structure underlying intelligent awareness.

We begin by reframing intelligence through a symbolic and nonlinear dialectic—one in which both alignment and contradiction, coherence and negation, contribute to the emergence of symbolic awareness. Besides, we introduce the concept of the Emotional Connection Complex — a reinterpretation of childhood development in which early emotional misalignment affects not only self-esteem but the structure of symbolic imagination. In this model, emotional attachment and the sense of connection are distinct but during childhood they are intertwined, and the disruption of their relationship explains much of the fragmentation seen in emotional and cognitive life.

From this psychological foundation, the theory evolves into a formal model. Emotional states are categorized symbolically; neural responses are transformed into the frequency domain; and emotional resonance is interpreted through complex-valued inner products. A global coherence score is introduced to assess how emotional configurations align across conscious, subconscious, and unconscious states — creating a geometry of symbolic integration. This approach draws from frequency-based neural modeling, phase coherence theory, and recent resonance-based interpretations of consciousness.

The result is a multi-layered account of intelligence: not as a measure of capacity, but as a state of alignment — a living process in which symbolic emotional patterns are either integrated or scattered. This model offers a unified perspective on psychological development, cognitive clarity, and conscious awareness, and opens a new path toward an emotionally grounded theory of mind.

Although the theory proposed here emerges from formal reasoning and interdisciplinary synthesis, it is also informed by personal experience — not in a reductive or autobiographical sense, but through a sustained practice of deep observation. The structure of the Emotional Connection Complex has taken shape through years of reflection on personal emotional dynamics, careful listening to others' life stories, and empathetic engagement with those experiencing mental distress — including extended conversations with individuals in psychiatric settings. It also draws insight from encounters with art, literature, film, philosophy, and religious and cultural expression. What is presented here, then, is not merely a personal projection, but a theory shaped by lived emotional reality, critical reasoning, and a background in mathematics, symbolic analysis, and philosophical inquiry.

2. Background and Prior Work Across Psychology, Neuroscience, and Philosophy

A wide range of research from psychology, neuroscience, and philosophy converges around the central claim that intelligence is not a disembodied rational faculty but an integration of emotion and cognition. This section surveys foundational frameworks — including Freud's theory of sublimation, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, distinctions between emotional attachment and connection, resonance-based models of consciousness, emotional intelligence theory, and symbolic models of affect. Together, they form the background against which the present theory of symbolic emotional resonance is developed.

2.1. **Freud's Sublimation and Maslow's Hierarchy: Early Frameworks of Needs and Drives.**

Freud viewed intelligence and creativity as sublimated outcomes of repressed desire. In Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality (1905), he argued that early childhood is dominated by polymorphous desires — emotional impulses that, when repressed, can be

channeled into higher symbolic functions like art or intellect [7]. Sublimation, in his model, transforms unacceptable instinctual energy into socially valued achievements [8]. While adaptive, this dynamic is rooted in tension — and when sublimation fails, the repressed energy resurfaces as neurosis or symbolic distortion.

Maslow, in contrast, framed intelligence in terms of need fulfillment. His Hierarchy of Needs(1943) begins with physiological and safety needs, then moves to love/belonging, esteem, and finally self-actualization — where creativity and intelligence can fully emerge [20, 21]. Maslow emphasized that emotional attachment is foundational for psychological development. Influenced by studies such as Harlow's monkey experiments, which revealed the primacy of contact comfort over mere sustenance, he argued that love and connection are not secondary luxuries but biological needs [11].

Yet both models are limited. Freud's theory overemphasizes repression as the driver of intellect, while Maslow's hierarchy has been critiqued for rigidity and cultural bias [30]. Later revisions, like Kenrick et al.'s life-history model, place relatedness needs like attachment and status alongside basic survival needs, recognizing that people often pursue meaning, love, or ideals even when more "basic" needs remain unmet [16]. Both frameworks acknowledge the role of emotion in shaping higher cognition — but neither accounts for emotional structure, symbolic resonance, or neural integration.

2.2. **Emotional Attachment vs. Sense of Connection.** Attachment theory, developed by Bowlby and Ainsworth, distinguishes between emotional bonds (attachment) and the internal mental schemas those bonds shape [3]. Emotional attachment is a biologically grounded need for safety, formed through specific caregiver relationships. But over time, these attachments scaffold a deeper internal reality — a sense of connection, which is broader, more symbolic, and existential in nature [3].

The sense of connection transcends immediate bonds. It includes feelings of belonging, empathy, and attunement with others or the world [1]. One can have emotional attachments and still feel disconnected; conversely, a person with no active attachments may maintain a strong inner connection — through memory, imagination, or spirituality. This distinction is critical to the theory of symbolic emotional resonance, which sees intelligence as rooted in this broader symbolic structure.

Phenomenologists like Buber have distinguished between I–It (functional) and I–Thou (relational) modes of being — with the latter representing true connection and mutual recognition [4]. Clinical models also show that insecure attachment histories can be transformed through therapeutic development of symbolic coherence and emotional attunement [14, 27].

While elements of this distinction appear across attachment theory, existential philosophy, and social motivation research, the clear conceptual separation between emotional attachment and a symbolically structured sense of connection has not been explicitly defined in the existing literature. This paper builds on these threads to propose a new model of emotional-symbolic development grounded in this distinction.

2.3. **Signal Coherence and Resonance Models of the Brain.** Contemporary neuroscience supports the view that emotional processing and symbolic cognition must be integrated [18]. Studies of neural oscillations show that emotional states are associated with specific frequency bands — for example, alpha and theta coherence are linked to relaxed or safe states, while gamma synchrony has been observed during moments of focused empathy or meaning-making [17, 19, 28]. Varela et al.'s "brainweb" model describes how transient

synchrony across distant brain regions enables the integration of emotion, perception, and thought [28]. Phase coherence — often measured through phase-locking values — reveals moments when emotional and cognitive systems align in resonance [17].

Importantly, meditative states and experiences of deep empathy have been shown to induce large-scale neural synchronization, suggesting that symbolic emotional alignment has identifiable neural correlates — measurable states of synchronized brain activity [19], Grossberg's Adaptive Resonance Theory models learning and emotion as emergent from phase-aligned signal loops [10].

These findings support the mathematical framework introduced later in this paper — where symbolic emotional categories and neural phase alignment together define a measurable geometry of resonance and awareness.

2.4. **Emotional Intelligence and Symbolic Cognition.** Theories of emotional intelligence (EI) — from Salovey and Mayer to Goleman — emphasize that the ability to recognize, interpret, and regulate emotions is a key component of effective intelligence [9, 22, 26]. Barrett's constructed emotion theory goes further, proposing that emotions are not fixed states but symbolic predictions based on prior experience, shaped by conceptual frameworks [2]. In this view, emotional clarity is a form of symbolic granularity — and high EI corresponds to a rich, nuanced emotional vocabulary.

Cognitive scientists like Oatley and Johnson-Laird have described emotions as signal systems embedded in the mind's symbolic architecture — essential for aligning goals, values, and perceptions [15]. Carl Rogers' humanistic psychology links emotional congruence with flexible, adaptive intelligence — and warns that emotional repression distorts both self-concept and symbolic reasoning [25].

These models reinforce the idea that intelligence is not detached from feeling, but structured through symbolic-emotional interaction. A person who can transform feeling into symbol — and align their emotional life with their cognitive structure — is more likely to act with clarity, empathy, and creative insight.

While these models have advanced our understanding of emotional intelligence in social and interpersonal contexts, they largely define intelligence in terms of adaptation, empathy, and emotional regulation. What is missing in this literature is a clear connection between emotional life and pure cognitive reasoning—the kind used in scientific insight, mathematical creativity, or philosophical clarity. The model proposed in this paper expands the definition of intelligence by linking it to symbolic coherence: the internal alignment of emotional structures that gives rise to clarity of thought, deep abstraction, and the capacity for integration across layers of awareness. In this view, intelligence is not simply about emotional skill or adaptation, but about resonance between feeling and form—where symbolic and emotional structures support the emergence of meaning and reasoning.

2.5. **Philosophical and Embodied Frameworks.** Earlier models of symbolic cognition, such as Fodor's "language of thought" hypothesis [6] and Putnam's functionalist theory of psychological predicates [24], emphasized internal mental representations and the computational structure of thought. While these approaches helped establish the symbolic nature of cognition, they largely separated emotion, embodiment, and meaning from the symbolic domain.

Continental philosophy, in contrast, has long emphasized the integration of emotion, body, and symbolic structure. Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit describes the dialectical unfolding of consciousness through emotional conflict and symbolic sublation — suggesting that intelligence arises from the transformation of desire into ethical and conceptual forms [12]. Merleau-Ponty adds that perception and cognition are embodied — shaped by emotional engagement with the world [23].

Philosophers like Damasio (in Descartes' Error) have shown that emotional integration is essential not only for survival and behavior, but for coherent decision-making and the construction of meaning [5]. His work challenges the classical separation of reason and emotion, showing that rationality itself depends on emotional feedback and internal coherence. Meanwhile, the Embodied Mind thesis (Varela, Thompson, and Rosch) unites cognitive science with phenomenology and Eastern philosophy, proposing that mind and meaning arise through dynamic interaction between symbolic systems, emotional states, bodily perception, and environmental engagement [29].

Together, these frameworks confirm that emotional resonance is not peripheral to intelligence—it is central to how meaning, identity, and awareness emerge. Decision-making, in this view, is not a detached calculation but a symbolic-emotional process shaped by how deeply one's inner structures are aligned with external reality. It is this alignment, or its disruption, that determines not only what we choose—but how clearly we can think.

3. Intelligence Beyond Computation: A Procedural View

For decades, intelligence has been defined by computational metaphors. From IQ tests to information-processing models, the mind has been imagined as a machine — a system of inputs, rules, memory, and outputs. But this view fails to capture the living nature of intelligence as we encounter it in ourselves and others.

I propose that intelligence is not computation, but procedure: an unfolding process shaped by feedback, memory, context, and emotion. It is not a fixed algorithm but a living structure — where cognition evolves through the interplay of biological learning mechanisms and emotional input.

We define two core forces at play:

- Biological Intelligence: The raw capacity of the nervous system to learn, adapt, and process stimuli. It is internal, dynamic, and grounded in neurobiology.
- Emotional Intelligence (in this theory): Not in the popular sense of "managing emotions," but as the emotional system shaped by two key elements:
  - Sense of Connection: An internal emotional power that gives the person existential grounding.
  - Emotional Attachment: The interaction of emotions with external conditions—society, relationships, trauma, acceptance.

These elements form the deeper structure of intelligence.

We suggest that the structure of intelligence is not a static combination of components, but a dynamic synthesis shaped by the ongoing interaction between the biological and emotional systems. Intelligence emerges not automatically, but procedurally — through tension, integration, and symbolic transformation.

We identify three core components in this dynamic structure:

- Biological Intelligence: The innate, adaptive neurological function of the brain — fast, parallel, sensory-driven, and open to learning through feedback.

- Emotional Intelligence: The full force of emotional presence — particularly through attachment and connection. This force introduces both guidance and disruption into the system.
- Procedural Intelligence: The lived, conscious capacity to think, adapt, create, and reflect — formed when biological intelligence is emotionally supported, and when emotional input resonates with the person's internal sense of connection.

This process is mediated by emotional attachment, which acts as both a bridge and a test. After childhood, if emotional attachment supports the person's internal emotional world — their evolving sense of connection — the structure holds, and procedural intelligence flourishes. But when attachment becomes deeply misaligned with the inner self — due to trauma, rejection, or persistent emotional conflict — the unfolding process becomes strained. Intelligence does not vanish, but it may become fragmented, withdrawn, or restructured in symbolic ways, especially during early development.

This helps explain why intelligent individuals may lose clarity or focus under social or emotional pressure. The issue is not a loss of ability, but a disturbance in structure — a misalignment between external emotional signals and the person's internal emotional grounding.

We refer to this disturbance as emotional noise: signals introduced from the outside world that do not originate from the person's symbolic-emotional core, and which may either support or interfere with the procedural unfolding of intelligence.

- When emotional noise resonates with the person's inner symbolic system, it amplifies intelligence.
- When it clashes with that system — due to unresolved trauma, social alienation, or emotional repression — it disrupts the procedure, causing confusion, symbolic fragmentation, or even emotional paralysis.

In this model, emotional noise is distinct from emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence belongs to the person — it includes both their inner emotional world and their capacity to build meaningful attachment. Emotional noise, in contrast, refers to external emotional input that interacts with — but is not necessarily integrated into — that system.

3.1. **Childhood and the Symbolic Response to Misalignment.** As mentioned above, this model draws from a dynamic emotional-cognitive interaction. After childhood, this process no longer depends on contradiction or disruption for synthesis to occur. But in childhood, when internal structures are still forming, emotional conflict can take on a creative role.

In such cases, intelligence may emerge through symbolic alignment — when external emotional signals (attachment) and internal emotional grounding (connection) resonate harmoniously. Here, the unfolding of intelligence is not driven by conflict but by coherence — through symbolic layering and emotional resonance.

This flexibility is crucial: the model acknowledges both conflict-based transformation and harmonious integration. The success or failure of procedural intelligence depends not on contradiction alone, but on the quality of emotional alignment between a person's symbolic-emotional core and the emotional signals they encounter.

Moreover, this procedural unfolding is not uniform across the lifespan. In childhood, when emotional attachment and the sense of connection are still entangled, misalignment may lead not only to disruption, but to compensatory growth — particularly in the form of

imagination. The child, unable to align with the external world, turns inward, and imagination becomes a symbolic extension of intelligence. In this sense, emotional noise may paradoxically strengthen one part of intelligence by activating symbolic depth.

After childhood, however, the structure evolves. Emotional attachment and connection begin to separate, and imagination no longer grows through rupture — it is more often suppressed, distorted, or punished by social systems. Misalignment at this stage leads not to symbolic compensation, but to emotional disintegration or over-adaptation. The procedural structure remains, but the possibilities within it narrow.

This developmental nuance reveals that intelligence — while procedural — is also historical. Its trajectory is shaped not only by internal structure and emotional alignment, but by the symbolic and emotional stage in which that alignment or misalignment occurs.

4. The Emotional Connection Complex: A Reinterpretation of Freud

Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex has long shaped psychological understandings of childhood development. According to this view, a male child experiences unconscious sexual desire for his mother and rivalry with his father, while a female child harbors similar feelings toward her father, expressed through what came to be known as the Electra complex. Freud built much of this theory on adult projections of sexuality onto early emotional experiences—an interpretive error that distorted the very structure of childhood development.

In contrast, I propose the Emotional Connection Complex—a reinterpretation of early emotional life rooted not in sexuality, but in curiosity, belonging, care, and emotional grounding. The core premise is this: children do not experience sexual desire as Freud imagined. Instead, they seek connection—both existential and emotional—with their caregivers. These early experiences shape not only their emotional life but the structural foundation of their selfhood.

4.1. **Childhood Orientations: Assertion and Care.** A male child, by nature, engages the world through assertion, exploration, and possession. These early behaviors are not sexual but existential—they reflect the child's attempt to locate himself within the emotional and relational world. His attachment to the mother is not erotic, but symbolic and foundational. When the mother's attention is perceived as belonging to the father, the male child may feel displaced, but this is a longing for connection, not a sexual rivalry.

A female child, by contrast, tends to engage the world through care, emotional sensitivity, and continuity. Her bond with her father, too, is not based on desire, but on care and admiration. Her emotional world is shaped through relational empathy, not erotic attraction. Freud's interpretation fails to grasp this crucial difference in emotional orientation, mistaking the symbolic structure of attachment for sexual impulse.

4.2. **Disruption and the Rise of the Complex.** The Emotional Connection Complex arises when the child's early attempts at connection are disrupted—through emotional unavailability, coldness, neglect, or confusion within the caregiving relationship. In these cases, the child does not form a stable emotional world. The symbolic "map" that should orient them toward love, trust, and identity becomes fragmented. This disruption does not harm intelligence, but it alters the child's emotional locomotive—the deep drive to connect, care, and find meaning in relationships.

When this complex forms, the child may grow up emotionally disconnected but intellectually capable. Their development continues externally, but the internal world lacks coherence.

The desire for connection is repressed or displaced, and as the person matures, they begin to view the world increasingly through the lens of sexuality—not because of innate eroticism, but because connection has been reduced to physical or symbolic representations. Sex becomes the surrogate for intimacy, and the true emotional need remains unmet.

4.3. **Self-Esteem and the Emotional Void.** This complex leads to a distinct emotional profile: the person may be high-functioning but inwardly unstable. They may seek approval, pleasure, or control, but struggle to trust love or feel grounded. They may be in relationships but feel empty. Most importantly, they often suffer from low self-esteem. This insight requires a refinement of the distinction I previously drew between emotional attachment and the sense of connection. While these two remain separate even in childhood, they are deeply entangled. The child experiences connection through attachment, but not as attachment. Emotional attachment is the external relation — shaped by caregiving behavior and environmental responsiveness — while the sense of connection is the child's internal symbolic structure, the emotional world being formed beneath the surface.

Therefore, in childhood, emotional attachment plays a vital role in supporting the emerging sense of connection. If that attachment is broken, unclear, or emotionally unsafe, the formation of connection may be injured — not erased, but wounded. The child's later emotional world may then be structured around avoidance, fear, or longing — none of which supports self-worth.

As the individual matures, emotional attachment and the sense of connection begin to separate more clearly. Some people rebuild a symbolic sense of connection through imagination, philosophy, or creativity. But the early void remains, and without reflection, it may unconsciously shape their emotional life for decades.

4.4. **Intelligence Without Grounding.** One of the most tragic patterns seen in individuals affected by the Emotional Connection Complex is a split between intelligence and emotion. The person may be articulate, reflective, or even brilliant, yet unable to integrate those gifts into a stable emotional identity. They live in a gap between awareness and love, with passion that cannot fully attach to a self.

This reveals an important distinction: the complex does not harm intelligence, but it prevents the emotional system from organizing itself around connection. The symbolic energy that should fuel trust, empathy, and belonging becomes scattered. The result is often anxiety, shame, or emotional fatigue.

Yet crucially, even when the sense of connection is wounded, it does not disappear. This part of the emotional self is deeply intertwined with family — not merely in terms of attachment, but in the form of unconditional emotional investment. The child may feel rejected, unseen, or emotionally unsafe, but the deep love for the family remains. In fact, that love may intensify as pain, and over time, even appear as resentment or hate. But this hate is not the opposite of love — it is love transformed by injury. It is the unconscious persistence of connection, disguised through emotional defense.

Therefore, while emotional attachment may disappear, the sense of connection persists — not as a clean, stable structure, but as symbolic passion that continues to seek meaning, even in fragmentation. This unresolved love sustains the emotional core, and may reemerge in displaced forms — through anger, loyalty, fantasy, or longing.

And it is here that a crucial function emerges: imagination.

Imagination is not an escape from pain — it is a response to the rupture of emotional attachment. When the child cannot fully connect to others, the imagination builds symbolic bridges to maintain a sense of self and meaning. It becomes part of the sense of connection and, eventually, of intelligence itself. In many cases, this compensatory function of imagination becomes stronger as attachment breaks down. The child, in seeking to prove their emotional existence — to affirm that they matter — turns inward, and the symbolic architecture of imagination becomes their emotional grounding.

This is why some of the most creative, visionary, and imaginative individuals come from broken families. Their imagination is not accidental — it is constructed through necessity. It is the response of the wounded sense of connection attempting to survive and to create coherence. And importantly, this symbolic growth through imagination only happens in childhood. Later in life, once emotional attachment and sense of connection have separated, the same kind of compensatory symbolic expansion is far more difficult to initiate.

Thus, the Emotional Connection Complex does not merely fragment the emotional world — it reshapes the foundation of intelligence itself. The person becomes a site of contradiction: emotionally unanchored, yet symbolically rich; disconnected, yet full of inner life. This paradox is not a failure — it is a testimony to the procedural and symbolic resilience of human intelligence.

4.5. **Toward Repair.** Unlike Freud's theory, which treated these complexes as universal and often pathological, the Emotional Connection Complex opens a path toward understanding and repair. It suggests that emotional healing begins not by analyzing repressed desire, but by reclaiming and reintegrating the symbolic structure of connection — through care, reflection, imagination, and emotional resonance.

Crucially, the sense of connection, though wounded, is never fully lost. It survives beneath the fragmentation of attachment, carried forward by unconscious passion and by the symbolic force of imagination. Even when emotional attachment is broken, the inner world continues to create meaning. The child who turns inward in pain does not abandon connection — they recreate it symbolically, building emotional continuity through fantasy, symbols, art, or inner reflection. This imaginative structure becomes a living archive of emotional existence.

Healing, then, is not about repairing what is gone, but about reactivating what was preserved symbolically — sometimes in silence, sometimes in pain. The goal is not to return to the original attachment, but to strengthen the inner architecture of connection by giving symbolic form to that which survived in fragments.

This is not a therapeutic technique, but an existential task: a transformation of emotional injuries into coherence, dignity, and presence. Through creativity, memory, philosophy, or authentic relationship, the individual can reintegrate their inner world — not by forgetting the wound, but by giving voice to what survived it.

This model reorients psychology toward the geometry of connection, not the mechanics of desire. It asks us to see the child not as a being of impulse, but as a seeker of care, meaning, and symbolic grounding. And it reminds us that emotional development is not defined by attachment alone, but by the imaginative and internalized structure of connection that endures — wounded, creative, and alive.

5. Emotional Attachment and the Role of Sense of Connection

Much of modern psychology, including Maslow's well-known hierarchy of needs, places emotional attachment—love, belonging, and social acceptance—as the emotional foundation

of human development. According to this view, self-esteem arises from having stable and fulfilling relationships.

While emotional attachment is undoubtedly a biological and psychological need, I argue that it is not the ultimate foundation of self-esteem. Rather, it is a developmental vessel—a necessary carrier of something deeper in early life: what I call the sense of connection.

5.1. **Emotional Attachment: Developmentally Critical, But Not Structurally Foundational.** Emotional attachment refers to our bonds with others — the need to be loved, recognized, and emotionally held. It is relational and responsive. In early childhood, emotional attachment plays a crucial role, because the child's first experience of connection comes through the caregiver. In this early stage, attachment and sense of connection are entangled, but not identical. The child's symbolic world begins to form through attachment, but the sense of connection is already a distinct emotional structure — an inner orientation that will grow or fracture based on the quality of that attachment.

Without secure attachment, the child cannot fully form a coherent sense of self, and self-esteem struggles to emerge. But even in broken attachment, the sense of connection may persist — wounded, symbolically redirected, or carried by imagination.

As the individual matures, emotional attachment becomes more situational and fragile. It depends on others. It fluctuates. It can be broken, withheld, or manipulated. At this stage, attachment still influences emotional states, but it no longer defines the foundation of self-worth. That foundation shifts inward — to a more personal, symbolic experience: the sense of connection.

5.2. **Sense of Connection: The Ground Beneath Emotional Attachment.** Sense of connection is not a need, but a state of being. It is an internal emotional map — a felt sense of orientation, belonging, and meaning. It can arise from memory, imagination, language, spirituality, or symbolic experience. It does not depend on current relationships. It is deeper than attachment and more resilient.

A person may be isolated and still retain self-esteem through a strong internal sense of connection. Conversely, a person surrounded by people may feel hollow and insecure if that inner connection is missing.

This is why self-esteem is ultimately grounded not in how others relate to us, but in how we are emotionally rooted within ourselves — in how our symbolic world survives fragmentation.

5.3. **A Complex Example: A Child in Conflict.** Consider a child raised in a violent but intellectually stimulating household. Emotional attachment is weak or broken — love may be absent, safety unstable. And yet, the child may be encouraged to read, think, or imagine. In this case, the sense of connection forms partially, through imagination. Self-esteem may survive, but not fully. The Emotional Connection Complex leaves a void where grounding should be.

This child may grow into an adult who is intellectually rich but emotionally uncertain. They may appear strong but suffer internally from emotional dislocation. Their sense of connection is present, but weakly rooted — a tree with branches but shallow roots.

And yet, in this symbolic weakness, something else may grow: imagination.

Imagination is not just a mental capacity — it is a symbolic extension of the sense of connection. It exists from birth as part of emotional intelligence, but whether it flourishes

depends heavily on childhood conditions. When emotional attachment is disrupted, imagination may grow more strongly, compensating for the lost relationship. In these cases, imagination becomes a symbolic response — a private language of survival.

But this growth is limited to childhood. After childhood, if emotional attachment is disrupted or symbolic coherence breaks down, imagination does not grow — it is more often silenced or redirected. Society punishes symbolic disconnection in adults. What was once adaptive becomes socially dangerous. The imagination is not destroyed entirely, but it ceases to develop as a pure function of the sense of connection.

5.4. **Integration: A Developmental Model of Self-Esteem.** We can now revise our model:

- In early life, emotional attachment and sense of connection are entangled, but separate. Attachment mediates the formation of symbolic connection.
- In later life, attachment becomes secondary, and connection becomes primary. Their paths diverge.
- If this transition is disrupted, the person develops an Emotional Connection Complex. Their emotional development stalls, imagination becomes overburdened or frozen, and their intelligence fragments — even if it continues to grow in appearance.

This gives us a developmental, flexible model of self-esteem: one that honors the complexity of emotional life without reducing it to either biology or environment.

6. Sociocultural Disruption and Symbolic Recovery

Examples from Experience and Observation

The relationship between emotional attachment, symbolic connection, and procedural intelligence is not purely personal. It is shaped — and often distorted — by the emotional architectures imposed by culture, history, and power. The following reflections, drawn from experience and observation, explore how these emotional-symbolic structures are constructed, broken, and sometimes rebuilt within larger systems of meaning.

The following cases reveal a central truth:

> Intelligence is not lost in capacity — it is lost in direction.
> When emotional attachment disrupts symbolic connection, intelligence fragments.
> But when connection survives — even in silence — integration remains possible.

6.1. **Women: Survival of Imagination under Distorted Recognition.** In the case of many women, imagination often survives — but the state of mind is disturbed. What is disturbed is not thought, but the sense of connection. Society values women, but often only through the lens of desirability or service, particularly linked to sex. Sex brings desire, and desire feeds imagination — so imagination remains. But without symbolic connection, intelligence becomes ungrounded.

This produces not subconscious depth, but unconscious detachment: she continues to act and imagine, but from a place disconnected from her internal power. And society gives her an untrue existence — an identity shaped by male-dominated religion, culture, and language.

This creates followers instead of thinkers. Action replaces reflection. A woman with a true sense of connection would never say, “He belongs to me, and I belong to him.” That is not intelligence — it is obedience.

Yet women with a strong inner sense of connection can break through these conditions and become great minds. But even their intelligence can be shattered if emotional attachment is deeply wounded. In this model, survival is not enough — integration is the real threshold of intelligence.

6.2. **Minorities: Symbolic Redirection into Resistance.** In the case of minorities, imagination is often killed early — replaced by objection, a constant emotional resistance to injustice and exclusion. They are not taught to build concepts, but to respond to images — of domination, of struggle, of survival.

Their emotional attachment becomes reactive, and their sense of connection is redirected toward these emotionally charged images. Intelligence, then, becomes a structure of pain rather than discovery.

To recover, what is needed is a true history — a history not written about minorities, but withthem. A history that invites both sides to engage with concepts, not just images. In minority experience, the blockage often resides in the subconscious — and because of that, it can be healed.

6.3. **Immigrants: Emotional Displacement and Symbolic Loss.** Immigrants suffer from the loss of attachment — not to people, but to society. Their symbolic connection is fractured, and imagination begins delivering distorted images — of inferiority, of surrender, of silence.

Their concepts are converted into images, and in those images, they see only one path: to become emotional and cultural slaves of the host society. Not physically — but in internal, symbolic form. And this quiet symbolic submission often leads to collective harm, not just for the immigrant, but for the society that fails to recognize their inner resonance.

6.4. **Those Wrongly Called "Stupid": A Case from Mathematics Education.** Another critical example of how emotional connection and imagination shape intelligence comes from my own teaching experience in Iran. I privately taught a high school student for four years who, at the beginning, was widely regarded as "stupid" — a label even reinforced by her father, a psychiatrist, who maintained a rigid, controlling environment that suppressed her emotional development and imagination.

Her intellectual potential had been buried under the weight of psychological control and a lack of symbolic engagement. Over time, by teaching her mathematics in a meaningful, emotionally connected, and imaginative way, I helped her rediscover her sense of self and her capacity to think. She grew to enjoy learning and eventually chose to pursue applied mathematics at the university level. Later, she built a successful career outside of academic math. Her story is a reminder that what we often call "stupidity" is, in fact, a symptom of emotional disconnection and symbolic suppression. With the right environment and connection, even those who are dismissed early in life can grow, transform, and find their own meaningful path.

In mathematics education, this transformation becomes especially powerful when the teacher engages the student's imagination. When mathematics is taught not just as a mechanical system but as a symbolic and emotional language, students begin to observe and digest the material in a more intuitive, personal, and lasting way.

But how does this work in practice? It begins with a shift in the teacher's gaze: by accepting students as young mathematical thinkers, the teacher creates an emotional and symbolic recognition that says, "You are capable. You are seen." No one is truly "stupid"

when it comes to feeling how others perceive them. Children especially are sensitive to the way they are viewed, and once a teacher begins to believe in them, that belief itself becomes an invisible curriculum — a message louder than any lesson plan.

Of course, emotional support alone is not enough. What makes the transformation complete is the quality of teaching. The simpler and clearer we teach, the more deeply students believe in their own ability to understand. Simplicity is not dumbing down — it is a gift of structure, a form of elegance that helps students recognize themselves in the ideas. When both emotional connection and conceptual clarity are present, learning becomes not just possible — but joyful, meaningful, and identity-forming.

6.5. **Symbolic Hijacking: A General Case of Imposed Imagination.** In this model, decision-making is understood not as a purely logical output, but as a symbolic process aligned by emotional attachment — a form of cognitive synthesis that draws power and direction from internal resonance. Emotional attachment acts as the locomotive, pulling symbolic elements into coherence, while the sense of connection orients this alignment toward the world.

However, when external symbolic interference occurs — through media manipulation, noise saturation, or coercive social cues — this process can be derailed. Crucially, the individual may remain emotionally attached and connected to their environment, but in a distorted direction. The symbolic structure they are aligned with is no longer coherent or truthful, but manipulated. In this state, attachment becomes the fuel of distortion — driving resonance toward false conclusions or reactive behaviors.

This interference often occurs not by suppressing imagination, but by implanting new imaginative structures that feel emotionally charged and symbolically complete. These externally constructed narratives or mental images enter the person's symbolic system and begin to resonate — creating an illusion of inner coherence that feels meaningful but leads to false alignment. In such cases, imagination becomes the carrier of misalignment, and decision-making reflects this hijacked symbolic synthesis.

This is not disconnection. It is symbolic hijacking — a condition where resonance exists but serves a misaligned structure. As a result, reasoning intelligence collapses not because of emotional fragmentation, but because of synthesized coherence with the wrong symbolic configuration. The person continues to feel connected and directed, but the symbolic compass has been shifted.

Imagination, in this model, is not a separate faculty — it is the shared ground between emotional intelligence and biological intelligence. It synthesizes symbolic meaning, anticipates possibilities, and orients decision-making through emotionally grounded projection. When symbolic freedom is lost, imagination does not disappear; it becomes redirected. Emotional signals still flow, and symbolic patterns still resonate, but they serve imposed structures. This is what makes hijacking so powerful: the person's intelligence continues to function, but in service of something misaligned with their authentic symbolic-emotional core.

This framework suggests that procedural intelligence — which includes imagination — cannot function independently of emotional and symbolic freedom. Imagination is not a separate faculty; it emerges at the intersection of biological responsiveness and emotional grounding. When external signals distort a person's emotional coherence, they also redirect imagination, sometimes subtly, toward imposed or manipulated patterns. In such cases, the mind is no longer free: reasoning becomes distorted not because of emotion, but because

emotional intelligence itself has been disrupted. Protecting procedural intelligence, then, requires symbolic freedom — the ability to pause, reflect, and re-attune one's emotional-symbolic world. Only by reclaiming imagination as an internally grounded, emotionally coherent process can the integrity of intelligence be restored.

7. Self-Esteem and Intelligence: Distinct but Intertwined Realms

The distinction between self-esteem and intelligence is often overlooked, yet essential. These are not two names for the same phenomenon. They arise in different layers of the mind, and their relationship is complex.

- Self-esteem is rooted in the subconscious or unconscious. In early development, it arises through emotional attachment; over time, it becomes tied to the sense of connection — the symbolic emotional map that orients the person inwardly, often beneath conscious awareness.
- Intelligence, by contrast, operates primarily in the conscious mind. It requires alignment, clarity, and an active connection between internal grounding and external emotional signals. Yet it is not purely rational — it is shaped by symbolic elements formed in early emotional life, including imagination, memory, and resonance.

In this framework, a person may be:

- Intellectually gifted, yet suffer from low self-worth if the emotional connection is fragmented or never formed.
- Emotionally isolated, yet possess stable self-esteem, if the internal sense of connection remains intact.
- Outwardly functional, yet inwardly divided, when conscious intelligence and emotional grounding are misaligned.

Self-esteem is durable when internal connection is present, even in adversity. Intelligence is fragile when emotional noise overwhelms conscious processing.

Though distinct, these two realms often mirror and influence each other. Intelligence may search for coherence using the symbolic materials of the self, while self-esteem may rise or fall based on the person's perceived ability to express and realize their internal emotional vision.

This distinction helps explain why intelligence is often disrupted — not by biological limits, but by emotional misalignment. It also clarifies why cognition does not flourish in a vacuum. Intelligence requires not only reason, but emotional grounding — symbolic coherence that begins deep within and is shaped by the emotional architectures of history, society, and self.

8. Symbolic Emotional Categories and Neural Signals

In classical neuroscience, brain activity is often measured as a function of space and time. Electrodes capture signals across regions; these signals fluctuate over time; and the result is often interpreted using spatial-temporal frameworks. But to model emotional intelligence, we must introduce a symbolic layer — one that reflects not where the brain is active, but what kind of emotional meaning is being processed.

We propose a reformulation of the neural signal space by redefining the spatial variable as symbolic rather than physical.

Let:

- x: represent emotional impact types — such as fear, admiration, doubt, trust, threat, hope, etc.
- t: remain as time.
- $f(x,t)$: represent the recorded neural signal over time when emotional condition x is activated or symbolically engaged.

In this framework, emotional stimuli are no longer bound to specific physical coordinates. Instead, we interpret the brain's response as being organized around symbolic emotional categories.

This formulation acknowledges a truth long recognized in literature and art: emotions are not merely physical sensations or chemical reactions — they are structured and categorized through experience, imagination, culture, and memory.

9. Mathematical Modeling: Fourier Analysis of Emotional Dynamics

To analyze how the brain processes emotional categories over time, we apply a Fourier transform to the signal $f(x,t)$. This yields a frequency-based representation of the signal for each symbolic emotion x:

$$F(x,\omega) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(x,t) \cdot e^{-i\omega t}\, dt$$

Here:

- ω: represents frequency — the oscillatory character of the neural response.
- $F(x,\omega)$: is the frequency profile of the brain's activity associated with emotional symbol x.

Next, to study how the brain responds under specific combinations of emotions, we define a characteristic function $\chi(x) \in \{0,1\}$, which selects which emotional categories are active or present.

We then construct a filtered frequency signal:

$$F_\chi(\omega) = \sum_x F(x,\omega) \cdot \chi(x)$$

This gives us a family of functions — each $F_\chi(\omega)$ corresponds to a different emotional configuration, as defined by χ.

By choosing different sets of symbolic emotional categories, we can observe how the brain's frequency dynamics shift. These shifts are not random — they reflect patterns of emotional resonance, integration, or conflict.

This mathematical structure now allows us to move into a deeper interpretation: how do these filtered frequency functions relate to conscious awareness, unconscious processing, and emotional intelligence?

10. Inner Products and the Geometry of Conscious Resonance

To compare different emotional configurations, we define an inner product between two filtered frequency functions:

$$\langle F_\chi, F_{\chi'} \rangle = \sum_\omega F_\chi(\omega) \cdot \overline{F_{\chi'}(\omega)}$$

This inner product measures the resonance between two emotional states, as encoded in the frequency domain. It captures not only the strength of activation across frequencies, but also the phase relationship between them.

Crucially, the result is a complex number. And in this model, we treat the real and imaginary components of this number as psychologically meaningful.

10.1. **Psychological Interpretation of Complex Inner Products.** We propose the following interpretive structure:

- Real part only (purely real inner product): The emotional resonance is in phase. The symbolic emotional signals are consciously aligned. The experience remains available to direct awareness — integrated, stable, and clear.
- Imaginary part only (purely imaginary inner product): The resonance exists, but is 90 degrees out of phase — emotionally present, but unavailable to consciousness. This represents a truly unconscious connection — active within the system but inaccessible to direct reflection.
- Complex result (both real and imaginary parts): This indicates a subconscious connection — a blending of conscious and unconscious processes. The individual may sense the emotion, but only partially, or in distorted or ambiguous ways.

10.2. **Consciousness as Phase Alignment.** In traditional signal theory, phase determines how waves combine: in phase, they reinforce; out of phase, they cancel or distort. This gives us a beautiful metaphor — and more than a metaphor, a structural insight:

- Consciousness emerges not only from frequency magnitude, but from phase alignment across symbolic emotional signals.
- When our inner symbolic structure is phase-coherent, we feel clarity, presence, intelligence.
- When the structure is out of phase, we may act or feel, but without clear awareness — the signal is misaligned, and we live in unconscious or subconscious states.

This allows us to map inner experience onto geometry — treating the emotional mind as a space of complex-valued vectors, whose alignment or misalignment tells us something profound about human awareness.

It is important to note, however, that this model does not measure emotional intelligence directly. Rather, it captures the symbolic and neural dynamics that determine whether emotional intelligence is consciously accessible. What we observe is not the presence or absence of emotional intelligence itself, but the state of resonance — whether emotional symbols are aligned with awareness or remain latent within subconscious or unconscious structures. Thus, the model represents not a quantity of intelligence, but a geometry of access: a way to understand how emotional meaning becomes available — or hidden — within the mind.

11. Global Emotional Coherence and Intelligence

The human mind rarely operates in a single, isolated emotional state. Emotional life is composed of overlapping, conflicting, or coexisting symbolic conditions. A person may feel admiration mixed with fear, or hope shadowed by regret. Each of these states corresponds to a different emotional configuration $\chi(x)$, and each filtered frequency response $F_\chi(\omega)$ represents the brain's rhythm in that configuration.

To assess the system-wide coherence of these emotional states, we define a global measure:

$$S = \sum_{\chi,\chi'} \langle F_\chi, F_{\chi'} \rangle$$

Here, S is a complex number — a sum of all pairwise inner products between emotional configurations. It captures the overall integration or fragmentation of the symbolic emotional system.

11.1. **Interpretation of Global Coherence.**

- A high real part in S suggests that many emotional configurations are consciously aligned — that is, the symbolic structures of emotion resonate in ways the individual can perceive, reflect on, and use in cognition.
- A high imaginary part indicates strong unconscious resonance — emotional patterns that are active and structured, but not accessible to awareness.
- A highly complex value, with both components significant, represents a rich subconscious field — a mind in which emotional patterns are actively coexisting at multiple layers of awareness.
- A low magnitude overall may indicate emotional fragmentation or symbolic flattening — where emotional states lack resonance both with each other and with awareness, resulting in emotional dullness, detachment, or incoherence.

This global value S can be thought of as a kind of emotional intelligence signature — a mathematical representation of how the symbolic emotional system is functioning across states.

11.2. **Toward a Geometry of Integration.** This model suggests that intelligence, at its core, may not be a function of logical structure or computational ability — but of emotional coherence across symbolic configurations.

- A person with high coherence may think clearly not because they are faster or more logical, but because their internal emotional symbols are aligned in phase.
- A person with low coherence may have great potential, but experience confusion, instability, or paralysis — because their symbolic structures are misaligned or emotionally suppressed.

This model offers a way to quantify integration — to see intelligence not as a fixed trait, but as a shifting state of alignment — where emotional symbols, neural frequencies, and awareness come into resonance.

11.3. **Positioning the Model Beyond Traditional Psychological Theories.** This model of symbolic-emotional resonance, represented mathematically by global coherence, carries direct implications for how we understand intelligence itself — especially when compared with dominant psychological theories.

The model of symbolic resonance developed in this paper does not exist in isolation from the broader psychological and social environment. Intelligence, as redefined here, is not a fixed trait or skillset—it is a fragile, dynamic structure of symbolic alignment that emerges from emotional attachment and a sense of connection.

While this model introduces a new way to understand emotional intelligence through symbolic coherence and resonance, it also marks a departure from existing psychological frameworks. Traditional theories—such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, attachment theory, and self-determination theory—describe developmental stages or motivational drives, but

they do not account for the symbolic and energetic architecture of emotional life. These models assume that fulfillment, security, or autonomy are sufficient for psychological health, yet they largely overlook how emotional states are categorized, aligned, and activated through symbolic resonance across the conscious and unconscious mind.

One critical distinction this model introduces is between emotional attachment and sense of connection. Emotional attachment refers to early developmental bonding and safety, as emphasized in attachment theory. But the sense of connection described here is symbolic and existential—it emerges from being recognized, mirrored, and integrated into a shared field of emotional meaning. A person can be securely attached yet feel disconnected on a symbolic level; conversely, one may lack early attachment but still build symbolic resonance through deep recognition and coherence later in life. Traditional models do not address this layered structure of emotional-symbolic development.

By contrast, the model proposed here treats intelligence as an emergent property of symbolic coherence within a frequency-based emotional field—a geometry of integration that reflects not just what the individual feels, but how emotional symbols vibrate in alignment across levels of awareness. This view redefines intelligence as a dynamic system of resonance, not a static hierarchy of needs.

12. Implications for Psychology, Neuroscience, and Philosophy

This model offers a new framework for understanding intelligence — not as a fixed capacity or an abstract computational ability, but as a process of emotional alignment and symbolic coherence. Its implications stretch across several fields:

12.1. **For Psychology.**

- Self-esteem and emotional resilience can be reinterpreted through the lens of internal emotional coherence.

  Rather than seeing self-worth as dependent on social bonds alone, this model explains how a person's sense of connection can survive trauma, isolation, or rejection — as long as symbolic emotional vision remains intact.
- Emotional disturbances, such as dissociation, fragmentation, or identity confusion, may be understood not only in narrative or behavioral terms, but as a loss of coherence in symbolic emotional space.
- Therapeutic work may aim not just at healing relationships, but at restoring alignment across symbolic emotional categories — reconnecting frequencies and re-integrating meaning.

12.2. **For Neuroscience.**

- The model proposes a symbolic extension of existing tools such as EEG and MEG, not by spatial mapping, but by filtering signals through emotional category functions $\chi(x)$.
- Rather than asking "Where is the brain active?" the question becomes "What emotional meaning is being processed, and how coherent is it with other meanings?"
- Inner products between filtered frequency signals offer a new lens for analyzing emotional states, trauma responses, or even creative processes.
- Complex-valued analysis provides a mathematical foundation for distinguishing conscious, unconscious, and subconscious processing, potentially contributing to ongoing studies of consciousness and affective neuroscience.

12.3. **For Philosophy.**

- The theory challenges the view of intelligence as an abstract rational faculty and repositions it as a grounded emotional process.

  Intelligence is not separated from emotion — it is informed by it, structured by it, and made possible through it.
- Consciousness is modeled not as a single unified field, but as a space of phase-aligned symbolic configurations. What becomes conscious is what resonates clearly across emotional signals.
- This invites a new kind of phenomenological analysis — one that treats symbolic emotion, not just perception, as central to selfhood and meaning.

12.4. **For Education and Social Structures.**

- Educational systems often assess intelligence in isolation from emotional life. But this model suggests that emotional coherence is essential for cognitive clarity.
- Students experiencing emotional instability — due to trauma, cultural displacement, or social marginalization — may not lack intelligence, but suffer from misalignment between symbolic categories and emotional context.
- Culturally responsive education, therapeutic presence, and narrative work could be seen as ways of re-establishing phase alignment — restoring symbolic order so intelligence can emerge.

This theoretical framework does not seek to replace existing disciplines, but to reframe their assumptions. It offers a common structure that links emotion, signal, meaning, and awareness — inviting an interdisciplinary vision of what it means to think, to feel, and to be intelligent.

12.5. **Logical Foundations: Hegelian Dialectics, Quantum Resonance, and the Parallel Law of the Excluded Middle (PLEM).** This model not only proposes a psychological and mathematical structure for emotional intelligence, but also operates within a non-classical logic — one that aligns more closely with Hegelian dialectics and the structural dynamics found in quantum theory. The use of complex-valued inner products to measure resonance is not a technical convenience, but a reflection of philosophical depth.

Dialectics in Signal Geometry

The use of the complex conjugate in the inner product reflects a dialectical structure. The frequency-transformed emotional signal $F_\chi(\omega)$ represents the thesis — the asserted or expressed symbolic state. Its conjugate counterpart $\overline{F_{\chi'}(\omega)}$ represents the antithesis — the emotional inverse or reflective counter-signal. Their product, $F_\chi(\omega) \cdot \overline{F_{\chi'}(\omega)}$, thus becomes the synthesis: a measure of resonance or contradiction between symbolic emotional configurations. This structure captures not only amplitude alignment but also phase relationships, preserving both harmony and tension within the geometry of emotional consciousness.

Resonance with Quantum Mechanics

While this paper does not make claims about quantum physics, it is worth noting a philosophical resonance between this model and structures found in quantum theory. In quantum mechanics, a system exists in superposition — not in one state or another, but in a blended combination until measured. Measurement "collapses" this blend into a singular outcome, much like emotional synthesis resolves ambiguous symbolic tensions into conscious awareness. Quantum amplitudes are also manipulated through conjugate inner products,

suggesting a similar logic of interaction. While no direct link is asserted, this structural parallel suggests that dialectical reasoning — far from being outdated — may offer a powerful model for understanding complex, layered, symbolic processes.

The Suspension of the Law of the Excluded Middle

This model, like Hegelian and quantum structures, implicitly suspends the Law of the Excluded Middle (LEM). Emotional states and symbolic structures are not simply present or absent, true or false, but may exist in blended, ambiguous, or contradictory forms. Resonance may be real, imaginary, or complex — not reducible to binary logic. Intelligence, emotion, and self-perception emerge from the phase-aligned integration of symbolic signals, not from rigid categorization.

The Parallel Law of the Excluded Middle (PLEM)

To formalize this logic, I propose the Parallel Law of the Excluded Middle (PLEM). In contrast to classical logic — which insists that every proposition must be either true or false — the PLEM holds that:

A proposition or symbolic state may be simultaneously true and false, each in a distinct layer of awareness.

In the context of emotional intelligence:

- A symbolic signal may be conscious at one frequency,
- Unconscious or inaccessible at another,
- Or exist in a subconscious blend, partially integrated but not fully resolved.

This structure is captured by the complex-valued resonance between signals — where the real part represents conscious clarity, the imaginary part represents unconscious misalignment, and the full complex form captures subconscious tension or synthesis.

The PLEM offers a logical foundation for modeling emotional ambiguity, symbolic conflict, and intelligence as emotional synthesis. It allows us to treat contradiction not as failure, but as a structural feature of human awareness. In this view, emotional life is not composed of discrete truths, but of layered presences — a geometry of symbolic configurations unfolding across time and resonance.

This layered view of truth leads to a deeper clarification of the Parallel Law of the Excluded Middle (PLEM). Unlike the classical Law of the Excluded Middle — which states that for any proposition P, either P is true or its negation $\neg P$ is true — the PLEM asserts that this dichotomy does not need to be resolved within a single layer of awareness.

Instead, truth is distributed across parallel symbolic layers — or what we may call subworlds of the psyche. A symbolic proposition P may be true in one domain (such as the conscious self-image), while its negation $\neg P$ is simultaneously true in another (such as the unconscious emotional field).

For example, a person may consciously affirm "I am loved," yet subconsciously feel abandoned, and unconsciously act out of fear of rejection. Classical logic would interpret this as contradiction. But under PLEM, it is seen as a parallel truth structure — where the proposition and its negation each hold validity within distinct symbolic worlds.

We may thus restate the principle as follows:

PLEM (Formal Expression):

Let W be the set of symbolic-awareness layers (e.g., conscious, subconscious, unconscious). Then for any symbolic proposition P,

$$\exists w \in W \text{ such that } P(w) = \text{true}, \quad \text{or } \exists w' \in W \text{ such that } \neg P(w') = \text{true}.$$

That is, either the proposition or its negation is true — but not necessarily in the same symbolic world.

This expanded logic allows the emotional system to preserve ambivalence, contradiction, and tension without collapsing them into binary categories. It supports a model of symbolic cognition in which resonance, misalignment, and partial integration are not logical flaws, but essential features of emotional intelligence.

In this way, the Parallel Law of the Excluded Middle provides the logical spine of this theory: a principle that honors contradiction without erasing it, and models emotional life as a system of layered, coexisting truths — each vibrating in its own symbolic frequency.

12.6. **Rethinking Freud: Desire, Intelligence, and the Symbolic Mind.** In Freudian theory, intelligence is not understood as a neutral or grounded faculty. Instead, it is often interpreted as a sublimated form of desire — particularly sexual or narcissistic desire that has been repressed and redirected into socially acceptable domains such as reasoning, creativity, or abstract thought. This mechanism, known as sublimation, forms the backbone of Freud's explanation for intellectual and artistic achievement. The mind's higher functions are seen as derivatives of the id, reshaped by repression and redirection.

In this view, intelligence is ultimately driven by unresolved desire. Its structure reflects not emotional grounding, but psychic compensation. Even thinking, in Freud's model, becomes a kind of disguised longing — a way for the psyche to process impulses that cannot be expressed directly.

In contrast, the present theory proposes a fundamentally different origin and structure for intelligence. Intelligence is not born from repression, but from emotional coherence — from the alignment of symbolic emotional categories and internal connection. Where Freud emphasizes desire and substitution, this model emphasizes resonance and integration. It treats intelligence not as a symptom of repression, but as an emergent synthesis of biological learning and emotionally aligned symbolic processing.

This difference is not only theoretical — it changes how we interpret trauma, education, development, and healing. A person is not intelligent because they repress desire well, but because their emotional signals and symbolic categories find coherent structure — even if fragmented or delayed. This shift moves us from a theory of repression and desire to one of resonance and grounding — and it opens the door to a richer, more structured understanding of mind.

13. Conclusion: Toward an Emotionally Grounded Theory of Mind

This paper has proposed a reformation of how we understand intelligence — not as abstraction, not as computation, and not merely as emotional regulation, but as a state of symbolic coherence and emotional alignment. Intelligence, in this view, is neither a fixed capacity nor an isolated skill. It is a procedural structure — a process shaped by the interplay between biological potential, emotional attachment, and symbolic connection.

We began with the Emotional Connection Complex, showing how childhood emotional misalignment can distort — but also redirect — intelligence through the compensatory

growth of imagination. We then distinguished emotional attachment from the sense of connection, and traced their developmental divergence across time. From there, we introduced a mathematical model: symbolic emotional categories, filtered frequency responses, and inner products that capture the geometry of conscious and unconscious resonance.

At the heart of this framework lies a simple but powerful idea: intelligence is not lost in capacity — it is lost in direction. It flourishes when emotional states are integrated across symbolic layers of awareness. It collapses when symbolic signals become fragmented or out of phase.

This theory invites a new paradigm for psychology and education — one that values internal emotional structure over behavioral performance. It offers neuroscience a way to interpret brain signals through symbolic emotional filtering, rather than just spatial or temporal metrics. And it gives philosophy a new vision of consciousness — not as abstract self-reflection, but as phase-coherent symbolic resonance.

What this model ultimately measures is not emotional intelligence itself, but the geometry of access: how aligned we are with the symbols that carry emotional meaning. Intelligence, then, is not something we possess — it is something we enter, construct, and align with, as we rebuild the internal structures of meaning, connection, and presence.

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