

On Searching

*The Jays That Call Us Onward, and the Unknown Reasons We
Follow*

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the On—ing series · ongoing

Dedicated to someone, anyone, who is struggling to figure out who they are. Trying to find the answer. Your search for answers doesn't have to span the globe — it starts within you, then extends to your loved ones, and THEN we go towards the stars. This piece is for you, the reader. For making my ripple in time hit a little bit harder, every time an eye crosses a word.



What are we looking for exactly? Better yet, what were you looking for when you came here and read my “thoughts”?

The meaning of life? If you’ve been paying attention to the Hitchhiker’s Guide, it’s 42.

If you’ve been paying attention to what I’ve been saying, it’s a lot more complicated than that.

Come with me again, on a trail of scattered thoughts, and let’s put the framework against the subconscious instinct we have to find, and what we may be looking for.¹

In *On Rising* I imagined what it might be to stand fully aligned with your Jays — every human perspective arriving at once like white light reassembled from all its scattered colors, your own ripples of intent visible as they travel outward through time, and the whole of you rising toward something larger than yourself. But up, as I said there, is only ever relative to wherever the gravity is pulling. Rising leaves a question hanging in the air it rises through: rising *toward* what? Reaching for what? That open hand at the top of the climb — that’s the search.

So what are we pointing at, that we have this unexplainable desire to “find” someplace we call home that isn’t actually our home?

I circled this once before, in a small piece simply called *Home*. I drew it as a bird on a branch beside a little house in one corner, and a galaxy in the other, a single quiet axis running between them — and I couldn't decide, then, which direction home actually was. Down into the intimate, or up into the cosmic. Novalis once said that philosophy is really homesickness,² the urge to be at home everywhere, and I think the ache he meant has no street address at all. I believe now the answer runs in order, exactly the order of the dedication you just read: it starts within you, then your loved ones, and *then* the stars. An old book put it plainly — the Kingdom is within you first.³



But let me shrink the lens one final time here, and ask you what the sensory organ is that you “search” with. Your eyes? We’ve already proven that’s not as true as we once thought, in the way light travels through space. We really don’t know what’s going on with reality around us.

But what about the “third eye” that keeps getting hinted at through my framework? The “sixth sense”? The Quantum Lens.

Can someone “see” Jays floating around them, in and out of them?

Absolutely not. None of the five understood senses in the current structure of science have any way to measure them. By that logic, the observer effect is... quite literally in full effect.

Can you “feel” Jays?

Absolutely you can.

You feel them every time you hear a song that makes you feel like you’re special. Whether it be happy, grateful, important —

whatever emotion that song generates in you is a result of the Jays being sent from the artist who wrote the song.

Did either of you know that they would travel through time like that? From the mind of one musician anywhere in the world, into a notebook, then to band practice, into a recording studio, onto a... weird quantum pause here. At 42 years old, I can put any number of words in this spot. Vinyl Record, Cassette Tape, Compact Disc, MP3 files, etc.

I hear Jays in all the songs I listen to, because I only listen to songs I like. But I'm extremely weird though — I used to be a “big famous” DJ in my head (I only left Kansas City to perform twice). I tend to listen to literally anything.

Literally anything? Yes. Anything.

Hip hop, country, classic rock, and here recently I've been getting into a lot of electro remixes of classic rock. I especially like this new wave of “consciousness based” lyrics and quantum lenses being applied to meaning. Some of the music being created today is going to be timeless, and the artists don't even know it.

Spent the day today at a music gathering with one of my artist friends; she doesn't even realize her music will be anthems for our home town decades after she's gone. Or maybe she does.

Timeless is not a thing we achieve, it's a feeling we have, as humans.

Tapping into it, that's another story.



How did I find my way “home”?

The same way a lot of us do. By messing everything up, and putting it all back together again. (Quantum lens out — imagine a day the WORLD did that. We'll get to that at the end; let's zoom back into the ego I used to loathe.)

My cousin Bibiana, yet again a pillar at many intersections of my life, her name resonates here in time with me. I was a young boy. She didn't steer me wrong; she just told me to keep asking why. (Or something to that effect — I can't remember the context, but that's what stuck.) In the minutes following, I stepped in front of a mirror, looked deep into my own eyes, and asked "Why am I me?"

So much ego in that question, but I was so young. So what did I find on my search since that day?

I'll tell you.

I now have a full scientific understanding of how light reflects the three-dimensional image of objects all the way to the back of your retinas. Upside down, if you didn't know. Technically you're always on the "bottom" of the planet from gravity's perspective, being drawn up toward the core of gravity. But that's all relative — just remember that up is down, and nothing makes sense.

Are we crystal clear? Probably not. Took me the better part of three decades to figure out how all that works. Let's follow the beam of light a little further.

Next your retinas create an electrical impulse in your occipital lobe. For years, the textbook picture was that the image gets relayed from there to other parts of the brain, generating further impulses that eventually report back to the hypothalamus — the "center" of the brain, from a lot of perspectives, not just the directional one. But in recent years, using high-resolution diffusion imaging, researchers have traced a long fiber bundle running straight from the occipital

cortex into the hypothalamus, the septal nuclei, and the bed nucleus of the stria terminalis — the occipito-hypothalamic/septal/BNST tract, or OHSB. They've proposed that this direct wiring could let an image trigger an emotional response before you've consciously "thought" about it at all.⁴ Based on everything we've already talked about, if I had to guess, I'd say that if the people who mapped that keep digging, they'll find that most of the major parts of the brain are wired directly to the hypothalamus in one way or another.

But what do I know — I'm just a guy with a theory about imaginary "time Jays" that affect our everyday lives. You're still reading, though, so I'd better grow a bit of ego back and continue.

Before I do, sidestep the science of sight with me for a second and let's talk about the brain's perception of pain. Pain isn't generated out in the extremities; it's constructed in the brain and then referred back out to the place that got hurt. Say you get a paper cut. The nerves in your finger — nociceptors — fire their messages up the spinal cord, the brain reads them, builds the sensation, and assigns it a location: there, in the fingertip. None of that is instant. By the time you consciously feel the cut, somewhere between a tenth and half a second has already gone by. The event is over. What you experience as the sharp *now* of the paper cut is a reconstruction your brain assembled from a signal that has already come and gone — and then quietly back-dated, so the lag never shows.⁵ You don't feel the cut at the instant it happens. You feel a stitched-together replay, and your brain hides the seam. Still think the title of my book sounds weird? You are living a fraction of a second behind the world, every waking moment of your life. You're literally a time traveler.

Cool, right?

Nevertheless, if our own brains are reconstructing the world a beat late to make us “feel” something that has already happened to us, this only solidifies the existence of Jays — but it makes their paths ever more confusing.

We don’t have to explain their paths. We just have to know they exist for them to work.

Another takeaway here is that nothing your brain perceives is happening in real time.

Only when your Jays are aligned are you experiencing real time, one split second at a time. Operating within the framework like some kind of “Alien” to the design.

Don’t ask me how it works. I just write about it, and philosophize about what it means.

But where do they point? What’s the draw?

What are we searching for?



Let’s go back to my framework itself, and talk about the greater good of humanity. In the four parts of *Toward a Theory of Coherent Existence* I tried to lay the floor under all of this: coherence assembled patiently, layer by layer; the old mythic and spiritual traditions all circling the same center; resonance and frequency as the grammar by which aligned things find one another; and the claim I finally staked in the last part — that no one is coherent alone. That an aligned person can become a binding *third* inside a shared mind: the thing Simmel saw in the triad, Buber in the meeting of I and Thou, Peirce in the community of inquiry, Bohm in true dialogue — and the thing we might one day test against what

Tomasello calls shared intentionality.⁶

When people work to help each other — not just each other, but humanity as a whole — their Jays point “outward” is the best I can put it in words. I once thought the direction was *up* — but up is relative; and now I realize that when they’re pointed inward, that’s the ego sucking up all of their “power,” removing your importance from the timeline.

When they point outward — toward your family, friends, community, city, state, country, and species... oh boy.

I have no words for the very brief moment I experienced it, but I’ll forever keep talking about why it made sense, if you’ll keep reading.

Just know that when I say I have no words, I literally mean I have no words.

There’s no human word to describe Jays in their nature yet. I struggled even to come up with a name for them as it is, not wanting to take credit for “finding them.” Let’s face it — my theory parallels almost every other theory in reality about existence. But that only shows you how close we are to actually solving this mess.

My moment is passing, but my search will never stop. I explained this in *On Learning* — there are still so many things I need to put in this little brain of mine.

My cup overfloweth.

I’m grateful, and yet I search.

Keep asking why. Don’t stop. There is an answer, I promise. Be patient with yourself;⁷ for a long time humanity has had its Jays misaligned.

Humanity doesn't have to heal — but if the reader turns a few Jays outward before this passage closes, then I've done my job well.

On a day you're searching for someone to love you, just remember that I'm always here loving you with my thoughts. Hoping I can bring you joy — or that we can meet someday and you can tell me I brought you joy.

That would bring me joy too.

Jays point out.

Towards the future. <3⁸



Notes

1. *The paradox of the search.* Plato's *Meno* poses the puzzle directly: how can you look for something when you don't already know what it is — and how would you recognize it if you found it? Socrates answers with *anamnesis*, recollection: the search is possible because the soul already half-knows what it seeks. The same intuition runs beneath this essay and beneath *On Learning* — that we arrive empty and arrive remembering.
2. *Homesickness as philosophy.* The phrase belongs to Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg): philosophy as *Heimweh*, “really homesickness,” the urge to be at home everywhere. It anchors the companion prose piece *Home* and names the ache this essay tracks inward before turning it outward.
3. *The Kingdom within, and the restless heart.* “The Kingdom of God is within you” is Luke 17:21. Augustine gives the longing its most-quoted form in the *Confessions*: the heart stays restless until it rests in something larger than itself — the home that is not a place.
4. *The OHSB tract.* Using high-angular-resolution diffusion-weighted tractography, Kamali and colleagues delineated and named the occipito-hypothalamic/septal/BNST (OHSB) pathway, building on their

earlier mapping of the parieto-occipito-hypothalamic tract. These studies establish a *structural* connection between the occipital cortex and the central limbic nuclei and *propose* a role in routing visual information directly toward emotion-related centers; the functional, “before-you-think” reading remains a hypothesis rather than a settled finding. (Kamali et al., *Brain Research*, 2023; precursor work, 2020.)

5. *The lag, and the back-dating.* Conscious perception runs behind the world. Cortical processing of a painful stimulus takes on the order of a few hundred milliseconds, and near-threshold sensations can require up to roughly half a second to reach awareness (Libet). Libet proposed the brain *antedates* experience so the delay goes unnoticed — “backward referral” — a specific mechanism that remains debated, even as postdiction itself is independently demonstrated in illusions such as the flash-lag effect. The honest, modest takeaway is the one the essay keeps: what you experience as “now” is a reconstruction of an event that has already passed.
6. *No one is coherent alone.* The fourth part of *Toward a Theory of Coherent Existence* argues that an aligned person can act as a binding third within a shared mind, drawing the lineage together: Georg Simmel on the triad, Martin Buber on the I–Thou meeting, C. S. Peirce on the community of inquiry, David Bohm on dialogue — with falsifiability pointed toward Michael Tomasello’s work on shared intentionality.
7. *Live the questions.* Rilke, in *Letters to a Young Poet*, counsels patience toward everything unresolved in the heart, and learning to “love the questions themselves.” The line beneath “keep asking why.”
8. *A way for the cosmos to know itself.* Carl Sagan’s framing — that we are the cosmos grown able to contemplate itself — is the lineage this essay’s outward turn belongs to. The search pointed at the stars is the universe searching its own face.

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