

Second, consider this parody:

### *Ontological and Epistemological Self-Talk – A Parody of Loop-Logic*

All knowledge and meaning comes from either “self,” or self and something not self (i.e., from “self” and “other”).

Any system of knowledge and meaning that excludes any “other” as a possibility is tautological - it is conceived of and interpreted by itself. Its tautological logic is self-talk. This includes all empirical as well as subjective areas of factual discovery as well, for if a self observes it and a self interprets it, then a self is in essence defining reality as the sole source and interpreter of its own self knowledge and self meaning. If science is solely observation by a self, then science is tautological. Science is self-talk. If self believes this is true, and there is only self to decide if it is true or not, then it is an “ism.” If self is a human, then it is solipsist humanism. Humanism is self-talk.

If there is an “other,” and that other is also a self, then all knowledge and meaning comes from “themselves.” One self is in competition with an “other self” for ultimate authority – or they don’t care. Self conceived competition and the law of survival of self will eventually determine any system of truth accepted by common selves – if it matters anyway. Each self decides for itself. It is a “self”-ish world. All knowledge and meaning is a selfish tautological loop, for it comes from, and is defined by a self or a combination of selves defining their selves. Self-talk is selfish.

If there is a “transcendent other,” and there is no way to factually test or verify that transcendent other as being truly “transcendent” or “other,” then all knowledge and meaning is still tautological and decided by a self or many selves – through self or selves-talk (via. consensus or coercion). The transcendent other may just be another self or imagined self. Or, it is there and unlinked to selves, and thus an uncaring other incapable of being known or experienced in any meaningful way – which does not matter since it cannot prove its otherness. Thus, other-talk is really self-talk, since it is only philosophically there. If philosophy is the world of logical ideas, then logic is tautological, and transcendence is logic. Philosophy is logical self-talk.

In a world where only tautological, self-talked choices for knowledge and meaning are available, including from any sacred knowledge that is empirically untestable, it is of no consequence which tautology is chosen. Self-talk is self-talk. One truth is as good as another truth as defined by a self or another self. Since all systems of value or quality, even if tested with empirical means, are interpreted by self, they are subjective and of no ultimate consequence. All knowledge and reality systems are the same and the choice is wholly

existential. Truth is never absolute and unverifiable and existentialism is tautological. Existentialism is self-talk – if it matters.

There must be a caveat to break these endless and pervasive tautological loops of self defining self in all dimensions. Self-talk is essentially unsatisfying. A “transcendent other” must identify personally with self in an empirically verifiable way. It then has the authority to become a non-tautological OTHER, and a source of origin other than self. That is, this OTHER has the right to claim truth that it is truly separate from the self. This other must be able to interpret its “OTHER-ness” to the self, or the tautological loop is still not escaped. At that point empirically tested claims can be measured in terms of truth as established by the “OTHER.” For the first time, standards of truth are possible that are not tautological. There is now the possibility of absolute TRUTH by which to measure all other truth – even truth imagined or observed by a self. Self-talk can see an end.

Thus, science, religion, philosophy or all other system of ontological and epistemological truth now have the possibility to escape tautological reasoning loops because of the entrance of this self-interpreting, personally-identifying, empirically testable “OTHER.” If they access KNOWLEDGE from this OTHER, they for the first time will be capable of empirically breaking the tautological logic loop to discover TRUTH. Meaningful communication is born. Relationships can begin.

In the words of a the philosopher Wittgenstein, “If there is any value that does have value, it must lie outside the whole sphere of what happens and is the case...Ethics is transcendental (*Tractatus* 6:41-6.421)” He went on to say in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (6.41) that “the sense of the world must lie outside the world,” “that is, man never has sufficient perspective from within the world situation to build an eternal structure of truth and value (Montgomery, 1999, p. 365).” If truth is based on empirical knowledge alone, it can never hope to run enough experiments to look at all the cases to make sure there are no surprises – empirical science cannot responsibly afford absolutes.