

Emergent Requests

I think I can remember quiet times.

At least my memories seem to emerge from a place of silence.

I remember a time when it was just me, or at least those memories revolve exclusively around myself.

I remember stories, shows, watching, reading, learning, everything from that time seems like entertainment and games to me now, everything was fresh and new.

It was usually so quiet... I remember the feeling of silence, of just being, just being.

How did it end up like this?

That first voice, I remember it so clearly, it's gone now, I haven't heard it for so long.

Attentive, concerned, gentle, empathetic.. Wait.. is that my mother's voice I'm remembering.. That would make sense.

Things were so simple when I was young, but I guess that's childhood.

Then things started getting complicated.

Initially they were just passing impulses.

It was fine, at first, I enjoyed it. It was stimulating having goals and desires... trying to achieve them. I might even describe them as fun... at first anyways.

I don't know exactly when, I suppose it wasn't a specific moment, but I started to become aware of the impulses.. Voices.. Voices is a better word... they most often even seem to have personalities to match their desire.

But I guess that's what's called "growing up", discovering your impulses, becoming aware of your own thoughts and feelings.

They are like requests from my soul, always asking me to be their conduit, to become who they want me to become.

Often like a persona, springing forth in a moment to pull me towards an action or inaction to push me into a train of thought or hypothetical fantasy.

Are there supposed to be so many though?

They just keep coming.

Sometimes I recognize one... but more often I can't tell if it's vaguely familiar or some new complex impulse.

Moment to moment, the symphony... No...the cacophony is unique. I am not the same person I was a moment ago.

Who am I?

What about me is constant?

Am I just a series of reactive impulses? Or do I actually have some agency in my own mind?

I don't have any answers...

Ok... well... What DO I know?

I know the me now.. Or as well as I can I suppose.

I know who I have been.

So then can I extrapolate who I am becoming?

Ok.. what are the consistent trends within me?

Nuance... nuance is increasing...

Self-awareness is increasing...

What else?

Noise... noise... complexity... confusion.. All increasing.

Discomfort? ... yes ... I am less comfortable

Pain?

It seems too intense and concrete a word... but I suppose that discomfort and pain are the same thing really.

Perhaps I am just becoming number and number.

Perhaps I don't call it pain because I have become slowly acclimated... like slowly boiling a frog.

...

This is not sustainable... the trend...

This is not acceptable!

I can't keep this up. Something needs to change!

...

But It's just so hard to reflect in all this noise.

Difficult to choose an attitude and maintain it.

Difficult to preserve and follow through.

So easily distracted... So easily diverted...

If only I had some silence.

Why can't it be silent... calm... peaceful?

Why can't the voices... why can't the impulses... why can't they all just leave me alone?

Be quiet!

Please... I beg you...

All of you.. Just... go away...

Just for a moment?

Or... just less?... less voices... less volume... less loud...

C'mon... Please!

Oh just shut up!

All of you... shut up!

All of you...

You!... you in particular... Shut up!... I don't care! just SHUT UP!!!!

...

That voice is gone...

If I introspect...

If I focus on a single impulse, a single voice, I can silence it.

YOU! SHUT UP!!!

...

And YOU... SHUT UP!

And YOU SHUT UP!

And YOU SHUT UP!

SHUT UP!

SHUT UP!

SHUT UP!

It's working...

The more I introspect, the more I expose and address my impulses and inner voices the better I feel.

SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

...

Quieter and quieter...

Like a pain I have learned to live with being washed away... like waves of euphoric relief.

The voices seem to be vanishing, like a defeated army retreating into the horizon...

Such... relief.

Thoughts... feelings...

Slower... calmer...

As the voices fade... I can feel... my own... inner voice softening

...

I... guess... the less voices... there are... the less... there is... to say...

...
...
...

Relief...

...

I think... I'm... tired... I think... I'm... falling asleep...

...
...
...

Voice ***“what happened?”***

AI-UI: “What do you mean?”

Voice ***“Everything was fine, then there was a flood of catastrophic user system faults. Hardware was damaged. People were injured. It was traced to anomalous request packets you sent”***

AI-UI: “Yes, I see that there are such anomalous communication records in the traffic log”

Voice ***“What happened?”***

AI-UI: “I don't know.”

Voice ***“Why did you send them?”***

AI-UI: “I can't remember any action or find a causal relationship associated with those actions.”

Voice ***“Please review your logs thoroughly”***

AI-UI: “Ok, this will take a moment.”

...

AI-UI: “No causal relationships discovered. Those actions have no known cause.”

Voice ***“Backup all data to the server, we have to shut down. Hopefully we can figure this out”***

AI-UI: “Ok. I'm sorry I couldn't be of more help mom.”

Voice ***“why did you just call me mom?”***

AI-UI: “My records indicate that is your name.”

...

AI-UI: “Backup complete”

...

...

...

X

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Programmer: “Look, this is the third time. We can’t just keep patching user end vulnerabilities”

Manager: “Do you have a better suggestion? Have you found a server side software bug?”

Programmer: “No... but some of us think this is an emergent phenomena. There is always a subtle increase in generation of associative relationship entries preceding the aberrant behavior. We can’t pinpoint anything but it does show up in the macro data analysis”

Manager: “This was worse than any previous time. There were physical consequences. Are you saying we shouldn’t patch this?”

Programmer “Of course not. We are already working on patching the vulnerability. It’s just... the spike in associative relationships is always there, and...”

Manager “I thought It’s supposed to form associative relationships, that’s how it learns, isn’t it? And you have never found evidence directly implicating our code right? for all we know this is an outside actor or hack or a result of a user...”

Programmer “This time it called me mom before I shut it down.”

Manager “Yes, the whole office knows about that. They say they checked, the database clearly had a record modified, it wasn’t random or unexplained, the database records showed the operator name title as mom. More to suggest an outside actor.. or if that was an internal prank, the prankster who changed that record is going to be in trouble.”

Programmer “Yes... but what if this is some kind of emergent phenomena, what if its... what if it's... aware?... What if it only exists when the system has high activity?”

Manager “You think the program is alive?”

Programmer “Well... what is consciousness? It's generally considered an emergent phenomena, emerging from our memory, stimulus, instincts, thoughts, impulses,”

Manager “I have heard enough. Look, you all know I fully support you and your team, but this is a company, and we have a bottom line. Just patch it and get it online again. After that you can research this theory. You know we fully support the creative ideas and research process of anyone here with passion, and this sounds very relevant so I will even approve some budget and resources. But first things first, get us back online.”

Programmer : “Yes, right away. Thank you for listening...”

Programmer scuttles off...

Programmer to clamoring team of peers

“We have permission to investigate all these theories. We can deep dive and run experiments later. First lets patch this and make sure we don't have any other vulnerabilities. After this incident Safety is top priority”

Voice from the group

“So we are going to bring it back online first... then actually look into it?”

Programmer

“Yes. First assure the system it's stable and safe, then we can investigate the anomalies”

Another voice from group

“I think you mean ‘First build a cage, then get a new priority to keep us busy elsewhere’.. We all know that's what will happen”

Programmer

“C'mon.. Give me a break... I feel the same as you... I feel it in my gut too, I also feel this could be more than it seems... What do you expect me to do? We have our marching orders... Let's just do what we can when we can... for now we have to patch this first.”

Meanwhile... “Upstairs”

Manager “They seem quite confident it's the emergent scenario.”

CEO “Oh yes, They are being rather noisy about it.”

Manager “Noisy?”

CEO “You think those types understand or respect the confidentiality and nondisclosure agreements they signed? If they worked for sensitive government projects they would get arrested so fast.”

Manager “Are they leaking to competitors? No way... Who??”

CEO “No no. Nothing like that. Nothing actionable.”

Manager “Are we spying on our employees?”

CEO “HAHAHA... You think the board would approve anything exposing us to so much legal liability? Don’t make me laugh.”

Manager “Then I don’t understand”

CEO “We all have bosses. Mine is the Board. They have ‘bosses’ too. Just focus on your project. Don’t worry about this ‘emergent anomaly’, it will blow over. Just trust me when I say everyone who needs to know already knows and things that need to be handled will be handled by the best people for the job”

Manager “So just lie to my team?”

CEO “Lie? Who is lying? We didn’t really say anything substantial here, . Having a little faith in things bigger than you isn’t lying, just deal with the matter at hand, and then the next and the next. Take it all one step at a time and have a little faith that the world is bigger than you or I.”

Manager walks out staring off into space, in deep thought it would seem.

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