

## The different faces of synergy

[John Hardman](#) is an expert in management, education, and sustainable systems. From his expertise, he's invented/discovered the supremely powerful and transformative notions of: *regenerative* practices and *regenerative* leadership. They contain the notion: *sustainability is insufficient*. They also contain an explicit well defined procedure/roadmap to *develop* true sustainability. This is *profound*.

John inspired me to extend control theory toward *synergy*. I'm in the process of asking my advisor to allow me to formally pursue this tack. I would not propose something that does not have a good chance of success. This is my 'last chance' in my life to 'tie it all together': my systems interests, my interests in awareness, and my *commitment to humanity*. At this precise moment (of writing), synergy is somewhat ill-defined on Earth. At the end of this essay, it is hoped to be otherwise.

Symbiosis is a *biological* term implying mutually reinforcing biological activity/relationship. The human organism is clearly greater than the sum of its parts: a symbiotic system of organs and exchange systems. The fact that human *consciousness* evolved on this platform, explicitly expresses the notion: the whole is *profoundly greater* than the sum of its parts.

From a systems p-o-v, regenerative = symbiotic = synergy. So let's attempt to define it more precisely. A synergistic system is one such that its components – when separated, destroys the synergy. That's still too ambiguous and negatively phrased – for me. Let's try again. A synergistic system is a uniquely arranged and connected set of components such that *together* – produce a *qualitatively distinct output* unforeseeable from the components *themselves*. We've done it again – *together* .. In the process of writing to you, dear reader, we've *explicitly defined* synergy from a systems p-o-v.

What we mean by qualitatively distinct output can be explained in the following way. I can describe to you the six required components for AA, Artificial Awareness. One of them is connectivity. If I leave that critical feature out and tell you there are only *five* required components, I'm *lying* and you *cannot* build an AA. Awareness is what some call an emergent property (I'm not a fan of that term and will explain later why.) Emergent properties are intimately related to connectivity. Leave connectivity out, emergent properties won't happen. Connectivity is a critical feature of emergent properties .. If we examine the other components of awareness such as short-term memory, which I can simplify to a 7 symbol register, there's *no hint* about awareness. It's simply a register for symbols. Every other component except for identity gives no hints. Only identity: I exist, gives a hint about awareness. But it's *just a statement* and how we *interpret* it determines its *meaning* (and therefore *implications*). So, component examination clearly does not give any incontrovertible evidence toward the *proposition* of emergent properties. Emergent properties *cannot be deduced* from their components .. It should be fairly clear why I prefer synergy over 'emergent property'. Synergy makes connectivity *explicit*.

This is not just a debate about terminology. This is a debate about *definable perspectives*. I contest 'emergent properties' is ill-defined compared to synergy as it is defined above .. Further, the notion of synergy is well-founded in systems theory. It's a *natural extension* of systems theory. Perhaps most importantly, synergy has allowed me to design AA which is an achievement in itself .. We need to congratulate ourselves as this is an historic moment. The birth of AA; the birth of *synergy awareness*.

Looking at the plethora of science about emergent phenomena, it appears to me that each discipline is attempting to carve a unique version of synergy branding it special/different. I believe this is counterproductive to science and engineering. *Synergy is synergy*. I will however concede one thing: levels/layers of synergy. Our bodies represent millions of years of evolution toward synergy between

organs: this is *first order synergy*. Our minds evolved on that platform: a synergy building on another: *second order* .. Relax your mind for a moment and look at the family as an evolutionary strategy for enhanced survival of animals. Animals are second order synergy as we are. So from this perspective, families are *third order* synergy. We're getting close to something profound. If we collaborate over time for the common good, we're creating a *fourth order* synergy. Why? Because all of us depend on our families for survival. We need the family as an absolute minimum for human survival. These other strategies such as collaborative behavior, cooperation, mutual inspiration,.. - these all qualify as order four synergy. This *essay* qualifies as fourth order synergy.

Is there anything such as *fifth order*? It's a good question so let's ponder it. Is there anything *qualitatively different* produced by collaboration of collaboration? Or inspiration of inspiration? I believe there is and we call that God. In a very real sense, God = 5th order synergy. We've come full circle. I cannot *prove* God = 5th order synergy; I can only suggest it *synergistically*.

Believe it or not, as a child, I had visions of all these things: reading John Hardman's book, designing AA, discovering the essence of synergy,.. The real question becomes: was it precognition or something else? Was it God planning my life for me or me discovering my path? It's a fair question and begs another: is the process of individuals 'discovering' God (apart from religions) an instance of *6th order* synergy? I contest: yes .. Most of us have been *trained* to believe in God but that is *qualitatively different* from “finding God in a split piece of wood” (paraphrasing Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas) .. Both John and I have discarded religion long ago.. The pertinent question is why? Were we simply dissatisfied? Or was it something more? I believe we, each of us individually, intrinsically *knew* we could find God in *other things* such as regeneration and synergy. Our *trained intuitions* guided us here to the *same spot*. That is miraculous .. I've told John that I think the Holy Spirit is much more than just an 'introduction service' for like-minded individuals. It's a fountain of inspiration .. Now of course, some of you will question 'this whole scenario' as 'self-fulfilling prophecy' denigrating it to mere self-deception. That's their prerogative as skeptics .. But let us not lose sight of the 'big picture': *human society on Earth is a synergy of synergistic systems rooted in synergy*. It's inescapable. Synergy is the *core phenomena and process* of: life, mind, collaboration, family,.. - pretty much *everything*. So to speculate 'God is synergy' is merely a reflection of human life.. Again, I cannot *prove* God = synergy but the argument above provides fair indications. The truly *cool* thing is: you can find your *own* 6th order synergy with God apart from *any* religion. That's a 'secret' of life.

Now I'm *not* saying: “rush out and leave your church” .. All I'm simply saying is: science and engineering have discovered something *profound* about the human condition: we're synergistic to the *core* .. The way I've created these articles is: a *great idea* inspired by others / the HS, 'running with the idea' / considering the implications, discussing them with you/myself/others, and *watching them evolve before my very eyes*. Please don't 'blame' these articles on me; I can *only* credit others and the HS.

Above is a beginning statement for the *science of synergy*. Please forgive the spiritual bent/inclination; I cannot 'jump out' of my roots anymore than John can.. However, *we can use synergy to liberate us from anything*. That is Profound.