Preface

This book is the first of what is hoped to be a series of seven books. Hence, the reason for the “An Introduction” qualifier to this book’s title. This ambitious goal is the result of my many life’s experiences some of which are personal, some academic and some professional.

My personal experience includes the abuse of alcohol with that behavior restricted to the ages of 28 to 30 and then from 38 to 44 for a total of eight years. I put the “plug in the jug” at about 1:30 pm EST on April 22, 1987, and have many times since stated “Hello, my name is Dave and I am an alcoholic”, and with that statement made in an appropriate forum without prejudice to others. I have also heard many people introduce themselves with the same “…my name is …” reference some of whom were celebrities, clergy, corrections officers, dentists, husbands, physicians, police officers, skilled workers, students, teachers, unemployed, unskilled workers, wives, and with this short census extend to a long list of vocations with ardent abusers of an endless variety includable. Further, the ages of the many people have ranged from 14 to 92 with age differences largely inconsequential to the ability of each person to share personal thoughts about life’s experiences with each other. Sadly, men have outnumbered women by more than three to one, a ratio the undercurrents of mortality data suggests to be the wrong proportion.

My personal experience also includes eight years of talk therapy, which is comprised of four segments with the first three with a psychologist and the fourth with a psychiatrist. The first segment began in the fall of 1987 and lasted for about 1-1/2 years. That time was spent delving into an inventory of my personality, an effort that did result in an introspective evaluation with technical merit but was void of a sense of feeling about self. The second segment began in the spring of 1995 as an extension of the first segment but gradually drifted to a questioning of why we seemingly intelligent human beings find safe harbor in delusion. The questioning resulted from my decision, also in the spring of 1995, to be involved in the community in the form of participating in discussions about substance abuse for four years (women in a shelter, then men in a shelter, and then men in a jail) and then in the form of executive level management of recovery services (president of the board of a treatment center, and then finance director of a domestic violence agency). The third segment began in the summer of 2000 and quickly took the form of a two-person doctoral symposium. Upon becoming the board president at the treatment center, the psychologist directed all attention to prior research attempts to craft an equivalent of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory to the discovery of the addictive personality, with that research generating a consistent 50%-yes and 50%-no result across all control group configurations. And, the fourth segment began in the fall of 2001 and was about unfortunate experiences while serving in the military. The psychiatrist consistently countered my description of events with a “you were lucky”, with all recollections of events masking heavily repressed childhood issues that were not discovered and resolved until after that person’s death, when a very special and precious woman stepped into my life and she and I agreed that a fear of trust was our common plight.

My academic experience includes economics, mathematics and organizational psychology. My interest in economics has narrowed to cost-benefit analysis with a focus on the illusiveness of uncertainty on the planning (cost) side with an equal
emphasis on the discovery of uncertainty on the measurement (benefit) side. My interest in mathematics has narrowed to the family of harmonic functions with a focus on the investigation of patterns in the analysis that precedes planning and its inherent uncertainty. And, my interest in organizational psychology has narrowed to self-referencing systems with a focus on the investigation of patterns in the analysis that follows measurement and its cloud of uncertainty.

And, my professional experience includes fifteen years in sales forecasting and market analysis with eleven of those years in the pharmaceutical industry and the remaining four years in the motor vehicle industry, and fifteen years in software and systems development as a consultant with that experience spread across several industries. The common focus across both vocations was the maximization of knowledge about the immediate subject of interest, with no focus on the lack of precision that is inherent in each (at the expense of uncertainty).

Taken together, these experiences have allowed me to form a strong opinion about the human condition, with that opinion ranging from being about a collection of foibles and fears, through a narrower fear of trust, and on to a fundamental notion of feeling wrong as a person. While a focus on the recognition of uncertainty and its impact is a consistent theme throughout this book, uncertainty per se is not the explicit subject. Instead, the subject is a two-dimensional Arrow of Effort as a proxy for the human condition as an opportunity, with the cosmological Arrow of Time as a proxy for the human condition as a happening. My writing plan recognizes the complexity of this subject.

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