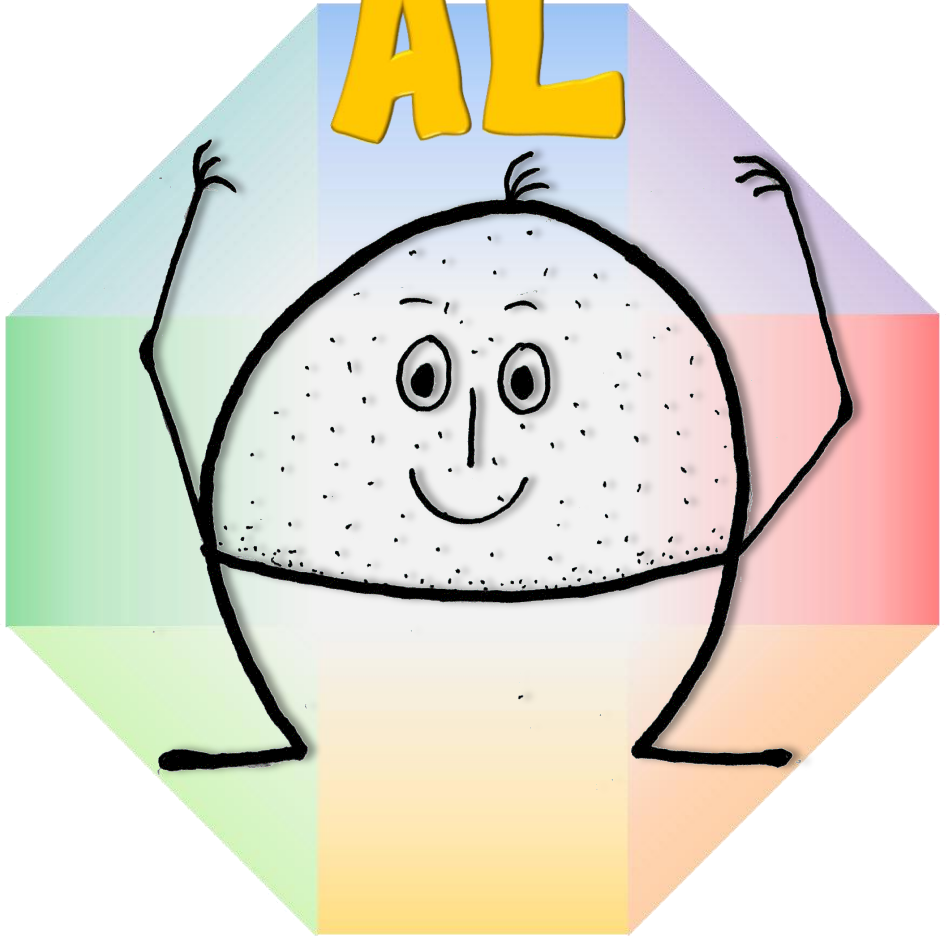


# YOUNIVERS- AL



AN ALLEGORY

Alan Marcus James Robbins

***You can read and understand this allegory in many ways,  
depending on your age and inclinations.***

***Whatever your take on it, keep an open mind,  
just enjoy reading and try to practice  
the ideas of keeping balance and  
letting love take control of your life.***

**Alan Marcus James Robbins, Oxford, June 2019**

*Special thanks for inspiration to:  
Richard Rohr OFM, Rupert Sheldrake, Pope Francis, and my wife Gilli!*

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Al's material is available in other forms.

Since this is an evolving project,  
versions of printed and electronic material will change.

**Booklets** available from Lulu Publishing

<http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/8al> (check both pages)

**PDFs** for your mobile phone or tablet, available from Scribd

<https://www.scribd.com/user/153370791/Marcus-Robbins>

**Animated GIFs** available on GIPHY

<https://giphy.com/channel/amjrobbins>

**Animated AL clips** and **animated OM maps** on YouTube

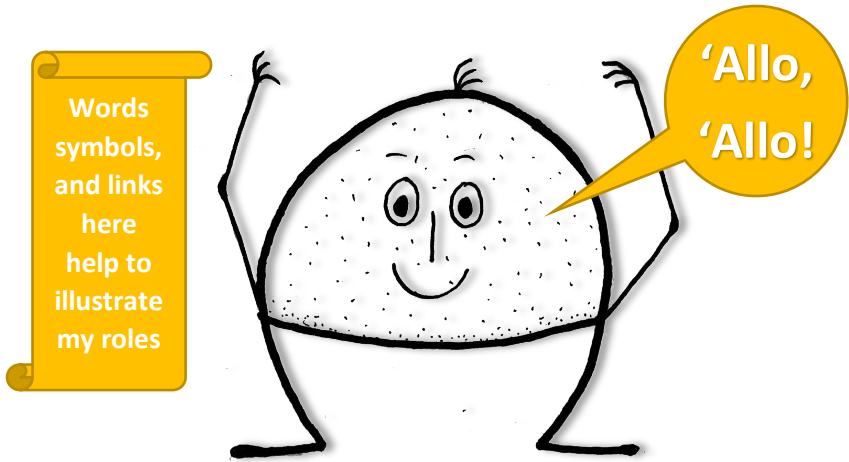
<https://www.youtube.com/user/amjrobbins>

(click on Featured contents or Playlists, then Al's animations)

The PDF version (using Adobe Reader), has hidden links to some animations.

See if you can find them by clicking or tapping the graphics.

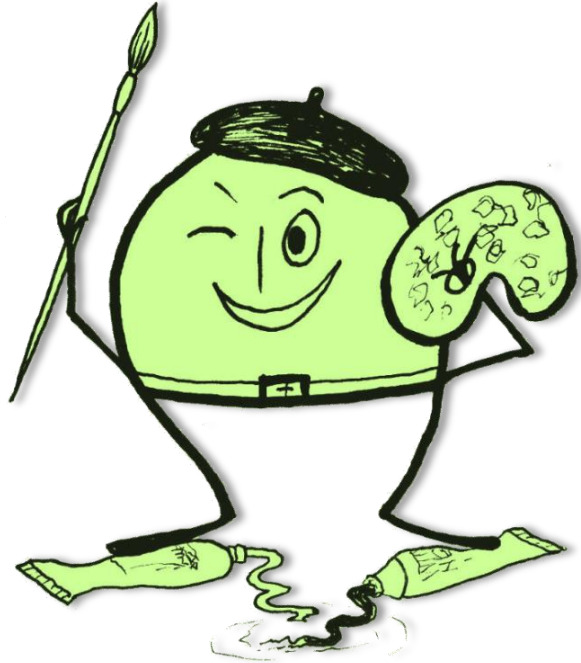
**My name is AL.**  
**Let me introduce myself...**



... I'm your *ALter ego*  
(a close and trusted friend)  
who can help you to understand yourself,  
others, and the world around you.

In the movie of your life,  
I come in all sorts of guises and  
love to play different roles,  
each one of which has many AL-iasess.  
So, role up, role up, meet some of them,  
and learn how to  
live a life of love with me.

**This is me in the guise of Origin-AL,  
acting the way...**



... we all have a unique beginning in life,  
a time and place when we were created  
and were free to do many original things.

We still need to be creative in our lives  
and to make all sorts of inspiring things  
like art, music, sculpture, prose, poems,  
to play games, have hobbies, invent stuff  
to have fun, be funny and to create new life!

We need free rein to imagine – “yeeHA!”

This is me in the guise of Influen-ci-AL,  
acting the way...



... everything has to follow rules, OK?  
There are natural and spiritual laws,  
and those that humans decide upon.  
They influence the choices we make  
and how we judge right from wrong.  
We need to be critical, but fair and just.  
Without controls that give life order  
we'd have chaos and conflict, and  
we'd be unable to stop **S**-elf-**I**-sh-**N**-ess.

# Influenti-AL and Origin-AL need to keep each other in balance!



Our roles must be acted out together.  
Creative freedom needs ordering rules.  
Without laws, Big Bangs create chaos!  
Our need to be free, creative and original  
must be balanced by law, order and habit.  
If they get out of balance, we'll have either  
anarchy/chaos, or boredom/repression.  
We tend to limit other people's freedom  
if we follow our freedom without control.



## So there's a time for both/ &:

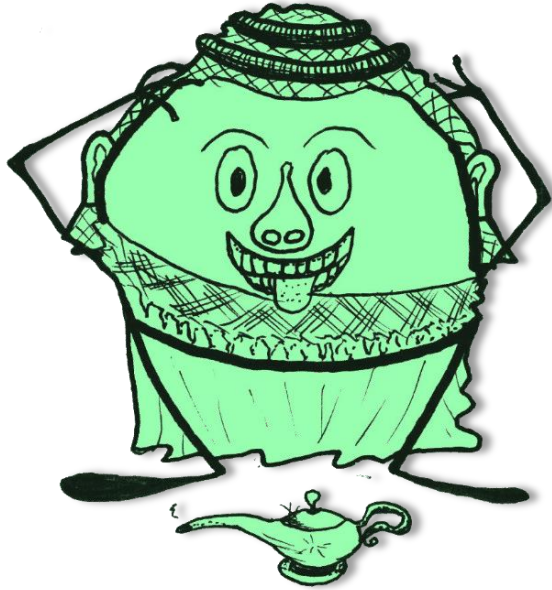


- To be funny & to be serious
- To be creatively free & to follow the rules
- To be spontaneous & to be disciplined
- To show mercy & to punish (but justly!)
- To start something new & to stop old stuff.
- To disobey (unjust) laws & to obey (just) laws
- To play games & to keep to the rules
- To be relaxed, calm & to be alert
- To be open to change & to be traditional
- To allow free trade & to insist on fair trade
- To set free & to be in control
- To insist on rights & to accept responsibilities
- To dream/imagine & to be down to earth.
- To be pragmatic & to be idealistic
- To be adaptable & to be dependable
- To be joyful & to be sorrowful
- To be digital & to be analogue
- To make love & to abstain
- To be born & to die

This is me in the guise of Materi-AL,  
acting the way...



MateriALity  
**OBSERVE**  
NOTE!



... we are all made of physical matter -  
skin, muscle, blood, bones, and water.

We have five senses (maybe more?)  
to **O**bserve, note, hear, touch, taste, feel,  
and take in matter from our environment.  
We need sustenance - air, food and drink,  
and to have or get things we produce  
like tools, clothes, a home or a family.  
It matters to everyone that we need matter!

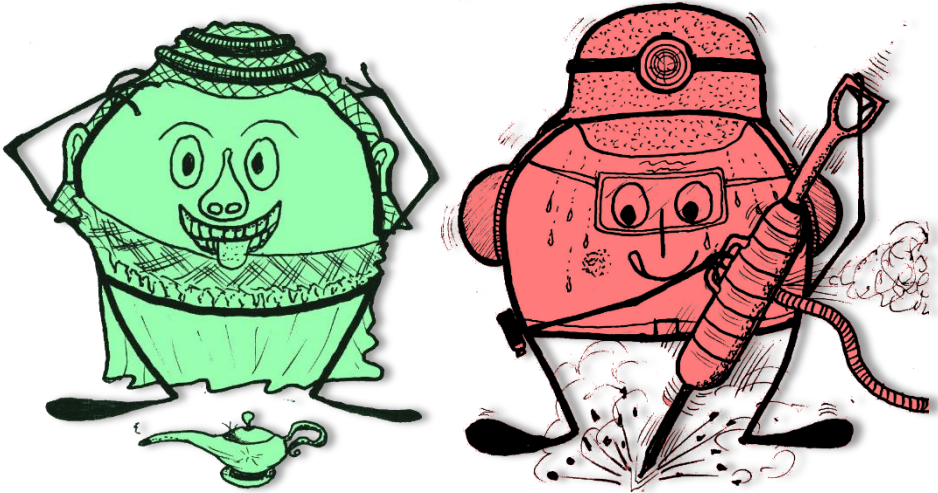


This is me in the guise of Motion-AL,  
acting the way...



... that everything has to move to exist.  
The Big Bang was a moving moment!  
Particles, planets and people all move.  
Our work and play involves moving stuff.  
Even if things seem outwardly stationary,  
at some level there is always **Activity**.  
Our bodies are never still, full of motion  
and we need to exercise to keep healthy.  
Life is literally a moving experience!

# **Materi-AL and Motion-AL need to keep each other in balance**



Our roles must be acted out together.  
Physical matter needs energetic motion.  
Everything has to move to have existence.  
To sense, eat, drink and acquire matter,  
we must be able to move, and vice versa.  
We all need to work to be able to live.  
Our ability to move has enabled us to  
invent things that extend our senses  
which in turn allow us to move even more.

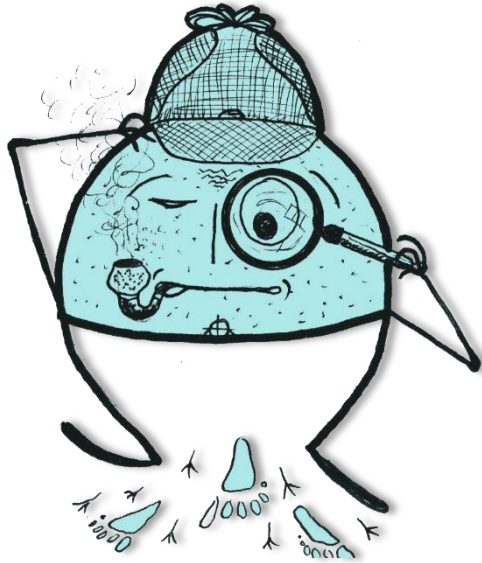


## So, there's a time for both/&:



- To watch & to act
- To stay still & to make a move.
- To chill out & to work hard
- To deposit/save & to withdraw/spend
- To be calm & to be energetic
- To rest, recuperate & to take exercise
- To consume inputs & to produce outputs
- To be entertained & to entertain
- To conserve resources & to utilise them
- To use & to recycle
- To service/maintain/repair & to fuel/drive
- To smell the coffee & to drink it
- To anticipate an act & to carry it out
- To be traditional & to embrace change
- To use your senses & to go by instinct
- To study the past & to observe the present
- To stroll through trees & fly to the moon.
- To capture a scene & to experience it
- To feast & to fast

**This is me in the guise of Differenti-AL,  
acting the way...**



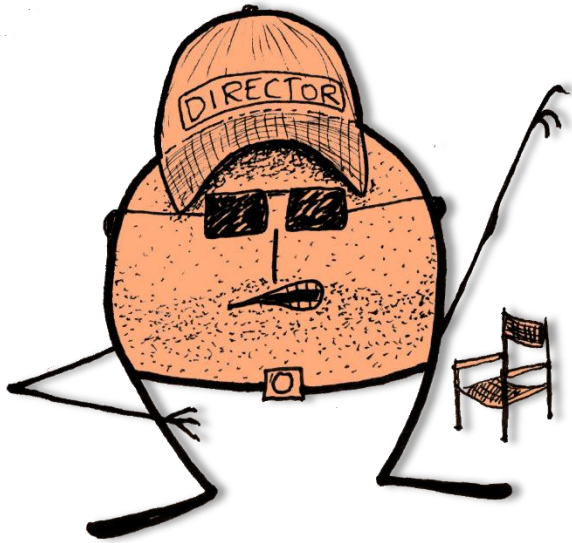
... we are made up of many different parts - head, arms, legs, a body and many organs, all made from trillions of cells, which in turn are made of atoms, particles - all different.

Each has a vital role to play in our lives.

We need diversity around us, to be able to monitor, measure, classify, and examine all the details of this wonderful world.

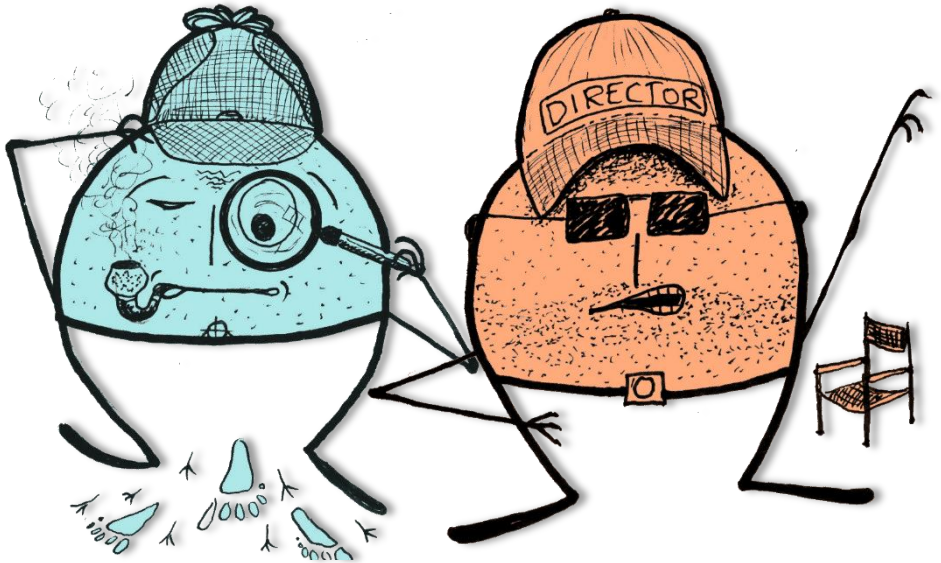
As they say, "Variety is the spice of life!"

**This is me in the guise of Integr-AL,  
acting the way...**



... that stuff is more than its parts.  
Each of us is a person, not just cells.  
We have a unique purpose in life and  
need to be directed towards our goals.  
We play many roles in guiding others  
such as mentor, manager, or mother.  
The ultimate aim in any life is to join  
with others in creative relationships,  
integrating and seeing the big picture.

# Differenti-AL and Integr-AL need to keep each other in balance



Our roles must be acted out together.  
Functional parts need purposeful wholes,  
wholes greater than the sum of their parts.  
We need to understand HOW things work,  
pulling stuff apart to see the inner detail,  
But we must be also put things together  
so that we can understand WHY they work.  
That's where science AND religion help.  
You have to learn about them both.

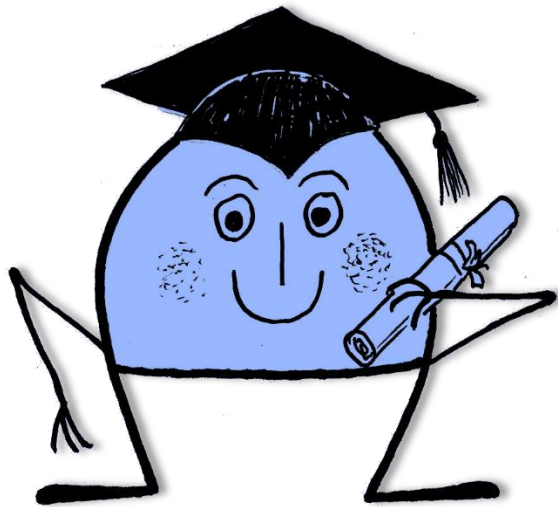


## So, there's a time for both/ &:



- To see the particular & to uncover the universal
- To look at the detail & to see the big picture
- To be a follower & to be a leader
- To take apart & to put together
- To gather evidence & to draw conclusions
- To sort things out & to put them away
- To be part of a team & to manage it
- To find a lost sheep & to care for its flock
- To analyse & to synthesise
- To be specific & to generalise
- To be unambiguous & to be vague
- To discriminate & to be inclusive
- To have diversity & to promote unity
- To simplify & to make more complex
- To examine the dead & to observe the living
- To cast the actors & to direct the play
- To peer down a microscope & to gaze through a telescope
- To see the trees & to discover the wood
- To have biodiversity & to create uniformity

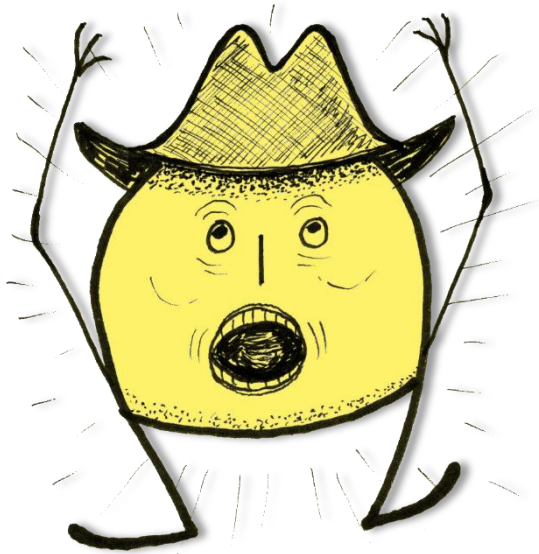
**This is me in the guise of Intellectu-AL,  
acting the way...**



... we have a brain and mind  
with which we can think and muse.  
We all interpret things differently  
and are intelligent in many ways.  
We need to imagine abstract ideas,  
solve problems that confront us,  
and remember things we've learnt.  
Our minds could extend beyond us  
and everything may be conscious!



**This is me in the guise of Phenomen-AL,  
acting the way...**



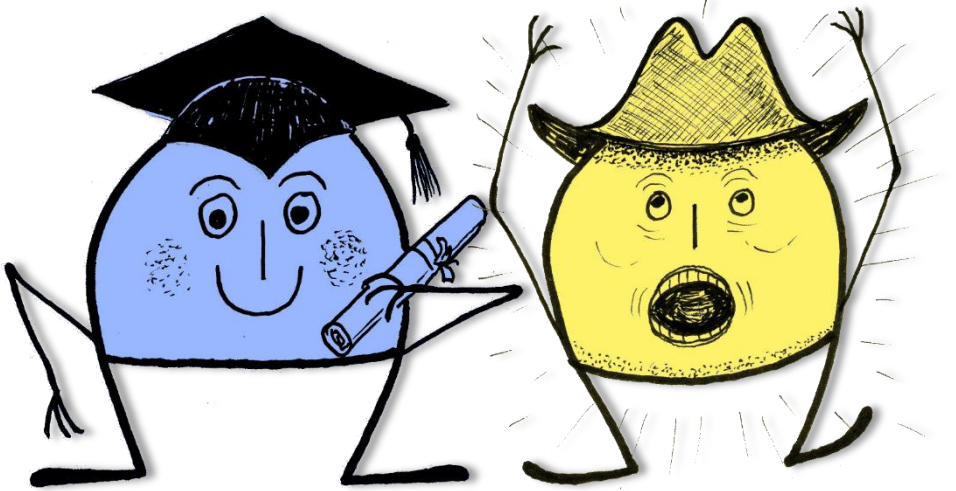
... everything can reveal itself to us -  
that's how we learn about things.

We all need to express ourselves -  
what we think and what we feel, by  
telling others our thoughts and ideas.

This way, we send people messages  
that are hopefully meaningful and true,  
using the essential tool of language.

We always need to communicate!

# Intellectu-AL and Phenomen-AL need to keep each other in balance



Our roles must be acted out together.

There's no point in dreaming up ideas  
if they are never communicated to others.  
The way we tell others what's on our mind  
depends on the types of thought we have:  
Poetry, music, picture, idea, fiction or fact.

Languages allow us to express ourselves  
via words, voice tone, body signs, symbols.

These two roles really make us unique.

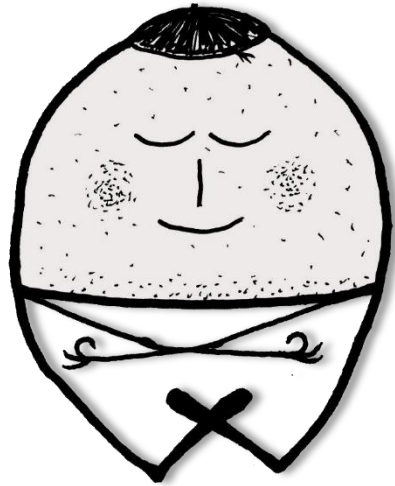


**So, there's a time for both/&:**



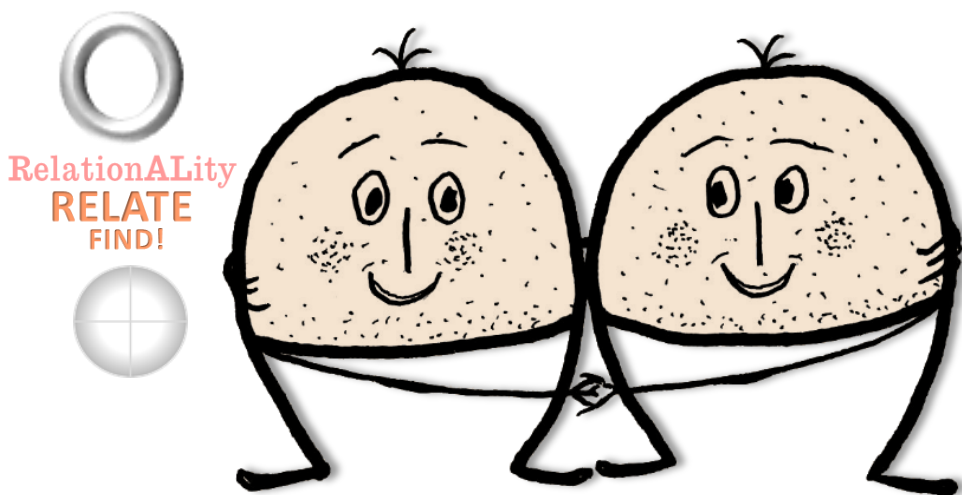
- To think & to speak
- To be rational & to be emotional
- To know the truth & to tell the truth
- To have an idea & to put it on paper
- To go by instinct & to have an intuition
- To imagine a letter & to write it down
- To get educated & to find employment
- To be paradoxical & to be straight forward
- To use your right brain & to use your left
- To be cooperative & to be competitive
- To be pragmatic & to be idealistic
- To be joyful & to be sorrowful
- To be self-deprecating & to be self-confident
- To be realistic & to be encouraging
- To be honest & to be kind
- To be progressive & to be conservative
- To think globally & to act locally
- To be diplomatic & to be out-spoken
- To express your feminine side & your masculine

**This is me in the guise of Intern-AL,  
acting the way...**



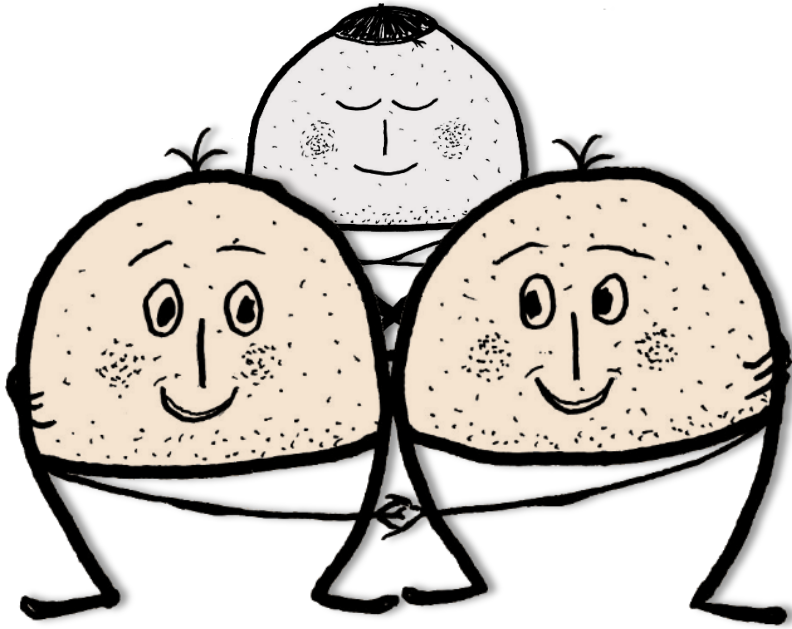
... we relate to ourselves inwardly.  
Everything has an inner relationship.  
We aren't just physical material bodies  
but there is also a spiritual dimension  
through which the divine is revealed.  
We need to understand it by listening to  
our inner body, mind, spirit, and soul.  
We need to pray, meditate, and reflect.  
Truth comes via science AND religion.

This is us in the guise of Relation-AL,  
acting the way...



... all things in the cosmos are related.  
They attract or repel, however small.  
We form relationships throughout life  
with parents, families, lovers, spouses  
friends, neighbours, and colleagues.  
We should all become closer, but  
often we repel or are indifferent.  
Perfect relations are divinely made  
and only possible through our spirit.

## **Intern-AL and Relation-AL need to keep each other in balance**



Everything relates inwardly and outwardly

We need to understand ourselves first  
before we can understand other people.

The divine command is to love God fully,  
and other people as we love ourselves.

If we don't love ourselves, that's difficult!

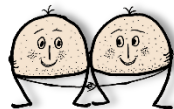
Outer relations need inner reflection.

That's why I've imagined these ten Aliases

So that you can begin to know yourself!

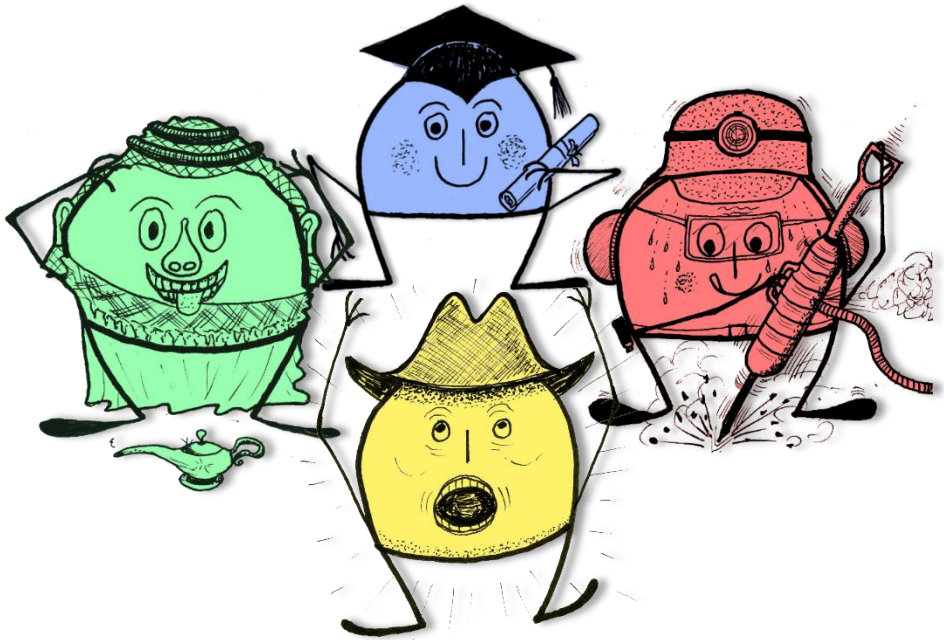


**So there's a time for both/ &:**



- To care for ourselves & to care for others
- To meditate & to engage with the world
- To contemplate & to act
- To be inward-looking & to be out-going
- To be heavenly minded & to be of earthly use
- To be praying & to be preying (just joking)
- To seek the divine & to be with the human
- To be spiritual & to be material
- To be still and know & to be active and know
- To be in the body & to be in the spirit
- To know yourself & to know others
- To go on retreat & to have a party
- To go to sleep & to wake up (smell the coffee!)
- To fast & to feast
- To muse & to amuse
- To be alone & to be together
- To be an individual & to be corporate/communal
- To be mystical & to be accessible
- To interiorise & to empathise/be compassionate

# My TraditionAL team of actors



Our foursome: Materi-AL, Motion-AL,  
Intellectu-AL and Phenomen-AL  
have loved to act together for many years!

We appear in ancient stories and plays  
in traditional roles often described as:  
the introverted watcher and thinker, and  
the extraverted speaker and doer.

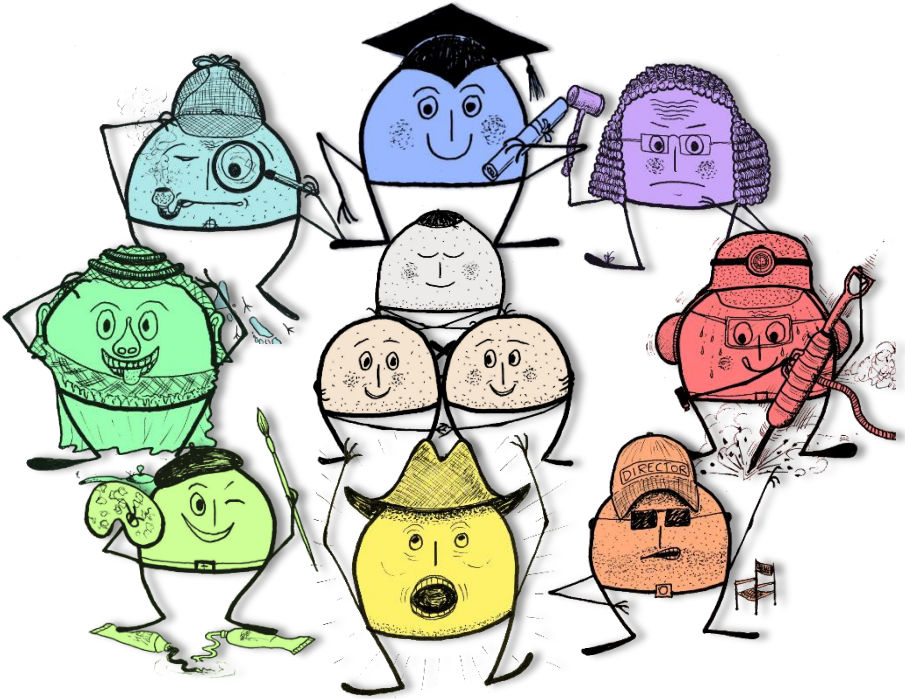
Those roles have rather stereotyped us,  
but now we play very different parts.



## So, there's a need for all four....

- We help you to relate in 4 ways  
**Applying**, **Expressing**, **Interpreting** & **Observing**  
(Remember them as Vow-ALs: **A E I O** makes **You**)  
The following aspects of life are related to them:
- We help you to learn in 4 ways, by:  
Watching, Thinking, Feeling & Doing
- We help you to be led/governed across 2 spectra  
Democratic-Autocratic; Conservative-Radical
- We help you to think in 4 ways (i.e. Right/left brain):  
Visual & Interpersonal / Logical & Sequential
- We help you to have 4 ability quotients (cf.IQ)  
Compassion, Emotional, Intelligence & Practical
- We help you to know how we're influenced in 4 ways  
Sensory, Mental, Behavioural & Physical
- We help you to know the 4 archetypes of our roles  
Wiseman, Hero, King, Lover (and their dark sides)
- We help you to know the weaknesses of our roles:  
Fear and anger leading to flight and fight.
- We help you to discover from where our SelfishNess  
comes from (thought, word, deed and omission)

**All my ways of acting form a team.**



We dance together, like an eightsome reel,  
with two at the centre guiding the others.

We may follow each other in sequence,  
or we may whirl around in pairs and  
sometimes we have to wait to join in.

Roles opposite each other need to balance.

Adjacent roles complement each other.

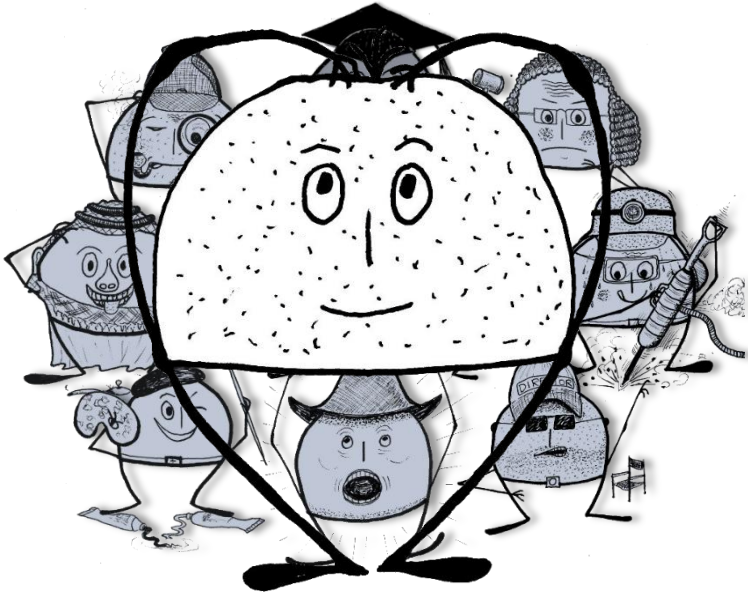
We are all needed and must play our part  
following the script (sometimes ad-libbing!)

**So, there's a time and place for each.**

**We can help you to understand ....**

- The skills needed in a team - all valuable  
(e.g. innovator, adviser, specialist, evaluator, researcher, organizer, implementer, promoter, coordinator, encourager)
- The facets of our personalities - all worth respect  
(e.g. forming relationships, gathering information, making decisions and organizing our lives)
- The roles in community/economy – all contributing  
(e.g. manager, cleaner, academic, technician, artist, professional, religious, scientist etc. etc.)
- The parts of speech - all essential to communicate  
(e.g. noun, verb, adjective, adverb, interjection, conjunction, preposition, determiner, tone of voice and gesture)
- The ways we express ourselves differently,  
giving us our infinite guises, personalities and temperaments (all unique and equally loved).
- The ways we can be complementary to others in couples, families, teams, workplace and groups.
- The ways we get to know other people in our relationships ([see this Okki-Map](#) (“Getting to know you”).
- The ways timing is important (e.g. listen and think before we speak, look before we leap, etc.)

**Finally, my univers-AL act is to love.**



Even if we carry out all these roles  
balancing and using them at the right time  
but don't act with love in our heart  
then the drama of life will end in a whimper.

My love comes in many forms:  
physic-AL, parent-AL, fili-AL, amic-AL  
but over all there must be the spiritu-AL.

Divine love seeks nothing in return.

Watch Al's summary of roles, handing out medals here:

<https://youtu.be/atxVbCd2GIE>

## **I can help you to act lovingly by ....**

- Being patient, patient, patient....
- Being kind, gentle, and considerate
- Not being envious, but content
- Not being proud or arrogant, but modest
- Not being dishonourable, but respectful
- Not being self-seeking, but thinking of others
- Not being easily angered (righteous anger OK!)
- Not keeping a record of wrongs
- Always trying to forgive and reconcile
- Not enjoying the wrongs of others
- Seeking the truth, even if it hurts
- Protecting always, especially the vulnerable
- Trusting always, even if doubtful
- Hoping always, despite the odds
- Persevering always, until the end
- Being prudent and courageous
- Being temperate, just and fair
- Being faithful all the time
- Never expecting anything back...



**My Love  
never  
ends!**

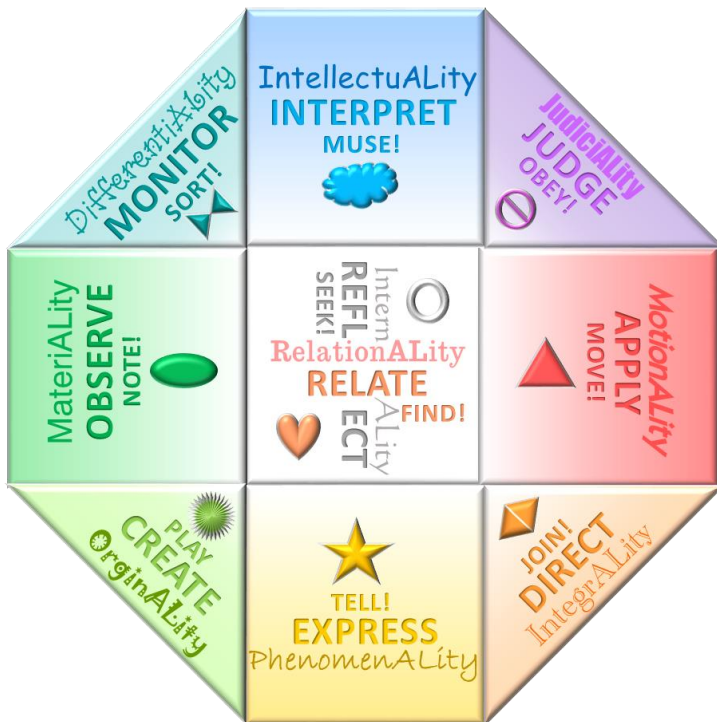
# Get in on AI's act!

The diagram (*Octaikon*) below shows the links between all ten of AI's guises, roles, or faculties and some symbols and words used to describe them.

They can also be called *FracALities*, as they are *fractal*, when applied to all levels of existence.

See page 2 for online links to further information, or Click the link below to explore over 100 ideas using the *Octaikon* to summarise, compare and contrast them.

<https://www.scribd.com/document/342839827/okki-maps-mobile-format>



## Origins of AL

Al is a late arrival during the 25 years that I have tried to understand why we all have different ideas, behave in different ways, believe different things, and get into arguments or worse over them. As I've done this, I had to develop a graphical framework to help compare, contrast and synthesise these ideas (illustrated on the previous page).

But only recently, I decided that I needed an *alter ego* to help explain the model, using my love of drawing to create a pen friend to represent him/her.

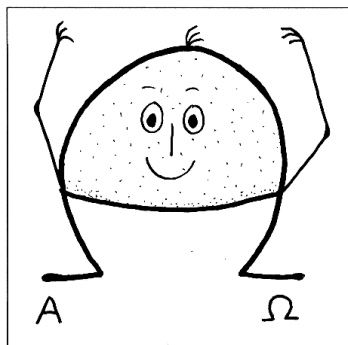
I can't remember how (maybe it was a sudden inspiration) but he/she took the form of a combination between the Roman letter A and the Greek omega (all face and spindly limbs) because I thought he/she could represent the beginning and end (the *ALpha* and *Omega*) of all things.

As a result, my friend was given the name AL. That name worked at many levels e.g. Alan is my first name (not Marcus), and many associated words begin or end with AL, not least Alter ego, AL for allegory, comicAL etc. allowing me to have a bit of pun!

Some readers will have guessed that Al can represent Jesus the Christ – both the historical Jesus who lived just over 2000 year ago, and the Christ, the divine creative principle, who has always been and is in all of us, waiting to help us get our act together. In that case, just ask JC for directions!

# WANTED

## Alive!



### **Alf O'Mega**

alias: *Al, AM, and OM*

The Fall Guy for all guises

The Person in all personalities

The first and last WORD in loving-kindness  
and the *be all and end all* of everything

**IF RECOGNISED, BEFRIEND, INVITE HOME,  
AND AL-ERT EVERYONE!**