

### **Orientation for Week 3**

The reading is the second half of chapter 2. The continuing theme here is to investigate the claim that the entities we encounter in our experience, including 'subjective' entities such as thoughts, feelings, etc. have substantial reality. The purpose behind this investigation is to call into question the usual distinction between substance on the one hand and space as 'nothing' on the other, so that we can rediscover space and understand its significance.

In the first half of the chapter, we saw that names, labels, and our own concerns serve as the glue that holds together moments of experience and creates the impression that those moments can be referred back to something substantial. It is like a magician performing a coin trick, using sleight of hand and distraction to convince you that the two coins he is holding are actually one and the same.

The reading for this week explores a different possibility: even if each individual entity has no substance in itself, the whole of experience refers to something substantial. The analysis proceeds along lines related to the discussion of our concerns as the glue linking moments of experience. Here the idea is that 'the whole of reality' expresses a certain way of assigning meaning to experience. This whole is the field within which experience unfolds.

We will look at the treatment of 'field' and the 'field communiqué' in our discussion next week. For now, just notice that by directing our attention to the field instead of the various items that show up within the field, the reading is breaking down the distinction between space and the objects in space in an interesting way. Little by little, we are seeing how it is possible to focus on space after all. The 'nothing' of space turns out to be meaningful after all.

During the phone call, we worked with the exercise that I posted on the website as part of the description for this class. It is based on the last paragraph of page 12. I suggest that you experiment with this way of seeing during the week, focusing on the transitions and transformations in experience rather than the 'things' experienced. As always, there is no need to conduct this kind of exploration over an extended period, though it is fine to do that also. Just some occasional efforts should yield some interesting experiences.