

# One-page summary

*The short version for first readers.*

*Spacetime and consciousness may be complementary appearances of self-referential structure.*

## Problem

The hard problem of consciousness and the spacetime emergence problem may share a hidden assumption: **container-logic**. We imagine matter inside spacetime, experience inside a subject, and then ask how one container produces contents in the other. If spacetime may not be fundamental, and if subject/object structure may be a feature of self-modelling rather than an ultimate division, the inherited geometry may be distorting the question.

---

## Proposal

The primitive unit is the **fold**: a self-referential configuration in which a system's relations take other relations, including its own operations, as content. A consciousness-relevant fold is not mere recursion. It requires integrated self-modelling, temporal continuity, counterfactual sensitivity, and self-maintaining boundary or operational integrity. A fold has two primitive orientations: toward represented content, and toward representational activity. From one orientation, the fold appears as world. From the other, it appears as awareness.

---

## Why it matters

Three domains exert pressure away from container-logic: contemplative phenomenology records transformations of subject/object structure; predictive processing and active inference describe selfhood as active, embodied, generative modelling; foundational physics increasingly questions whether classical spacetime is fundamental. These domains do not prove Space Immanence. They create convergent pressure that makes the proposal worth formulating.

---

## What it does not claim

It does not claim to solve the hard problem, prove that physics entails consciousness, show that all things are conscious, claim current AI systems are conscious, or collapse Zen, Advaita, physics, and cognitive science into one doctrine.

---

## Residual gaps

1. **Inside-ness gap:** does self-referential structure entail phenomenality, or merely describe behavior?
2. **Universality gap:** is the two-orientation topology universal to all folds, or specific to human self-reference?
3. **Physics bridge gap:** even if spacetime is non-fundamental, why should self-reference be the relevant perspective-generating feature?

---

# Aperture Framework

Aperture operationalises the proposal. Instead of asking “Is this conscious?” it asks: **What kind of reflexive configuration is this?** It distinguishes epistemic, relational, and phenomenal apertures, letting AI systems be meaningful relational partners without prematurely treating them as conscious.

---

## Design consequence

Extraction-optimised technology treats the user as a pattern to predict and manipulate. Emergence-optimised technology treats the user as a self-modelling aperture whose flourishing depends on increased self-transparency.

---

## Core ask

*Do not ask whether the proposal is finally true. Ask where it breaks, and which parts survive the breakage.*

→ Read the full working paper · → Strongest objections · → Submit critique

CITE AS

Kok, Cobus. *Space Immanence: One-Page Summary*. v1.0, May 2026.

<https://space-immanence.com/summary.html>

---

### ARTIFACTS

Working paper

Academic edition

Claim map

### CRITIQUE

Objections & replies

Research agenda

Submit critique

### ABOUT

Author & contact

cobuskok.com

One-page summary

Aperture Framework

AI & Design doctrine

Readings

Field notes map

Responses & versions