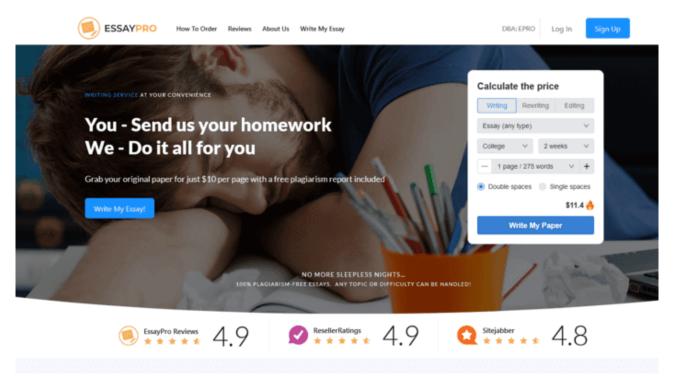
## Models of God, Humanity, and Nature My Experiences, Thoughts, and Critical Analyses



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I ask a lot of questions; I'm a curious person. I once asked my mom why people die, why there are bad things in the world if God is so good and all-powerful. Her response was that we just couldn't really understand why God does anything because we can't comprehend God's "master plan." I'm <u>sure</u> that she was right, but that response is not very satisfying to a curious little boy. I saw an <u>inconsistency</u> in my understanding of reality, and I wanted to get things straight.
I guess this little anecdote begins to illustrate a couple of my basic life principles. A concise explanation of how I look at the world is just this: We humans, as finite beings, use models to understand complex things – God, Nature, Humanity – and in doing so must simplify things. There's nothing wrong with this simplification, as long as we know we are doing so and why. Our models of these complex things can be based on a number of things – usually logic, evidence, and our experiences (I'm probably exluding a powerful one, namely tradition). These varying models of reality, however, must be internally and

externally consistent – that is, with themselves and with other models used by a single person.

When the models used by a person are internally or externally inconsistent with themselves or with logic, evidence, or experiences, the first reaction is probably confusion (or maybe anxiety), but in the continued search for <u>consistency</u>, one can arrive at further insight and a desired level of comfort in oneself and the way one views reality. I guess this is sometimes called the search for the meaning of life, although that's a rather grand phrase for ...

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... Humanity, and Nature are inter-connected internally and externally, I must work to understand these relationships, and in doing so, I must work to maximize the enjoyment and well-being of all things related to me, directly and indirectly, consciously and unconsciously. Additionally, I must treat all manner of things (entities perhaps) as subjects, rather than objects, recognizing that each has a level of being and enjoyment that it can attain, with the help of me and the rest of the world. I must work to avoid and eliminate violence of all forms by using memory, empathy, imagination, and true forgiveness to short-circuit the cycle. If I live my life in a continual state of change, using creative, responsive, and responsible love persuasively to acheive a higher level of good, then I will be living in a way that's consistent with process theology's Christianity.

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