

## Chapter 5 from *A Theory of Everything* by Ken Wilber The Real World

We shall hang together, or we shall hang separately. —BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

THE QUESTION I AM ASKED most often about this work is, What are its applications? That is, what are the applications of an integral or holonic model in the “real world”? What good is a T.O.E. even if we had one? Here is a brief sampling of what is going on.

### INTEGRAL POLITICS

I have been working with Drexel Sprecher, Lawrence Chickering, Don Beck, Jack Crittenden, and several others toward an all-quadrant, all-level political theory (in addition to working with the writings of political theorists too numerous to list). We have been involved with advisors to Bill Clinton, Al Gore, Tony Blair, George W. Bush, and Jeb Bush, among others. There is a surprisingly strong desire, around the world, to find a more balanced and comprehensive politics that unites the best of liberal and conservative—President Clinton’s Vital Center, George W. Bush’s Compassionate Conservatism, Gerhard Schroeder’s *Neue Mitte*, Tony Blair’s *Third Way*, and Thabo Mbeki’s African Renaissance, to name a few—and many theorists are finding an all-quadrant, all-level framework to be the sturdiest foundation for such.

Here is what I consider to be my own particular theoretical orientation, developed largely on my own, which has then become a framework for discussions with these other theorists, who bring their own original ideas for cross-fertilization. I will first indicate my own thoughts, and then the areas where these other theorists have helped me enormously.

In the last chapter of *Up from Eden* (“Republicans, Democrats, and Mystics”), I made the observation that, when it comes to the cause of human suffering, liberals tend to believe in exterior causes, whereas conservatives tend to believe in interior causes. That is, if an individual is suffering, the typical liberal tends to blame external social institutions (if you are poor it is because you are oppressed by society), whereas the typical conservative tends to blame internal factors (you are poor because you are lazy).

Thus, the liberal recommends exterior social interventions: redistribute the wealth, change social institutions so that they produce fairer outcomes, evenly slice the economic pie, aim for equality among all. The typical conservative recommends that we instill family values, demand that individuals assume more responsibility for themselves, tighten up slack moral standards (often by embracing traditional religious values), encourage a work ethic, reward achievement, and so on. In other words, the typical liberal believes mostly in Right-Hand causation, the typical conservative believes mostly in Left-Hand causation. (Don’t let the terminology of the quadrants confuse you—the political Left believes in Right-Hand causation, the political Right believes in Left-Hand causation; had I been thinking of political theory when I arranged the quadrants, I would probably have aligned them to match.)

The important point is that the first step toward an integral politics that unites the best of liberal and conservative is to recognize that both the interior quadrants and the exterior quadrants are equally real and important. We consequently must address both interior factors (values, meaning, morals, the development of consciousness) and exterior factors (economic conditions, material well-being, technological advance, social safety net, environment)—in short, a truly integral politics would emphasize both interior development and exterior development.

Let us therefore focus for a moment on the area of interior consciousness development. This is, after all, the hardest part for liberals to accept, because the discussion of “stages” or “levels” of anything (including consciousness) is deeply antagonistic to most liberals, who believe that all such “judgments” are racist, sexist, marginalizing, and so on. The typical liberal, recall, does not believe in interior causation, or sometimes even in interiors for that matter. The typical liberal epistemology (e.g., John Locke) imagines that the mind is a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate, that is filled with pictures of the external world. If something is wrong with the interior (if you are suffering), it is because something is first wrong with the exterior (the social institutions)—because your interior comes from the exterior.

But what if the interior has its own stages of growth and development, and is not simply imported from the external world? If a genuinely integral politics depends upon including both interior development and exterior development, then it would behoove us to look carefully at these interior stages of consciousness unfolding. In books such as *Integral Psychology*, I have correlated over one hundred developmental models of consciousness, West and East, ancient and modern, which help to give us a very solid picture of the stages of development of the subjective realm—not as a rigid series of unalterable levels but as a general guide to the possible waves of consciousness unfolding.

If the first step toward an integral politics is to combine the interior and the exterior (the Left-Hand and the Right-Hand, the subjective and objective), the second step is to understand that there are stages of the subjective—stages, that is, of consciousness evolution. To help elucidate these stages, we can use any of the more reputable maps of interior development, such as those of Jane Loevinger, Robert Kegan, Clare Graves, William Torbert, Susanne Cook-Greuter, or Beck and Cowan’s *Spiral Dynamics*. For this simplified overview, I will use just three broad stages: preconventional (or egocentric), conventional (or sociocentric), and postconventional (or worldcentric).

The traditional conservative ideology is rooted in a conventional, mythic-membership, sociocentric wave of development. Its values tend to be grounded in a mythic religious orientation (such as the Bible); it usually emphasizes family values and patriotism; it is strongly sociocentric (and therefore often ethnocentric); with roots as well in aristocratic and hierarchical social values (blue meme) and a tendency toward patriarchy and militarism. This type of mythic-membership and civic virtue dominated cultural consciousness from approximately 1,000 BCE to the Enlightenment in the West, whereupon a fundamentally new average mode of consciousness—the rational-egoic (postconventional, worldcentric,

orange meme)—emerged on an influential scale, bringing with it a new mode of political ideology, namely, liberalism.

The liberal Enlightenment understood itself to be in large measure a reaction against the mythic-membership structure and its fundamentalism, in two aspects especially: the socially oppressive power of myths with their ethnocentric prejudices (e.g., all Christians are saved, all heathens go to hell), and the nonscientific nature of the knowledge claimed by myths (e.g., the universe was created in six days). Both the active oppression instituted by mythic/ethnocentric religion and its nonscientific character were responsible for untold suffering, and the Enlightenment had as one of its goals the alleviation of this suffering. Voltaire's battle cry—which set the tone of the Enlightenment—was “Remember the cruelties!”—the suffering inflicted by the Church on millions of people in the name of a mythic God.

In place of an ethnocentric mythic-membership, based on a role identity in a hierarchy of other role identities, the Enlightenment sought an ego identity free from ethnocentric bias (the universal rights of man) and based on rational and scientific inquiry. Universal rights would fight slavery, democracy would fight monarchy, the autonomous ego would fight the herd mentality, and science would fight myth: this is how the Enlightenment understood itself (and in many cases, rightly so). In other words, at its best the liberal Enlightenment represented—and was a product of—the evolution of consciousness from conventional/sociocentric to postconventional/worldcentric.

Now had liberalism been just that—the product of an evolutionary advance from ethnocentric to worldcentric—it would have won the day, pure and simple. But, in fact, liberalism arose in a climate that I have called flatland. Flatland—or scientific materialism—is the belief that only matter is real, and that only narrow science has any claim to truth.<sup>1</sup> (Narrow science, recall, is the science of any Right-Hand domain, whether that be atomistic science of the Upper Right or systems science of the Lower Right.) Flatland, in other words, is the belief that only the Right-Hand quadrants are real.

And liberalism, arising directly in the midst of this scientific materialism, swallowed its worldview hook, line, and sinker. In other words, liberalism became the political champion of flatland. The only thing that is ultimately real is the Right-Hand, material, sensorimotor world; the mind itself is just a tabula rasa, a blank slate that is filled with representations of the Right-Hand world; if the subjective realm is ill, it is because objective social institutions are ill; the best way to free men and women is therefore to offer them material-economic freedom; thus scientific materialism and economic equality are the major routes of ending human suffering. The interior realms—the entire Left-Hand domains—are simply ignored or even denied. All interiors are equal—no stance is better than another—and that ends that discussion.<sup>2</sup> There are no waves, stages, or levels of consciousness, for that would be to make a ranking judgment, and ranking is very, very bad. A noble sentiment, but it gutted the interiors altogether, and pledged allegiance to flatland.

Nonetheless, this desire to alleviate human suffering is applied universally—all people are to be treated fairly, regardless of race, color, sex, or creed (the move from ethnocentric to worldcentric). Thus, liberal political theory was coming from a higher level of development, but a development that was caught in pathological flatland. Put bluntly, liberalism was a sick version of a higher level.

That is the great irony of liberalism. Theorists have long agreed that traditional liberalism is inherently self-contradictory, because it champions equality and freedom, and you can have one or the other of those, not both. I would explain the root of this contradiction as follows: Liberalism was itself the product of a whole series of interior stages of consciousness development—from egocentric to ethnocentric to worldcentric—whereupon it turned around and denied the importance or even the existence of those interior levels of development! Liberalism, in championing only exterior causation (i.e., flatland), denied the interior path that produced liberalism.<sup>3</sup> The liberal stance itself is the product of stages that it then denies—and there is the inherent contradiction of liberalism.

Liberalism thus refused to make any “judgments” about the interiors of individuals—no stance is better than another!—and instead focused merely on finding ways to fix the exterior, economic, social institutions; and thus it completely abandoned the interiors (values, meanings, interior development) to the conservatives. The conservatives, on the other hand, fully embraced interior development—but only up to the mythic-membership stage, which is nonetheless healthy as far as it goes: a healthy version of a lower level. (Mythic-membership, civic virtue, the blue meme, the conventional/conformist stage of development—this is a normal, healthy, natural, necessary wave of human development, and this sturdy social structure is still the main base of traditional conservative politics.)<sup>4</sup>

So here is the truly odd political choice that we are given today: a sick version of a higher level versus a healthy version of a lower level—liberalism versus conservatism.

The point is that a truly integral politics would embrace a healthy version of the higher level—namely, grounded in the postconventional/worldcentric waves of development, it would equally encourage both interior development and exterior development—the growth and development of consciousness and subjective well-being, as well as the growth and development of economic, social, and material well-being. It would be, in other words, an “all-quadrant, all-level” political theory and practice.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, from this spacious vantage point, the prime directive of a genuine integral politics would be, not to try to get everybody to a particular level of consciousness (integral, pluralistic, liberal, or whatever), but to ensure the health of the entire spiral of development at all of its levels and waves. Thus the two steps toward an integral politics are: (1) including both interior and exterior, and (2) understanding stages of the interior and thus arriving at the prime directive.<sup>6</sup>

That is the general orientation that I have brought into the political discussions with the aforementioned theorists. From Chickering (*Beyond Left and Right*) and Sprecher I have adopted the important distinction between “order” and “free” wings within both conservatism and liberalism, referring to whether emphasis is placed on collective or individual ends.<sup>7</sup> They independently agree with my general definition of Left as believing in exterior causation and Right as believing in interior causation.<sup>8</sup> The order wings of both Left and Right wish to impose their beliefs on all, usually via government, whereas the free wings of both ideologies place the rights of individuals first. For example, those who wish the state to use its authority to reinforce conventional roles and values are order Right, while the politically correct movement and orthodox feminists who wish to use the state to enforce their version of equality are order Left. Free-market economic libertarians are generally free Right; civil libertarians are generally free Left.

Those political quadrants happen to align, in significant ways, with my four quadrants, because the upper quadrants are individual or “free,” and the lower quadrants are collective or “order”; the interior quadrants are right/conservative, and the exterior quadrants are left/liberal.<sup>9</sup> This shows us which quadrant a particular theorist thinks is the most important (and therefore should be manipulated, addressed, or protected in attempting to achieve policy outcomes). The idea, of course, is that all four quadrants are unavoidably important in reality. Thus, an all-quadrant, all-level approach once again can serve as a theoretical basis for a truly integrated political orientation.

Jack Crittenden (*Beyond Individualism*) has been applying the notion of compound individuality developed in *Up from Eden* to political and educational theory, and has constantly added to my own understanding of these ideas. Don Beck’s *Spiral Dynamics* (developed with Christopher Cowan) is a wonderful elucidation of Clare Graves’s pioneering work, and has had numerous applications in the “real world,” from politics to education to business, and I have benefited greatly from those many discussions as well. Beck probably has as good an understanding of the prime directive as anybody, and my own formulations have been enriched by his work. Jim Garrison, as president of the State of the World Forum, has had extensive experience about how an integral vision will—and often will not—play out on the world stage. Michael Lerner’s “Politics of Meaning,” though embedded in order-Left assumptions and thus not an integral approach, is nonetheless an uncommon and admirable attempt to get liberals to look at the interior quadrants (meaning, value, spirituality), which they have classically avoided like the plague, an avoidance that has had dire consequences (e.g., the interiors have been left to the conservatives and their often reactionary, mythic-membership values, which are fine as a partial foundation of society, disastrous when left exclusively to their own devices).

## INTEGRAL GOVERNANCE

In all of this, we are looking for hints as to what a second-tier or integral approach to governance might look like.

The Constitution of the United States is generally a moral-stage 5 document (postconventional and worldcentric). At the time it was written, perhaps 10 percent of the U.S. population was actually at moral stage 5. The brilliance of this document is that it found a way to institutionalize the worldcentric, postconventional stance and let it act as a governance system for people who were not, for the most part, at that higher level. The Constitution itself thus became a pacer of transformation, gently encouraging every activity within its reach to stand within a worldcentric, postconventional, non-ethnocentric moral atmosphere. The brilliance of this document and its framers is hard to overstate.

The U.S. Constitution was the culmination of first-tier governance philosophy. Even though its framers were often using second-tier thinking, the realities that they were addressing were still almost entirely first-tier, particularly the formation and relation of the corporate states that evolved out of feudal empires and ancient nations.

But now global systems and integral meshworks are evolving out of corporate states and value communities (see fig. 3-1). These interdependent systems require governance capable of integrating (not dominating) nations and communities over the entire spiral of interior and exterior development. What the world now needs is the first genuinely second-tier form of political philosophy and governance. I believe, of course, that it will be an all-quadrant, all-level political theory and practice, deeply integral in its structures and patterns. This will in no way replace the U.S. Constitution (or that of any other nation), but will simply situate it in global meshworks that facilitate mutual unfolding and enhancement—an integral and holonic politics.

The question remains: exactly how will this be conceived, understood, embraced, and practiced? What precise details, what actual specifics, where and how and when? This is the great and exhilarating call of global politics at the millennium.<sup>10</sup> We are awaiting the new global founding Fathers and Mothers who will frame an integral system of governance that will call us to our more encompassing future, that will act as a gentle pacer of transformation for the entire spiral of human development, honoring each and every wave as it unfolds, yet kindly inviting each and all to even greater depth.

## INTEGRAL MEDICINE

Nowhere are the four quadrants more immediately applicable than in medicine, and the model is being increasingly adopted by healthcare facilities around the world. A quick trip through the quadrants will show why an integral model can be helpful. (In this example we are talking about physical illnesses—a broken bone, cancer, heart disease, etc.—and how best to treat them, since that is the focus of most orthodox medicine.)

Orthodox or conventional medicine is a classic Upper-Right quadrant approach. It deals almost entirely with the physical organism using physical interventions: surgery, drugs, medication, and behavioral modification. Orthodox medicine believes essentially in the physical causes of physical illness, and therefore prescribes mostly physical interventions. But the holonic model claims that every physical event (UR) has at least four dimensions (the

quadrants), and thus even physical illness must be looked at from all four quadrants (not to mention levels, which we will address later). The integral model does not claim the Upper-Right quadrant is not important, only that it is, as it were, only one fourth of the story.

The recent explosion of interest in alternative care—including such disciplines as psychoneuroimmunology—has made it quite clear that the person’s interior states (emotions, psychological attitude, imagery, and intentions) play a crucial role in both the cause and the cure of even physical illness. In other words, the Upper-Left quadrant is a key ingredient in any comprehensive medical care. Visualization, affirmation, and conscious use of imagery have been shown to play a significant role in the management of most illnesses, and outcomes have been shown to depend on emotional states and mental outlook.<sup>11</sup>

But as important as those subjective factors are, individual consciousness does not exist in a vacuum; it exists inextricably embedded in shared cultural values, beliefs, and worldviews. How a culture (LL) views a particular illness—with care and compassion or derision and scorn—can have a profound impact on how an individual copes (UL) with that illness, which can directly affect the course of the physical illness itself (UR). In fact, many illnesses cannot even be defined without reference to a shared cultural background (just like what you consider to be a “weed” often depends on what you are trying to grow in the first place). The Lower-Left quadrant includes all of the enormous number of intersubjective factors that are crucial in any human interaction—such as the shared communication between doctor and patient; the attitudes of family and friends and how they are conveyed to the patient; the cultural acceptance (or derogation) of the particular illness (e.g., AIDS); and the very values of the culture that the illness itself threatens. All of those factors are to some degree causative in any physical illness and cure (simply because every holon has four quadrants).

Of course, in practice, this quadrant needs to be limited to those factors that can be effectively engaged—perhaps doctor and patient communication skills, family and friends support groups, and a general understanding of cultural judgments and their effects on illness. Studies consistently show, for example, that cancer patients in support groups live longer than those without similar cultural support. Some of the more relevant factors from the Lower-Left quadrant are thus crucial in any comprehensive medical care.

The Lower-Right quadrant concerns all those material, economic, and social factors that are almost never counted as part of the disease entity, but in fact—like every other quadrant—are causative in both disease and cure. A social system that cannot deliver food will kill you (as famine-racked countries demonstrate daily, alas). But even in developed countries: If you have a lethal but treatable disease, and your insurance plan is the only source of funding you have, and your plan does not cover your disease, you will die. The cause of your death: poverty. Because we usually don’t think like this, we say, “The virus killed him.” The virus is part of the cause; the other three quadrants are just as much a cause. When the FDA was holding up drugs that might help AIDS, a gentleman with the disease stood before Congress and said, “Don’t let my epitaph read, ‘He died of red tape.’” But that is exactly right. In the real world, where every entity has all four quadrants, a virus in the UR quadrant might be the

focal issue, but without a social system (LR) that can deliver treatment, you will die. That is not a separate issue; it is central to the issue, because all holons have four quadrants. The Lower-Right quadrant includes factors such as economics, insurance, social delivery systems, and even things as simple as how a hospital room is physically laid out (does it allow ease of movement, access to visitors, etc.)—not to mention items like environmental toxins.

The foregoing items refer to the “all-quadrant” aspect of the cause and cure (or management) of illness. The “all-level” part refers to the fact that individuals have—at least—physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual levels in each of those quadrants (see figs. 4-5 and 4-6). Some illnesses have largely physical causes and physical cures (get hit by a bus, break your leg, physically set and plaster it). But most illnesses have causes and cures that include emotional, mental, and spiritual waves. I have covered these specific levels in *Grace and Grit* and won’t repeat myself here; and literally hundreds of researchers from around the world have added immeasurably to our understanding of the “multi-level” nature of disease and cure (including invaluable additions from the great wisdom traditions, shamanic to Tibetan). The point is simply that by adding these levels to the quadrants, a much more comprehensive—and effective—medical model begins to emerge.

In short, a truly effective and comprehensive medical plan would be all-quadrant, all-level: the idea is simply that each quadrant or dimension—I, we, and it—has physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual levels or waves (fig. 4-6), and a truly integral treatment would take all of these realities into account. Not only is this type of integral treatment more effective, it is for that reason more cost-efficient—which is why even organizational medicine is looking at it more closely. Of the hundreds of theorists doing wonderful work in this regard, I might mention John Astin, who has written perceptively on the application of holonic theory to complementary and alternative medicine<sup>12</sup>; Pat Odgen and Kekuni Minton<sup>13</sup>; Gary Schwartz and Linda Russek<sup>14</sup>; Wanda Jones and James Ensign (of New Century Healthcare Institute); and Barbara Dossey and Larry Dossey, who have used holonic theory to supplement their own extensive and original work in “the great chain of healing.”<sup>15</sup>

A group of us have recently formed Integral Institute, with branches of integral medicine, integral psychology, integral politics, and so on (see below). Members of the Institute of Integral Medicine include, in addition to the theorists listed in the previous paragraph, Ken Pelletier, Mike Murphy, George Leonard, Marilyn Schlitz, Joan Borysenko, Jeanne Achterberg, and Jon Kabat-Zinn. Members of Integral Institute do not necessarily agree with all the details of my version of integralism, but they do share a deep interest in a more integral, balanced, comprehensive vision, spanning the spectrum from matter to mind to spirit, exercised in self and culture and nature.

## INTEGRAL BUSINESS

Applications of the holonic model have recently exploded in business, perhaps, again, because the applications are so immediate and obvious. The quadrants give the four “environments” or dimensions in which a product must survive, and the levels give the types of values that will be both producing and buying the product. Research into the values



hierarchy—such as Maslow’s and Graves’s (e.g., Spiral Dynamics), which has already had an enormous influence on business and “VALS”—can be combined with the quadrants (which show how these levels of values appear in the four different environments) to give a truly comprehensive map of the marketplace (which covers both traditional markets and cybermarkets). Of course, this can be used in a cynical and manipulative way—business, after all, is business—but it can also be used in an enlightened and efficient fashion to more fruitfully match human beings with needed products and services (thus promoting the health of the overall spiral).

Moreover, management and leadership training programs, based on an integral model, have also begun to flourish. Daryl Paulson, in “Management: A Multidimensional/Multilevel Perspective,” shows that there are four major theories of business management (Theory X, which stresses individual behavior; Theory Y, which focuses on psychological understanding; cultural management, which stresses organizational culture; and systems management, which emphasizes the social system and its governance). Paulson then shows that these four management theories are in fact the four quadrants, and that an integral model would necessarily include all four approaches. He then moves to the “all-level” part, and suggests a simplified but very useful four stages that the quadrants go through, with specific suggestions for implementing a more “all-quadrant, all-level” management.<sup>16</sup>

Other pioneers in this area include Geoffrey Gioja and JMJ Associates, whose Integral Leadership seminars (which use three levels in the four quadrants) have been presented to dozens of Fortune 500 companies (“We believe that until recently, the transformational approach of organizational change has been the unmatched champion for producing breakthroughs, both subjective and objective.<sup>17</sup> We now assert that the transformational approach has been eclipsed by the integral approach.”); John Forman of R. W. Beck Associates, who uses an all-quadrant, all-level approach to supplement (and correct the flatland distortions of) systems and complexity theory; On Purpose Associates (John Cleveland, Joann Neuroth, Pete Plastrik, Deb Plastrik); Bob Anderson, Jim Stuart, and Eric Klein (co-author of *Awakening Corporate Soul*), whose Leadership Circle brings an all-quadrant, all-level approach to “Integral Transformation and Leadership” (“The main point is that the evolution of all of these streams of development in all of the quadrants are intimately bound up with each other. Spiritual intelligence is literacy in the practice of transformation. Spiritual intelligence is fast becoming a leadership imperative.”); Leo Burke, Director and Dean of Motorola’s University College of Leadership and Transcultural Studies, who oversees the training of some 20,000 managers around the world; Ian Mitroff (*A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America*); Ron Cacioppe and Simon Albrecht (“Developing Leadership and Management Skills Using the Holonic Model and 360 Degree Feedback Process”); Don Beck of Spiral Dynamics, which has been used in situations totaling literally hundreds of thousands of people; and Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, who are working with an all-quadrant, all-level approach coupled with very specific change technologies built around the optimal management of energy—physical, emotional, and mental. Tony is now writing the monthly Life/Work column for Fast Company and can be contacted there. All of the above individuals have joined the Institute of Integral Business, along with Deepak

Chopra, Joe Firmage (Project Voyager), Bob Richards (Clarus), Sam Bercholz (Shambhala), Fred Kofman, Bill Torbert, Warren Bennis, and numerous others.

## INTEGRAL EDUCATION

Because I am an “integral” or “holistic” thinker, people often imagine that I support what are generally called “holistic” educational approaches, whether conventional or alternative. Alas, such is not generally the case. Many “holistic” approaches are, in my opinion, either sadly flatland (based on systems theory, or merely the Lower-Right quadrant), or they stem ponderously and rather exclusively from the green meme, which means a type of pluralistic approach that nobly attempts not to marginalize other approaches, but in fact marginalizes hierarchical development, and thus often ends up sabotaging actual growth and evolution. In any event, most of these typical holistic approaches overlook the prime directive, which is that it is the health of the overall spiral, and not any one level, that is the central ethical imperative. A truly integral education does not simply impose the green meme on everybody from day one, but rather understands that development unfolds in phase-specific waves of increasing inclusiveness. To use Gebser’s version, consciousness fluidly flows from archaic to magic to mythic to rational to integral waves, and a genuinely integral education would emphasize, not just the last wave, but all of them as they appropriately unfold.

There are a large number of truly integral theorists working with these ideas and the applications of an all-quadrant, all-level education. In many instances, both the organizational structure of the schools (administration and faculty) and the core curriculum offered to students have been organized around an all-quadrant, all-level format. This has occurred both in conventional schools and in schools for the developmentally challenged. This overall topic is a prime focus of the Institute of Integral Education.

## CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES

The dominant approach to consciousness studies in this country is still that of narrow science (i.e., a cognitive science based largely on the Upper-Right quadrant). As I suggest in Integral Psychology, a more comprehensive approach to consciousness studies might start by using all four quadrants, or simply the Big Three of I, we, and it (first-person phenomenal accounts of consciousness; second-person intersubjective structures; and third-person scientific systems). This type of “1-2-3” of consciousness studies has already begun, as evidenced in such books as *The View From Within*, edited by Francisco Varela and Jonathan Shear, and by many articles carried regularly in *The Journal of Consciousness Studies*. The next stage of a more comprehensive approach might include not just “all-quadrant” but “all-level,” and in Integral Psychology I outline ways in which that important next step might be implemented.

Several theorists who are interested in a more comprehensive and balanced approach to psychology and consciousness studies have formed the Institute of Integral Psychology. Its members include Roger Walsh, Frances Vaughan, Robert Kegan, Susanne Cook-Greuter, Jenny Wade, Kaisa Puhakka, Don Beck, Robert Forman, Richard Mann, Brian van der

Horst, Allan Combs, Raz Ingrassi, Antony Arcari, T George Harris, Francisco Varela, Connie Hilliard, and Michael Murphy, among others.

### RELATIONAL AND SOCIALLY ENGAGED SPIRITUALITY

The major implication of an all-level, all-quadrant approach to spirituality is that physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual waves of being should be simultaneously exercised in self, culture, and nature (i.e., in the I, we, and it domains). There are many variations on this theme, ranging from integral transformative practice to socially engaged spirituality to relationships as spiritual path. The number of truly impressive groups and organizations pioneering these types of approaches is too large to list. But perhaps mention could be made of the work of Thich Nhat Hanh, Diana Winston, Donald Rothberg, Tikkun magazine, and Robert Forman and the Forge Institute (of which I am a member), who are attempting to bring some fresh perspectives to this noble endeavor.

### INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

The approach to ecology set forth in *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* is, critics agreed, a unique approach. Whether the critics liked the book or not, they agreed it was unique because it managed to combine ecological unity, systems theory, and nondual spirituality, but without privileging the biosphere and without using the Web-of-Life notion, which I maintain is a reductionistic, flatland conception. Rather, an all-quadrant, all-level approach to ecology allows us to situate the physiosphere, the biosphere, the noosphere, and the theosphere in their appropriate relationships in the Kosmos at large, and thus we can emphasize the crucial importance of the biosphere without having to reduce everything to the biosphere.

The key to these relationships—and the reason why they have so often been confused—can be seen in figure 4-6. Notice that the body (biosphere), mind (noosphere), and soul/spirit (theosphere) are all indicated on the figure. Each senior wave transcends and includes its junior, as shown by the enveloping nests. In that sense, it is quite correct to say that the mind transcends and includes the body, or that the noosphere transcends and includes the biosphere. The biosphere is a crucial component of the noosphere, but not vice versa (as most ecologists incorrectly suppose). That is, you can destroy the noosphere—or human minds—and the biosphere will still survive quite handsomely; but if you destroy the biosphere, all human minds are also destroyed. The reason is that the biosphere is a part of the noosphere, and not vice versa. By analogy, an atom is part of a molecule; if you destroy the molecule, the atom can still exist, but if you destroy the atom, the molecule is also destroyed. Same for biosphere and noosphere: destroy the latter, and the former can still exist, but not vice versa, showing that on the interior realms, the biosphere is a part of the noosphere, and not the other way around (as can be clearly seen in figs. 4-3 and 4-6). So it is not true that human minds (the noosphere) are part of nature (or the biosphere), but rather the reverse.

But notice, every interior event has a correlate in the exterior sensory world—the world we often call “nature.” Thus, most ecotheorists look at the external, empirical, sensory world, and they conclude that “Everything is a part of nature,” because everything does indeed have

a correlate in the Right-Hand world (as can be seen in figs. 4-4 and 4-6). So they conclude that “nature” (or the “biosphere”) is the ultimate reality, and they ask that we act in accord with “nature,” and thus they reduce everything to some version of ecology or the biosphere or the great Web of Life. But that is only half the story, the Right-Hand half. On the interior or Left-Hand dimensions, we see that nature—or the sensory, felt, empirical dimensions—are only a small part of the bigger story, a small slice of the Bigger Pie, a Pie that includes biosphere, noosphere, and theosphere. And although all of those interior waves have exterior correlates in the world of nature, they cannot be reduced to those exteriors; they cannot be reduced to nature. To do so is simply to embrace yet another version of flatland: the monochrome world of Right-Hand reality, the empirical-sensory Web of Life. That is ecological reductionism at its worst—reducing the entire Kosmos to the Lower-Right quadrant—a reductionism at the heart of many ecophilosophies.

On the other hand, an all-quadrant, all-level approach to ecology—as summarized in figure 4-6—allows us to honor the physiosphere, the biosphere, the noosphere and theosphere, not by trying to reduce one to the others, but by acknowledging and respecting the vitally crucial role they all play in this extraordinary Kosmos.<sup>18</sup>

#### MINORITIES OUTREACH

Since a truly integral model does not try to take one level or dimension of development (such as pluralistic, transpersonal, or even integral) and try to force it on everybody, but instead follows the prime directive of working for the health of the overall spiral of development, its approach to minorities is considerably different from typical liberal, conservative, and countercultural approaches. What is required is not to force liberal pluralism, conservative values, green multiculturalism, or holistic ideas on anybody, but to foster the conditions—both interior and exterior—that will allow individuals and cultures to develop through the spiral at their own rate, in their own way.<sup>19</sup> The same is true for a more integral approach to developing countries. A specific example from UNICEF is worth examining.

#### ALL-QUADRANTS, ALL-LEVELS, ALL-LINES: AN OVERVIEW OF UNICEF

“The Process of Integral Development” and “The Integrative Approach: All-Quadrants, All-Levels, All-Lines” are two in a series of presentations by iSchaik Development Associates, consultants for UNICEF. They outline the four quadrants, with examples from each; they summarize the major levels or waves in each quadrant; and they signal the importance of the numerous developmental lines or streams progressing in a relatively independent manner through the various waves. (See fig. 5-1, which was prepared by iSchaik Development Associates.) They state that “This is the bigger picture within which all the ideas and developments with which UNICEF is involved must be seen.” Figure 5-1. UNICEF (iSchaik Development Associates)

They then move to specifics: “In order to deepen our understanding of the complex and interrelated nature of our world, a mapping of consciousness development in social and cultural evolution is crucial. This must also have an integral approach to ensure that

evolution, and thus the state of children, humanity, culture and society, returns to a state of sustainable process.” They point out that “this requires a framework that allows us to go deeper than the understanding of the mere objective/surface system or web, and wider than a cultural understanding of diversity.” In other words, we must go beyond the Web of Life and standard systems theory analysis (which covers only the LR quadrant), and beyond a mere embrace of pluralism and diversity (which are confined to the green meme). What is required, they maintain, is an “all-quadrants, all-levels, all-lines” approach. With that, they begin a critique of the past performance of UNICEF and the UN.

*Clearly the process of development must address all four of these quadrants in an integrative fashion if it is to maintain a sustainable direction. But it is equally clear when we look at the evolution of UNICEF’s involvement in this process, together with the broader process of human development and how they affect each other, that progress made so far has largely not produced sustainable change. Attempts to understand the process of change, transformation, or development without an understanding of the nature of the evolution or unfolding of (human) consciousness have little prospect for success.<sup>20</sup>*

They then pinpoint a major reason for some of the past failures of UNICEF and the UN. “UNICEF’s activities have largely operated in the Upper and Lower Right-Hand quadrants, that is, the quadrants that are objective and exterior (individual and social), and have to a large extent ignored the interior and cultural quadrants.” That type of merely Right-Hand approach I have also called “monological” (another word for flatland), and so the analysis proceeds: “Possibly because of an overly monological vision of human development, UNICEF and the UN system have not been successful, or have simply not tried, at any stage, to map the larger picture in which they were involved. This monological vision may well have been necessary in the short term as human consciousness moved through, and is still moving through, the cultural stages of archaic, magic, and mythic, to the rational (and haltingly now to vision-logic or network-logic [i.e., second tier]). But it is now imperative that these organizations adopt a more post or transrational approach, one that incorporates positive ideas from the rational level [and, I would add, positive contributions from all previous waves], but one that also transcends these to a higher or deeper post-rational level of consciousness, in all of the quadrants.”

They then outline the history of UNICEF’s various programs, pointing out that, as important as they were, they all focused mostly on Right-Hand initiatives:

*The 1950s was the Era of Disease Campaigns: “firmly in the Upper-Right quadrant, that is measurable, observable and objective.” The 1960s was the Decade of Development: “emphasis now on the Lower-Right quadrant, that is, ‘functional fit.’” The 1970s was the Era of Alternatives: “but only alternatives that were mostly Right-Hand quadrants.” The 1980s was the Era of Child Survival: but no mention of interiors or interior development. The 1990s was the Decade of Children’s Rights (all seen in behavioristic terms), which quickly gave way to the Era of Donor Fatigue: “Donors and Governments returned to [‘regressed’ to] a pre-global state of nationalism stemming from problems at home and a lack of comprehension brought about from the misguided notion of all perspectives being equal [the ‘aperspectival madness’ of pluralistic relativism].” I have often argued that each holon, in order to survive, needs a balance of justice and rights (agency) with care and responsibilities (communion), and this they echo by saying that the previous efforts of UNICEF and the*

*UN had “no clear juxtaposition of ‘rights’ (justice) to jurisprudence (care and responsibility) at the global level.”*

Taking all of these factors into account they conclude that the 2000s are the Era of the Integral Approach: “This is where the sustainable process of change is seen from an integrative point of view, which explores more deeply the two Left-Hand quadrants of intention and culture. And of course for UNICEF this will have a major emphasis on children, youths, and women.” The problem up to this point is that “all ideas during these five decades were monological to a degree that excluded an understanding of the needs for interior/subjective development in individuals and societies in order to make the process of change and especially transformation sustainable.”

They conclude that an “all-quadrants, all-levels, all-lines” approach needs to be taken—carefully and uniquely tailored to each specific situation—in order “to ensure that actions we attempt or programs/ideas/metaphors we propose have any chance of being part of a sustainable, directional, transformative change process.”

Let me point out (as do iSchaik Associates) that any such integral approach needs to be implemented with the utmost care, concern, and compassion. None of the levels or lines or quadrants are meant in any sort of rigid, predetermined, judgmental fashion. The point of developmental research is not to pigeonhole people or judge them inferior or superior, but to act as guidelines for possible potentials that are not being utilized. The prime directive asks us to honor and appreciate the necessary, vital, and unique contribution provided by each and every wave of consciousness unfolding, and thus act to protect and promote the health of the entire spiral, and not any one privileged domain. At the same time, it invites us to offer, as a gentle suggestion, a conception of a more complete spectrum of consciousness, a full spiral of development, so that individuals or cultures (including ours) that are not aware of some of the deeper or higher dimensions of human possibilities may choose to act on those extraordinary resources, which in turn might help to defuse some of the recalcitrant problems that have not yielded to less integral approaches.

#### THE TERROR OF TOMORROW

One of the greatest problems and constant dangers faced by humanity is simply this: the Right-Hand quadrants are all material, and once a material entity has been produced, it can be used by individuals who are at virtually any level of interior development. For example, the atomic bomb is the product of formal-operational thinking (orange), but once it exists, it can be used by individuals at lower levels of development, even though those levels could not themselves produce the bomb. Nobody at a worldcentric level of moral consciousness would happily unleash the atomic bomb, but somebody at a preconventional, red-meme, egocentric level would quite cheerily bomb the hell of pretty much anybody who got in its way.

Stated in more general terms, one of humanity’s constant nightmares has been that technological growth in the Right-Hand quadrants has always run ahead of the Left-Hand

growth in wisdom, care, and compassionate use of that technology. In other words, exterior development has run ahead of interior development (only because, again, once a material artifact has been produced, it can be used by any interior level; and thus one genius operating at a high cognitive level—James Watt, for example—can conceive and produce a technology—in this case, the steam engine—that can then be used by individuals at any level of development, the vast majority of which could never themselves invent such technology).

Until the modern era, this problem was limited in its means because the technologies themselves were quite limited. You can only inflict so much damage on the biosphere, and on other human beings, with a bow and arrow. But with the emergence of modernity and the orange meme and its sweeping scientific capacities, humanity began producing orange-level technology when most of humanity was still at red or blue levels of moral consciousness. Exterior development, now incredibly powerful, was not met with an equal amount of interior development, and as Right-Hand technology ran ahead of Left-Hand wisdom, global catastrophes, for the first time in history, became possible and even likely. From atomic holocaust to ecological suicide, humanity began facing on a massive scale its single most fundamental problem: lack of integral development.

Today, with the rise of powerful second-tier technologies—from quantum-level energy production to artificial intelligence (robotics) to systematic genetic engineering to nanotechnology unleashed on a global scale—humanity is once again faced with its most primordial nightmare: an explosive growth in Right-Hand technologies has not been met with an equivalent growth in interior consciousness and wisdom. But this time, the lack of integral growth might signal the end of humanity itself.

Bill Joy, cofounder of Sun Microsystems, writing in *Wired* magazine (“Why the Future Doesn’t Need Us,” April 2000), caused a sensation with his estimate that within fifty years, technological advances in genetics, robotics, and nanotechnology might mean the end of the human species: genetics, in that we might intentionally or accidentally create a White Plague; robotics, in that we will be able to download human consciousness into machines, thus ending humanity as we know it<sup>21</sup>; nanotechnology, in that a “gray goo” (a nanomachine equivalent of the White Plague) could turn the biosphere into dust in a matter of days. Scientists he quoted put the odds at 30 to 50 percent that humanity will not survive the century.

This is obviously an enormously complicated topic, but a few things might be said. First, there are basically only two ways to “control” this technology: external legal enforcement (e.g., banning certain types of research), or internal moral constraint (e.g., an interior growth in collective wisdom that seeks and implements wise use of technology). I believe that eventually some degree of both forms will be necessary, but clearly, we cannot even begin to discuss the interior growth of wisdom and consciousness if we continue to ignore the interiors altogether. We will devise integral solutions to these global nightmares or we will very likely perish.

Bill Joy recommends a combination of exterior and interior control. He is in favor of attempting to ban or relinquish some types of research; but he also realizes that even if that were fully possible (which is unlikely, given that knowledge slips around boundaries), it would not really address the fundamental problem, which is the need for a growth in collective wisdom. “Where can we look for a new ethical basis to set our course?” he therefore asks. “I have found the ideas in the book *Ethics for the New Millennium*, by the Dalai Lama, to be very helpful. As is perhaps well known but little heeded, the Dalai Lama argues that the most important thing is for us to conduct our lives with love and compassion for others, and that our societies need to develop a stronger notion of universal responsibility and of our interdependency.” Any number of other spiritual leaders, from Christianity to Judaism to Hinduism, might echo those worthy sentiments.

But let us immediately note: we cannot simply recommend love and compassion per se, for those unfold from egocentric to ethnocentric to worldcentric, and do we really want an increase in ethnocentric love? Isn’t that exactly the cause of much of these problems? The Nazis loved their families, their race, their extended tribe. This is why most religions, centered on the blue meme, have caused wars, not prevented them. Not only have religions caused more wars than any other force in history, they did so in the name of an intense love of God and country. Their love was ethnocentric, dispensed freely to true believers and the chosen people, and death to all the others in the name of that love and compassion.

Surely, by “love and compassion,” the Dalai Lama and other leaders are actually calling for postconventional, worldcentric, universal love and compassion. But that is a stage of development reached by less than 30 percent of the world’s population, whereas virtually 100 percent of the world’s population might soon have access to globally destructive technologies. . . .

Clearly, the interior quadrants have some catching up to do. What good is it to continue to focus on the exterior technological wonders before us—from indefinite life extension to computer/mind interlinks to unlimited zero-point energy to worm-hole intergalactic space travel—if all we carry with us is an egocentric or ethnocentric consciousness? Do we really want to colonize space with red-meme Nazis and the KKK? Do we really want Jack the Ripper living 400 years, zipping around the country in his hypercar, unleashing misogynistic nanorobots? Exterior developments are clearly a concern; how much more so are interior developments—or lack there of. . . .

Edwin Firmage, a recognized authority on constitutional and international law, who has worked for several decades on the control of nuclear weapons, has written that “Law [exterior legal control] can help, but it leaves you hopelessly short of where we must be. Even if by law you could eliminate all nuclear weapons from the earth by fiat, you don’t lobotomize a generation of physicists. You could begin the whole process of arms racing again. How do you change the souls of human beings? You have to go where law can’t get you. . . .”<sup>22</sup> You have to go, that is, to the interior quadrants and the growth of the soul, the growth of wisdom, the growth of consciousness, an interior growth in the Left-Hand



quadrants that will keep pace with the growth in Right-Hand technologies.<sup>23</sup> And it simply does not matter that this is an impossibly difficult task; the alternative is painfully clear.

Whatever the solutions to these problems, the discussion must surely shift to an integral platform, because anything less than that leaves out fundamental dimensions of the crisis, which will then more likely speed out of control on its merry way to a destiny with death.

#### INTEGRAL INSTITUTE

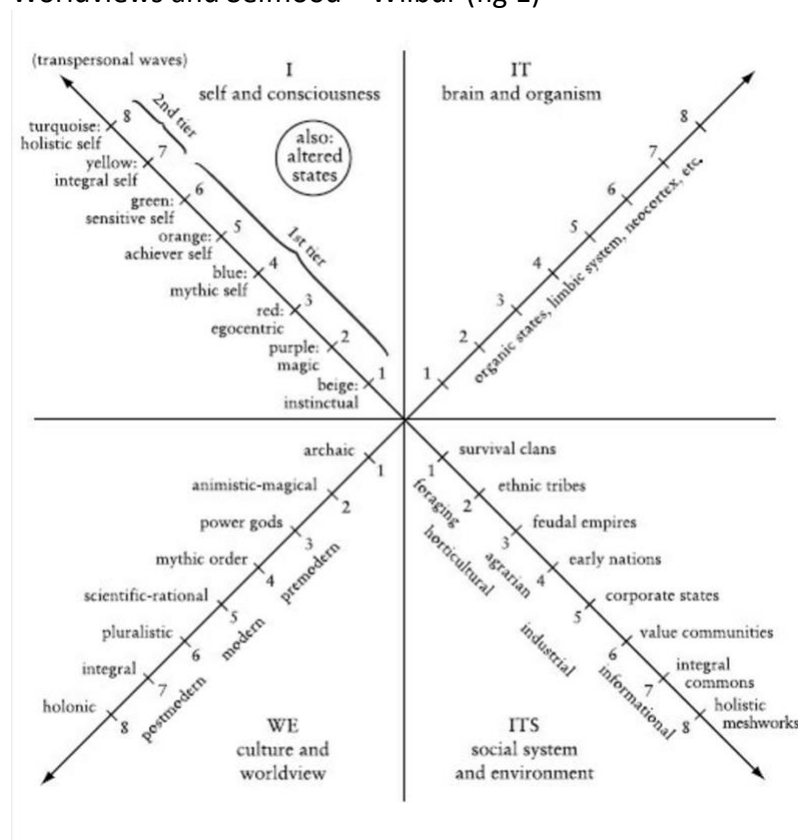
All of the approaches in this chapter—from the prosaic to the apocalyptic—are just a few of the areas in which a more integral or all-quadrant, all-level approach is having some immediate applications. There are others I have not mentioned: integral feminism, integral law, integral art and literary theory, even integral prison reform. Some of these approaches have been highlighted in a forthcoming book from Shambhala, assembled by a team of editors headed by Jack Crittenden, and tentatively entitled *Kindred Visions—Ken Wilber and Other Leading Integral Thinkers*, with contributions by Alex Grey, Jim Garrison, Joyce Nielsen, Ed Kowalczyk, T. George Harris, Marilyn Schlitz, Georg Feuerstein, Larry Dossey, Jenny Wade, Juan Pascual-Leone, Michael Lerner, James Fadiman, Roger Walsh, Leland van den Daele, Francisco Varela, Robert Shear, George Leonard, Michael Zimmerman, Stan Grof, Father Thomas Keating, Ervin Laszlo, Thomas McCarthy for Jürgen Habermas, Eduardo Mendieta for Karl-Otto Apel, Hameed Ali, Robert Frager, Drexel Sprecher, Lawrence Chickering, Gus diZegera, Elizabeth Debold, Lama Surya Das, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Mitchell Kapor, Don Beck, Frances Vaughan, Robert Forman, Michael Murphy, Max Velmans, Tony Schwartz, David Chalmers, Susanne Cook-Greuter, Howard Gardner, Robert Kegan, John Searle, and Charles Taylor, among many others. All of these men and women have contributed, in their own significant ways, to a more integral and gracious view of the Kosmos.

Many of the theorists contributing to *Kindred Visions* and many of those presented in this book have joined me in starting Integral Institute. As of this moment we have branches of integral medicine, integral psychology, integral spirituality, integral business, integral ecology, integral education, integral art, and integral politics, with more branches in the planning (media, diplomacy, law). Integral Institute hopes to be a major umbrella organization for genuinely integral studies as well as a conduit for funding integral projects. We intend to open an Integral Center as headquarters for the Institute (in New York and/or San Francisco), and we have already started Integral Media with Shambhala. If you are interested in joining the Institute or funding it, please stay tuned to the [Shambhala.com](http://Shambhala.com) website for further announcements.

Wilber, Ken. *A Theory of Everything* Shambhala. Kindle Edition.

|                                    | Worldview<br>(What I see) | Meme        | Self-identity<br>(Who I am) |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| preconventional<br>(egocentric)    | archaic (instinctual)     | beige       | impulsive                   |
|                                    | magic (animistic)         | purple      | egocentric                  |
| conventional<br>(ethnocentric)     | mythic (membership)       | red         | conformist                  |
|                                    | formal (rational)         | blue        | conscientious               |
| postconventional<br>(worldcentric) | pluralistic (relative)    | orange      | individualistic             |
|                                    | integral (holistic)       | green       | autonomous                  |
|                                    | (transpersonal)           | second tier |                             |

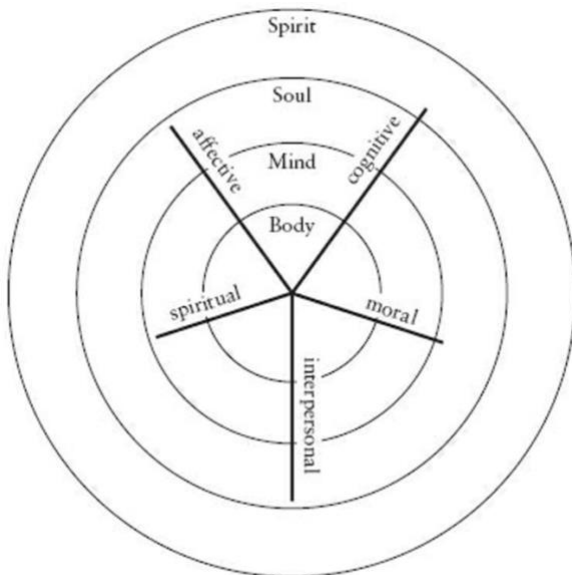
Worldviews and Selfhood—Wilbur (fig 1)



Examples of the Four Quadrants in Humans—Wilbur



Left and Right Hand Approaches to Human Behavior



Holarchy of Development--Wilbur