

# MULTILEVELNESS

Levels based not just on an ordinal scale of “later” but a value scale of “better.” Multilevelness goes beyond stages and chronology, allowing an appreciation of levels of concepts and levels of behavior described in these multilevel terms:

## **I - Primary Integration - *The unmoved non-mover.***

- Without drives to self-development, ego-centric. complacency is the theme.
- Lack of reflectiveness, lack of awareness of an inner environment.
- Conflict is largely external. Stability achieved by adjustment to “what is”,
- Vulnerable to negative disintegration from even small annoyances.  
(e.g. Homer Simpson)

## **II - Unilevel Disintegration - *Pulled in Every Direction***

- Inner psychic life begins to blossom in a state of turmoil and fragmentation.
- Moods oscillate; thought and action vacillate as rigid structures threatened.
- Without a heterarchy of values, self direction is confusing. A hierarchy of external values may be followed to save one from real choice of a new self.
- Severe psychopathologies or delinquent behavior if crises are not handled  
(e.g. Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina)

## **III - Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration - *Evaluating the Self***

- A newly-discovered and consciously-constructed hierarchy of values begins to emerge and take control.
- Behavior begins to evolve on the basis of “what should be”. Inner Conflict becomes vertical; behavior guided internally by moral responsibility.
- Self scrutiny, existential anxiety, moral conflict may be taken for neurosis “maladjustment” and personality disorders.
- Many therapies would step in with a “cure”. But “Psychoneurosis is not an illness” (Dabrowski) and, in the presence of appropriate dynamisms and overexcitabilities, the disintegration can do its positive, work. (e.g. Tolstoy)

## **IV - Organized Multilevel Disintegration - *What Ought to Be Will Be.***

- Universal values (not merely personal) autonomously and deliberately chosen are organized into an actualization hierarchy.
- Focus on problems outside oneself. A confirmed sense of responsibility leads to care. Similar to Maslow’s self actualizing person.  
(e.g. Eleanor Roosevelt)

## **V - Secondary Integration - *“Past the Pairs of Opposites”***

In contrast with primary integration, this is a stable state of dynamic wholeness, peace and centeredness. Not static “perfection”.

- Equilibrium is realized because action is in conformity with internal actualizing principles, guided by *personality ideal* based on timeless values
- Dichotomies dissolve. “When you have come past the pairs of opposites, you have reached compassion”

## ADJUSTMENT AND MALADJUSTMENT

### ACCORDING TO THE THEORY OF POSITIVE DISINTEGRATION

#### Adjustment:

*Negative* – Conformity to prevailing customs and norms without critical evaluation, or perhaps with the evaluation: “Everybody’s doing it, so it must be right.” This kind of adjustment is not autonomous and basically inauthentic. It is adjustment to “what is.”

*Positive* – Shaping one’s life around a considered hierarchy of values, consciously developed in pursuit of the individual’s personality ideal. This is adjustment to “what ought to be.”

#### Maladjustment

*Negative* – Rejection of social norms, not for higher values, but for whimsical or lower level instinctive (unreflected) motives, or, worse, for pathological reasons sometimes found in psychosis, psychopathy and criminal behavior.

*Positive* – While being well aware of what is going on in society, what expectations society puts on me, and what moral force social custom has, I, nevertheless, must respond to higher values that I do not see in social norms. This can be a very lonely and threatened position. But this is autonomy in its fullest sense of taking into account what the social environment has to teach, parceling out what is lower and what is higher and living according to the higher principles.

## Stability and change: Health and Disease.

### ***Traditional Medical Paradigm***

**Health—state of stability and absence of crises**

**Disease—instability and presence of crises**

**Health and disease are mutually exclusive**

### ***Dabrowski's. Paradigm***

**Health attaches concept of crisis to that of stability**

**Disease " " " stability to that of crisis**

**Health becomes capacity to alternate with fluidity between  
psychological stability and crisis**

**Disease becomes chronicity in stability at lowest levels or in constant  
crisis.**

**Dynamic system of values is driving force of development through  
levels**

# LEVELS OF SPIRITUALITY

## 1. Unreflected existence

Spiritual by nature , need for meaning. But no active awareness.

## 2. Superficial awareness of one's spiritual dimensions but basically ego-centric

'Spirituality'"achieved" mechanically by drugs, or "-mystical " turn-ons

Spirituality as a toy exploited for sensationalism

Not much different from magic -- confusion of spirituality with the occult.

## 3. Simple, unperturbed awareness

See oneself as spiritual, but in a simplistic, ego-centric frame.

Inattention to which questions truly merit ultimate concern

Questions of meaning, if they arise, are answered by authority.

Child-like, passive virtues are encouraged. Not autonomy

Providence takes care of all without our effort.

Religion is valued primarily for its comforting function.

Meditation = "waiting for signs" Prayer is manipulative.

Romantic spirituality. "God is there for me." – "Jesus and I"

Social awareness and sensitivity to social justice not strong.

Self actualization in its narrow, individualistic sense

The "once-born," "healthy" person described by William James.

## 4 A radical, perturbing awareness of one's spirituality

William James's "twice-born" or "sick" soul. "*Agonia*" experienced

Well aware of the demands made by one's spiritual nature

Perturbed by the injustice and lack of harmony in the world

Keen sense of sin both individually and socially

Religion excels in its perspectivistic role in finding meaning.

Values are affirmed and an attempt made to actually live them

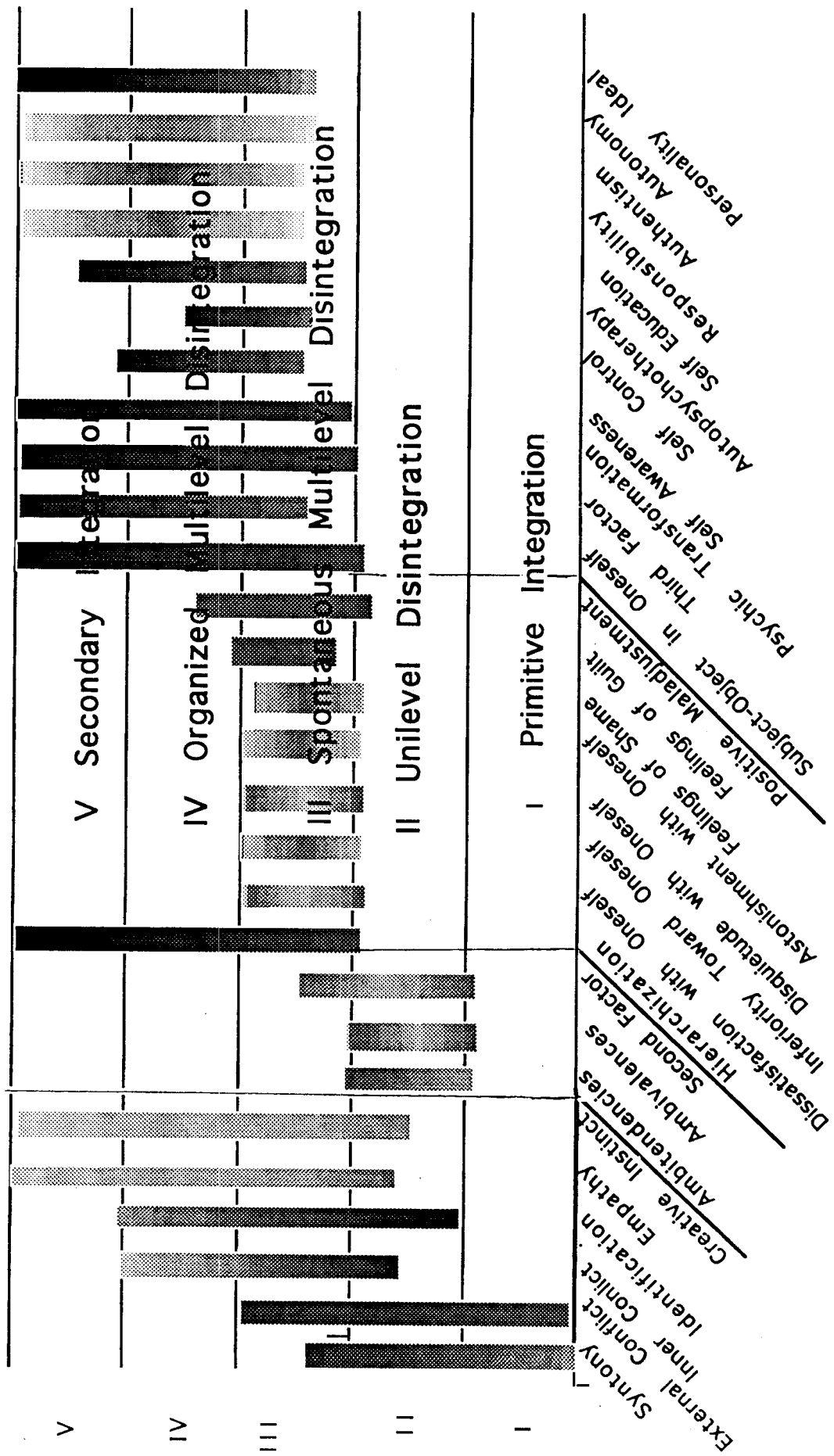
Social consciousness is world-consciousness

True self actualization in solidarity of self with all that is.

Salvation through world-consciousness-- spirituality is awareness of one's  
eco-systemic role in creation and a "yes" to it.

## 5. Full participation in the "seamless whole" of all that is

Transcends the threat to self identity that comes from acknowledging  
oneness with all that is. Oneness with God. No compromises or false  
substitutes "Peace that surpasses all understanding"

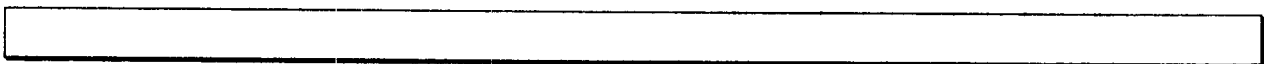


## Dynamisms Acting through Levels of Positive Disintegration

no Movement from the

Ought

<b>Lives lived by:</b>	<b>Horizon of Significance</b>	<b>Predominant Virtues</b>
What is...	Things as they are	Range from complacency to realism
What can be	Things as they might be	Imagination, creativity
What ought to be	Things seen as they should be—moral oughtness	Idealism realized through courage
What should be actually is	Things are what they should be	Morality of Authenticity



# OVEREXCITABILITIES

**Psychomotor** —organic excess of energy in the neuro-muscular system.

Expressed in restlessness, nervous habits, games, dances. Religious rituals appeal to this OE and draw from it, It may contribute to:

**Primitive Syntony**--Impulsive forms of gregarious behavior (riots, the crowd at a football game). On a higher level, responsiveness is in the form of:

**Empathy**. —more conscious and more deliberate form of participation, belonging to higher emotions, but building on psychomotor and other overexcitabilities.

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**Sensual** — keen awareness of physical sensations and an ability often to express this sensitivity in art and language rich with sensuality. Ritual and art.

On the down side, it shows itself in a heightened need for comfort, fashion, stereotyped beauty, variety of sexual experiences and numerous but superficial relationships. Tension may be transferred into eating disorders.

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**Imaginational**— manifests itself in imagery, metaphor, creativity and vivid visualization. Life may be a fantasy land filled with magic and enriched by the beauty of images and filled with the poetry of words. Anne of Green Gables —“And she was richer in those dreams than in reality; for things seen pass away, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” Lucy Maude. Montgomery.

In therapy this overexcitability can facilitate the use of memories of one's past in coping with present tension and conflict

From a *negative* view: turns up in dreams, nightmares, confusion of truth and fiction and unnecessary fears of the unknown—sometimes the child's early experiences of religion.

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**Intellectual** — appears in a thirst for knowledge, persistent questioning, the love of logic and the need to structure one's experience into a system to appreciate its fullness and one's own place in that grand design.

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**Emotional** — a heightened mode not just of experiencing feelings but of responding to the relationships integral to them. Mere intensity of emotions or great displays of feelings are not enough; there must be a relationship.

# Intrapsychic Value Determinants of Levels

## "Lower"

Biological--psychophysical facticity

Reactive, unreflective, uninhibited

Adjustment to "What is"

Primitive, biological and instinctive

Heteronomous, socially determined

Whimsical subjectivity

Reductionism: Human is "nothing but..."

Victim of lower instincts

Victim of heredity and environment

Illusion

Egocentric

Rigid

"Religion" structured for protection  
or power

## "Higher"

Suprabiological Humanizing Reality

Conscious, Reflective, Inhibited

Quest for "What ought to be"

Idealistic

Autonomous, Authentic

Objectivity through authentic  
subjectivity

Human is continuous with creation,  
yet unique

Self Conscious & self controlled

Self-determining

Authentic self

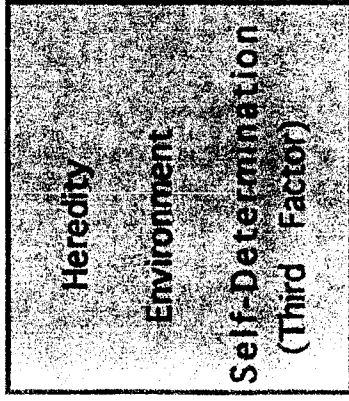
Self-Transcending, Caring

Creative

Religious, mystical,  
compassionate

# DEVELOPMENTAL POTENTIAL

DP = (3 Factors) + (5 Overexcitabilities)



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