

## Introduction to Integral Ecology



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## Integral Ecology

Ken Wilber, Psychologist/Philosopher



### Developed Integral Theory:

- Synthesis of major competing philosophical theories
- Combined
  - Western focus on body & mind
  - Eastern focus on soul & spirit
- Developed broad, interdisciplinary, worldview

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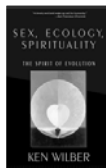
## Integral Ecology

Ken Wilber, Psychologist/Philosopher



### Integration of four perspectives:

- Physical/Biological (e.g., Newton, Darwin)
- Social/Systems (e.g., Marx, Lenski)
- Psychological (e.g., Freud, Jung, Piaget)
- Cultural (e.g., Habermas, Gebser, Kuhn)



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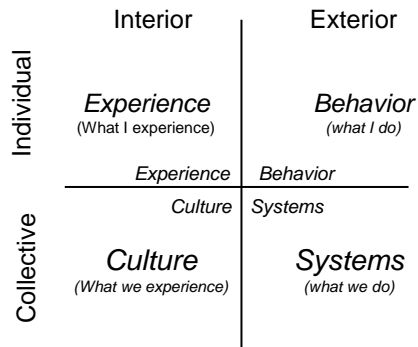
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Four Quadrant Model: multidisciplinary approach



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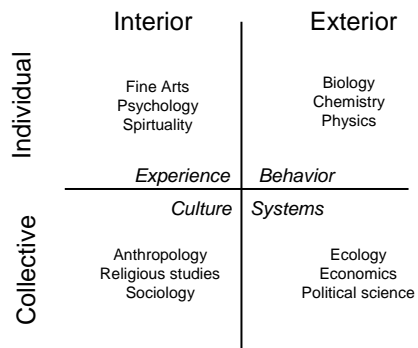
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Four Quadrant Model: multidisciplinary approach



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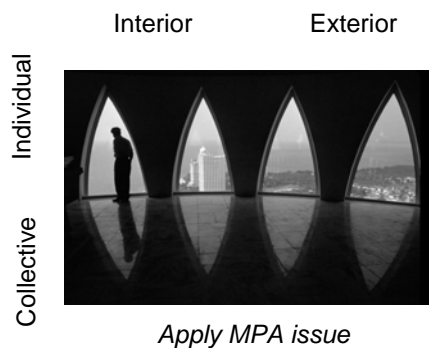
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Four Quadrant Model: four ways of seeing the world



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## The I, We, and It of an Oak



**Objective:** The oak is 72 feet tall, has course brown bark that is deeply furrowed, and is leaning a bit to the right. There are three really big branches that frame the entire tree. The oak is 79 years old and has survived three droughts and two brush fires. This oak's botanical name is *Quercus agrifolia* and has a leaf length ranging from 3/4 – 2 1/4 inches in length. It is an evergreen tree with short, stout trunk with many large, crooked, spreading branches.



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## The I, We, and It of an Oak



**Subjective:** As I looked at the oak I was filled with goose bumps and a sense of joy overcame me. I decided to climb up into its branches in order to get a better view of the valley. As I grabbed the lowest branch I could feel the rough, leathery bark scraping my soft skin. By the time I got up into the crotch of the trunk I was out of breath but very happy to be cradled by this living giant. I had a sense of satisfaction as I sat in there and felt waves of openness surrender me to the valley. I felt close to life.



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## The I, We, and It of an Oak



**Intersubjective:** As we came across the large oak on the North slope of the valley we couldn't help but recall that the oak was a symbol of power and strength to the Druids. My sister pointed out that even the biblical mother-shrine Mamre at Hebron included a sacred oak in a female-symbolic grove. We discussed how all over the world, wherever the oak has appeared, it has been held in reverence due to its awe-inspiring qualities. Now whenever I see an oak I am reminded of that wonderful day we shared.



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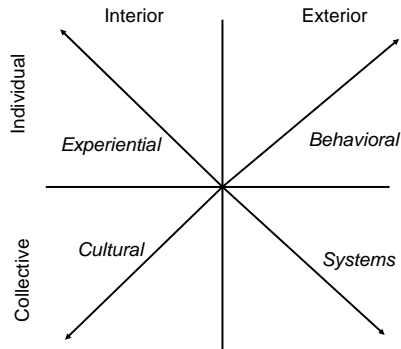
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Four Quadrant Model – All Levels



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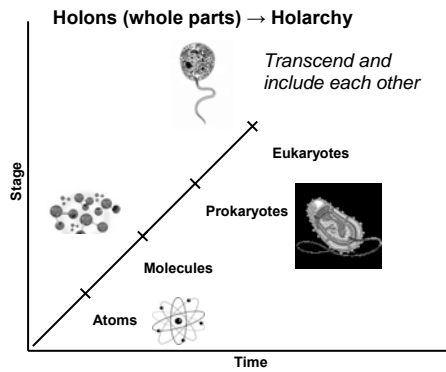
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Four Quadrant Model: Exterior-Individual



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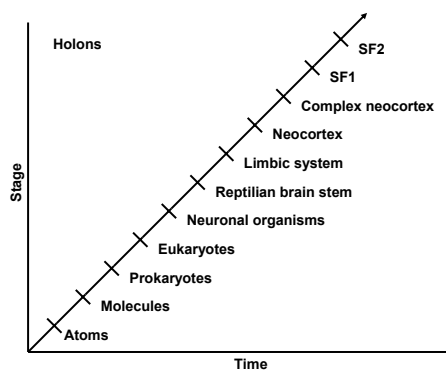
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Four Quadrant Model: Exterior-Individual



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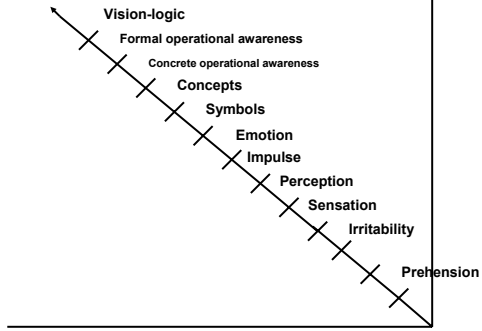
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Four Quadrant Model: Interior-Individual




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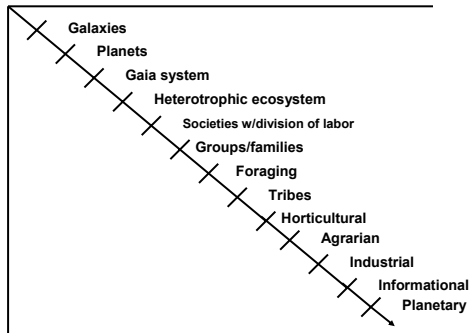
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Four Quadrant Model: Exterior-Collective




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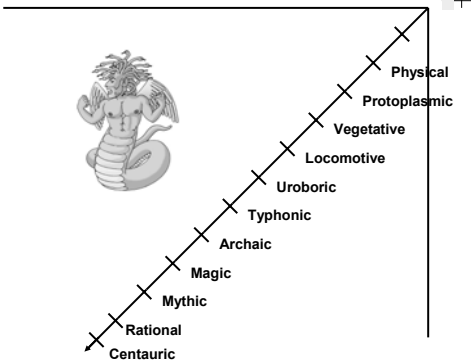
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Four Quadrant Model: Interior-Collective




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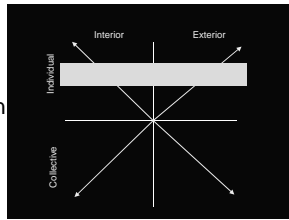
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## Danger of Reductionism

*Racism/Sexism*

Lack of differentiation  
of mind & nature



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## Power of Differentiation

Rise of Democracy: Self & Culture



Liberation Movements: Mind & Nature



Empirical Science: Culture & Nature



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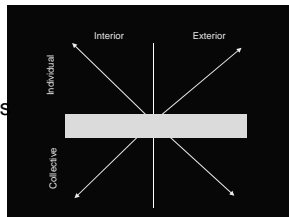
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## Historical Perspectives

*Flatland*

Collapse of quadrants  
during the  
enlightenment

16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries



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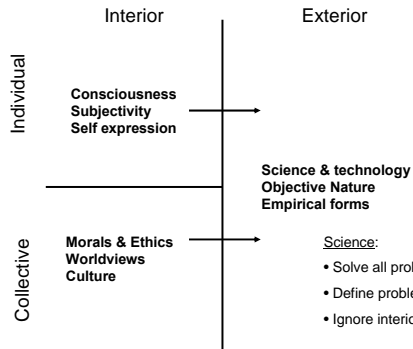
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*Flatland*




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## Applications of IE

1. Interdisciplinary: all quadrants
2. Perspective: all levels
3. Understand connections:
  - Ecological, social, political, economic
  - Interpersonal dynamics
4. Find solutions to problems
5. Design good studies
  - Holistic, promote sustainability

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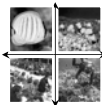
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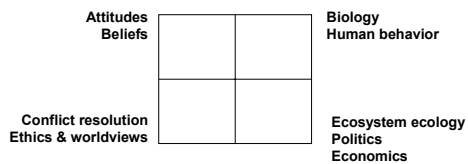
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## Integral Ecology



Integral theory applied to ecological problems




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# An Integral Ecology Approach to a Stream Restoration Project

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## *Objective Dimensions*



1. Which species are native and which ones are introduced?
2. What are the health conditions of various components of the ecosystem (e.g., soil nutrient, pH, O<sub>2</sub> concentration)?
3. Where are human-produced pollutants in the system?
4. How are the nearby homes, businesses, and school activities impacting the stream and surrounding area?
5. What kinds of behaviors does the project want to encourage and discourage around the stream?

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## *Interobjective Dimensions*



1. What are the ecological dynamics of the area and what ecosystems does the stream travel through?
2. How is the stream connected to the larger watershed?
3. How do the school system and local politics facilitate and complicate the project?
4. What are the economic dynamics of the area; where will financial maintenance come from?
5. What environmental laws or ordinances exist in the community and which ones might be important to establish?

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## Subjective Dimensions



1. What will be concealed and revealed from view or experience by any design utilized?
2. How might the design of walkways, and the placement of signs, benches, etc. support a visitor's interior experience?
3. What are the features of the landscape that have aesthetic value and are most likely to inspire painting, poems, and contemplation; how might we facilitate those encounters?
4. What forms of consciousness exist in or around the creek, how do they affect one another, and how will they be affected by the proposal?

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## Intersubjective Dimensions



1. What are the rights of each species and how might we honor them?
2. What kinds of meaningful encounters can be facilitated between species and which ones should be avoided?
3. What are the dynamics (e.g., race, gender, and class) in the community that are relevant to the proposed project?
4. How might the community be motivated to get involved and take responsibility (short- and long-term) for the restored area?
5. What is the eco-cultural history of the area; what are the ways the area has been documented (e.g., pioneer journals, folksongs, drawings, surveys, myths & legends)?
6. What are the community values and perceptions of the creek area and how can different values find resonance in visiting the area?

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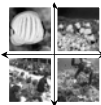
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## Integral Ecology



Examples: levels within quadrants

	<b>Behavioral</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Experiential</b>	<b>Cultural</b>
<i>Protozoa:</i>	Eukaryote	Heterotrophic	Sensation	Locomotive
<i>Wolf:</i>	Limbic	Groups	Emotion	Typhonic
<i>Humans:</i>	Neocortex	Foraging	Animistic	Magic
		Horticultural	Mythic	Mythic
		Agrarian	Formal	Rational
		Industrial	Sensitive	Centuric

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## Developmental dynamics



Howard Gardner: development of a child

ETHNOCENTRIC WORLDCENTRIC	EGOCENTRIC	Worldview	Meme	Self-identity
		Archaic (instinctual)	beige	impulsive
		Magic (animistic)	purple / red	egocentric
		Mythic (membership)	blue	conformist
		Formal (rational)	orange	conscientious
		Pluralistic (relative)	green	individualistic
		Integral (holistic)	second tier	autonomous

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## Spiral dynamics



Human development in eight stages

ETHNOCENTRIC WORLDCENTRIC	EGOCENTRIC	Worldview	Meme	Level
		Archaic-Instinctual	beige	first-tier
		Magic-Animistic	purple	first-tier
		Power gods	red	first-tier
		Mythic order	blue	first-tier
		Scientific achievement	orange	first-tier
		Sensitive self	green	first-tier
		Integrative	yellow	second-tier
	Holistic	turquoise	second-tier	

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## Spiral dynamics



Beige: *Archaic-Instinctual*

Basic survival level; use habitat, instincts to survive. Form survival bands to live.

Examples: First human societies, newborn infants, senile/elderly, starving masses, shell shock.

**0.1% adult population / 0% power**

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## Spiral dynamics



Purple: *Magical-Animistic*

Thinking is animistic; good & bad spirits leave blessings & curses and spells. Spirits exist in ancestors. *Form ethnic tribes.*

Examples: magical ethnic beliefs, family rituals, gangs, athletic teams.

**10% adult population / 1% power**

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## Spiral dynamics



Red: *Power Gods*

Egocentric & heroic. Spirits, dragons; archetypal gods and goddesses, powerful beings.

Examples: Feudal kingdoms, "terrible twos," gang leaders, tribal systems, epic heroes.

**20% adult population / 5% power**

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## Spiral dynamics



Blue: *Mythic Order*

Life has meaning, direction & purpose. Code of conduct, right & wrong, rewards and penalties. Conformist.

Examples: Religious fundamentalism, patriotism, totalitarianism, codes of honor.

**40% adult population / 30% power**

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## Spiral dynamics



Orange: *Scientific achievement*

Self escapes from herd mentality, seeks truth as an individual. Rational, scientific, natural laws, achievement oriented, corporate states.

Examples: the enlightenment, Wall Street, colonialism, the Cold War, Ann Rand.

**30% adult population / 50% power**

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## Spiral dynamics



Green: *Sensitive self*

Human relationships, ecological sensitivity, refresh spirituality, achieve harmony, pluralistic values.

Examples: Postmodernism, deep ecology, Greenpeace, ecofeminism, politically correct.

**10% adult population / 15% power**

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## Spiral dynamics



Yellow: *Integrative*

Second tier: see life as natural holarchies, systems and forms, egalitarianism complemented with natural rankings.

Examples: Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic.

**1% adult population / 5% power**

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# Spiral dynamics



Turquoise: *Holistic*

Universal holistic system, unites feelings with knowledge, sees entire spiral, emergence of new spirituality.

Examples: Black Elk, Gandhi

0.1% adult population / 1% power

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# Spiral dynamics



- Shapes human nature
- Creates global diversity
- Drives social dynamics



### Factors influencing the spiral:

- Every level available to all
- Physical environment
- Genetic development
- Cultural surroundings

ETHNOCENTRIC  
WORLDOCENTRIC  
Spiral Dynamics

Worldview	Meme
Archaic-Instinctual	beige
Magic-Animistic	purple
Power gods	red
Mythic order	blue
Scientific achievement	orange
Sensitive self	green
Integrative	yellow
Holistic	turquoise

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# Prime Directive



Maintain the integrity of the spiral!

- Need healthy memes
- Work towards higher levels
- Help others see higher levels
- Sustainability!!



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# Ecological approaches



Worldview	Approach	Example
Spiritual (coral)	Eco-sage	Shamanism; ecological self
Holistic (turquoise)	Eco-holist	Leopold land ethic
Integral (yellow)	Integral ecologist	Integral ecology
Postmodern (green)	Eco-radical	Deep ecology, Ecofeminism
Scientific-rational (orange)	Eco-strategist	Nature capitalism
Mythic (blue)	Eco-manager	EPA, Parks
Heroic (red)	Eco-warrior	Earthfirst!
Romantic (purple)	Eco-guardian	Earth goddess

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