

Ken-Marc – Techno-Optimist vs. Environmental – October 6, 2014

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Speakers

Marc Gafni

Ken Wilber

Marc Welcome, everyone. I am here with Mega Pandit, or otherwise known as Giga Pandit, Ken Wilber, Integral philosopher, and we are here in the pre-summit Success 3.0 series, and we're talking about success. And, Ken, just to dive right in, we talked about a few months ago in an offline conversation that in terms of the success of the world today, like where we are in the world, there seem to be two different schools, one school thinking that we're being pretty successful, we're doing really well, the other school thinking that things are in a bit of trouble.

And I think the way we framed it in that conversation was – and here I'm borrowing a word from you, which I love the word – the techno-optimists. So we've got the techno-optimists, and all you have to do is Google TED, and you can check out 10 TED talks by techno-optimists. Ray Kurzweil is often a leader of that cheerleading section. And it's inspiring, what's possible, and the potentiality and the availability of technology, a billion people coming online and getting access to the knowledge base of the world, and what creativity is going to be emerging from that new billion rising. There's an enormous literature. There's a great book called "The Infinite Resource" that we talked about by Ramez Naam, which is really about the power of innovation. So there's an entire kind of techno-optimist school.

But then when I started talking about this, you pointed out, first up, there's an economic pessimist school, the economic structures of reality ranging from debt, to China owning half the United States, and more deeply the inner textured structures of the financial instruments and institutions that make up the world, and the general economic trajectory, there's an enormous sense of, "We're not heading towards success there."

And then, of course, the environmental pessimism which is rampant, and which is interpreted in one way, as we know, by the classical liberal world, and in a different way by the intelligent voices in the conservative world, and it's hard to integrate those two. What's the news? We get two different interpretations of the scientific data, depending on your political alignment, which of course makes the entire conversation suspect is a major understatement.

So our question is: are we being successful in the world today? Is it the techno-optimists? Is it the economic pessimists we should be listening to? Is it the environmental pessimists or the environmental more moderate folks on the other side of the aisles? How do we evaluate success in the lower right and lower left quadrants, not,

as we've talked about up till now, in the upper quadrants, but just as a society, as a culture? So take us in, Mega Pandit.

Ken Well, yes, what we're dealing with here, of course, are just in some ways fundamentally different dimensions of human reality, and different aspects of it, and each of them has their own domain, and each of them has particular in a sense exemplars or what Kuhn called paradigms, particular practices that they take to be especially meaningful or generating reality or indicating reality, and each of them has different value sets, and each of them recognizes different types of phenomena as constituting truth, and so on.

So when you're looking at technology, you're looking at artifacts that are exchanged between human beings, and these artifacts are always based on leading edge knowledge, because what happens in the knowledge quest is that it essentially only goes forward. Now, of course it's true that when we get to the human dimensions themselves that there are certain political atmospheres that can oppress knowledge or not distribute it fairly or try to censor it and so on, but knowledge itself only – particularly on the technological side of the street, the scientific, analytic, empirical side of the street – technology knowledge only goes forward. There's never been a culture that started at industrial, and then went to agrarian, and then went to horticultural, and then went to foraging, and ended up with the bow and arrow.

Marc Although there were some good liberal social scientists who suggested that would solve the problem.

Ken A lot of eco-romantics that would love that solution.

Marc But it never happens.

Ken No, it doesn't happen. It doesn't go that way.

Marc It doesn't happen.

Ken And so there is so-called time's arrow, which is always headed in the direction of greater complexity and greater unity, and if you acknowledge all dimensions it also indicates greater consciousness and greater unity and so on, but it doesn't mean that there can't be large stretches like the Great Depression where something that otherwise generally moves forward and upward, like the stock market, can hit places where it really gets wiped out and goes down for long stretches, and other times it can just go flat and so on, even though generally it always goes up.

But the technology knowledge is always advancing, because it's always coming from the leading edge. There's simply no reason that somebody would take knowledge that had been known for 30 or 40 years, and try to make that a leading edge technology. Nobody's going to come in and take computers in the state they were 20 years ago, and

try to sell those to anybody. Forty years ago they were the size of trailers. So it's not going to happen.

So if you only look at technology, you're always an optimist, because it's always going forward, and you're always creating something that's more amazing and more astonishing. All you have to do is look at the history of inventions of the human race. It's an astonishing climb. Everything just gets more and more amazing, and more and more better, and more and more wow, and if you just look at nothing but that at any time in history, including the present, all you're going to see is an optimistic curve. There's no other curve there. So it's not even a matter of interpretation. There's not even opposing schools on this. It's just always building on what went before. So it's always increasing, it's always improving, it's always getting better and better, and more and more astonishing, and so on.

And we are indeed coming to a point – and this particularly is applying to the lower right quadrant, of course – but we are particularly coming to a point where, as Kurzweil and others would put it, we're approaching a singularity, which is simply where the rate of advancement starts to, at least on all the curves that we draw, it gets asymptotic to infinity. In other words, if you look at something like so-called Moore's Law, which was at one point he had said that the amount of information storage capacity in things like transistors, at one point he said it doubled every year, and at another point he said it was two years. It's usually reported as 18 months, although he never said that, but that's what it's usually taken as.

But what happens is the doubling power increases every 18 months, so it just keeps going up, going up, going up, going up, and pretty soon it's going up so fast that it's just thousands and thousands of times better than it was previously, and at some point it starts to hit an infinite improvement. So that they just call the singularity. And what happens in an actual singularity in the world of physics is that the laws of physics themselves are often just suspended. You just get in a very weird place, like a black hole, for example, and all sorts of weird things start going on. So they're just using that analogy when they call this technological hit at infinity a singularity. They're just using the analogy of physical anomalies that are...

Marc Right. And essentially what they're saying is it's unimaginable. You can't extrapolate out. The world that we live in, and that we know, and that we're familiar with – the familiar – would become completely unfamiliar, and they interpret that unfamiliarity positively. They assume that this exponential increase, which you say and describe beautifully as being inevitable because each advance is building on the one before it, their ironclad assumption is that the result of this is positive and beneficent for the planet, for humankind, and for all of life as we know it. And that's, in a certain sense, Ken – let me pass it back to you – that's kind of the implicit faith assumption. The faith assumption is that it's all going to be good.

Ken Yeah. And of course the other assumption they're making is that the only dimension of human reality that counts is the techno-economic dimension.

Marc The exterior.

Ken Yeah. And that's about the stupidest assumption that any system could be based on. So that brings us to some of these other dimensions, and if we just put them together right now as just the human dimensions, the problem about human dimensions and the growth in human dimensions is that human dimensions do indeed grow, but the problem with that is everybody's born at square one. So 500,000 years ago humans were making the transition from great apes towards a recognizably human species, and this whole transition period is generally referred to, Gebser referred to it as archaic, and that was indeed the period that humans actually went through from 500,000 to around 200,000 years ago. And their needs were essentially physiological, and nothing really higher involved. They're still essentially great apes.

And then after the first uniquely human beings emerge then they start using uniquely human types of images and symbols, and have uniquely human cognitions and so on, and at first they have a form that [inaudible 12:21] primary process, and that generally we think of it today as word magic or a magical worldview, and that's what Gebser called it, the magical worldview. So that, because it's just starting to differentiate itself from the environment, it doesn't clearly distinguish between subject and object, and so the image of a thing is often confused with the thing itself. So if you just make an image of a thing, like if I make a doll of a person, and then stick a pin in the doll, it'll hurt the actual person.

Marc Voodoo.

Ken If I do a rain dance, it will force nature to rain. The ghost dance was supposed to force white men's bullets to bounce off of the natives.

Marc It didn't quite work.

Ken It didn't work. They did that right before Wounded Knee, and disastrously it didn't work. So at some point humans learned that magic didn't work, and they replaced the belief that they themselves could do magic with a belief that supernatural beings could do magic, and that moved into the mythic era. Now, in all these cases there's a movement forward, and you can see it, and each stage builds upon the previous one, each stage transcends and includes, and so on. So that would mean that humans were going just like technology. They're getting better and better and better and better.

The problem is each of those stages remains as a stage in individual development as well. So everybody born today is born in the archaic stage, same stage as 500,000 years ago, same needs, same physiology, same drives, and then that tends to dominate for the first year or so, and then for the next two or three years humans are in a magical stage, the same cognition that we had 200,000 years ago, 100,000 years ago when humans were actually going through the magic stage. And then humans move through a mythic

stage, and then through a rational stage, and the problem is humans can stop growing at any one of those stages.

Marc Arrested development for humans, and then for whole societies.

Ken Exactly, and certainly whole subsections in societies, and criminal gangs, and street gangs, and Mafioso types and La Cosa Nostra, all of that, and then including of course even entire nations today in some cases have leaders that are power, magic, mythic, red altitude, monsters basically, whether it's Saddam Hussein or any of the fascist military warlords that had so many struggling to develop nations.

So humans, even though their leading edge is getting better and better and better, the leading edge of human development right now is in something called second tier or integral or holistic stages, and those are astonishing, those are the first stages in all of history that actually think that all the previous stages are important, where all the previous stages themselves think that their truths are the only truths in the world, and everybody else is idiotic. And so with one of those stages always governing human history, humans had one year of peace for every 13 years of war, because those stages don't get along.

Well, now the leading edge is the point where about five percent of the population is actually at these holistic or integral or second tier levels. That's never happened before. So that's going forward. The problem is the mass of humanity isn't. So about 70 percent of the world's population is still at ethnocentric or mythic or fundamentalist or Nazi or lower levels of development, about 70 percent. If you're just looking at overall development moving from egocentric where I identify with myself, to ethnocentric where I identify with a group, to worldcentric where I identify with all groups or all humans, regardless of race, color, sex or creed, to cosmocentric where I identify with all sentient beings, indeed all reality, so if you look at that, that's an expansion of identity.

The leading edge is always getting bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger, just like the leading edge of technological knowledge is, but the problem, again, with humans is that it all remains part of a stage progression that we have to go through, whereas our technology does not. It's always just from the leading edge. If humans were built like technology, we'd all be at integral right now, and there would be no such thing as war, terrorism would be unheard of, but we're clearly nowhere near that, and with 70 percent of the population at ethnocentric it means fundamentalist or fascist or some sort of totalitarian control, or some sort of fundamentalist mythic jihad belief, and we are continuing to put out humans that were for various reasons not getting much past those ethnocentric levels.

So if you look at any hotspot in the world today, whether it's the Middle East, whether it's Israel and Palestine, whether it's the Arab countries, whether it's India and Pakistan, it's an ethnocentric battle, and it's being fought to the death.

Marc Or a battle between, you know, one side's ethnocentric, like, for example, in Israel you've got a side where you've got basically a democratic pluralistic country battling countries that are all essentially ethnocentric in other forms, and non-pluralistic, and non-democratic, but basically it's those forces. Let me jump in for a second here, Mega-K, and just kind of see where we are.

So essentially the huge fallacy, which is a shocking fallacy, in the technological vision of the world, which is an important vision, this projected singularity utopia is that in one standard it ignores interiors, it ignores structuralism, the interior of consciousness, and to the extent that it does pay attention to interiors, it usually does it with a passing sentence which says, "Human beings are evolving," so they'll kind of quote Pinker or something like that and say, "Levels of violence are going down," which is all well and good. We'll talk about that soon. There is a kind of teleological movement. There is a kind of unfolding.

Nonetheless, what's happening is the unfolding in terms of the interiors is happening at the leading edge, and the leading edge actually is, precisely like technology, building on the previous developments. Because of course, as you pointed out, that's precisely the nature of this kind of Gravesian second tier level, that it actually acknowledges the value of all the previous levels. However – and this is the big 'however' – the big 'however' is not everyone's climbed the ladder.

Ken Exactly.

Marc That is to say there's a huge amount of arrested development, and that arrested development on the interiors of culture is the prism through which all of technology is filtered a.k.a. a rogue terrorist bomb, a.k.a. a drug cartel or a sexual slavery cartel using very, very sophisticated technology for its own purposes.

Ken Absolutely.

Marc This ignoring of interiors is hugely, hugely problematic, and we actually can't really engage – which is what you're suggesting – in a kind of successful culture. Culture can't be successful as long as culture ignores interiors.

Ken Absolutely. It makes no sense at all. If you look at the modern world, for example, one of the reasons, when modernity first came into existence, which was the Western Enlightenment, there were a couple of things that marked it in particular. One was the move from ethnocentric ideals to universal or worldcentric ideals, and so there was the whole discussion of the universal rights of men and women, and it was no longer you had rights if you were a member of the chosen group, or you had rights if you were a Catholic, or you had rights if you were Jewish or something like that. It was you had rights if you were a human being, which was a radically new concept. Nobody had ever considered what all humans have in common, regardless of race, color, sex or creed.

So that was new. Universal notions were new. And that was coming from the emergence of the first worldcentric universal level of development, which was an orange, rational, formal operational, the age of reason, and so on. So all of that was important, but they made the typical mistake in regard to their own development that the techno-optimists make about technological development. They just looked at the leading edge. And so there were all sorts of predictions. The most common one was religion as we know it will disappear, and by that they meant, of course, mythic religion, and they thought it would disappear because they used to believe in their mythic beliefs, but now they had reason, and they had science, and they were making actual progress, and making real discoveries, and so on.

And, of course, what did not happen is religion did not go away. And, not only that, also it wasn't progress in terms of peace either, because then all of a sudden you had things like the Nazis. You had atomic bombs. And in all these cases what you're getting is advanced technology in the hands of ethnocentric morals, which is what the Nazis were, deeply ethnocentric, but you can only kill so many people with a bow and arrow. It's quite different using gas chambers.

Marc Totally right. Just to be fair, Nazis are worse than ethnocentric, just to be fair. You can have people who are ethnocentric who are not Nazis. That's the ultimate kind of distortion of ethnocentrism, but, yeah, totally with you on the point.

Ken And basically all of the sort of modern predictions didn't come true, because nobody was taking into account that everybody's born at square one, and everybody has to move through this whole spiral of development, and people can stop at any level, and in fact they do, and a great number of them stop before worldcentric or universal. Robert Kegan in "In Over Our Heads" estimates that even in America three out of five people are not yet developed to the modern level. That means three out of five people in this country are in over their heads, because we live in a modern world, but they don't have the cognitive capacity to understand it, so they're not. And that's 60 percent of America, so that it's 70 percent of the world is not surprising.

Marc It's shocking.

Ken It is shocking. So that is a whole other dimension that in itself has to be put front and center, because what good is it if the Nazis have the singularity, number one. Then you can also look at within that human dimension, humans take up various approaches to other dimensions. So there's the human approach to markets, which is studied in economics, and there's the human approach to nature, which is studied in ecology, and typically these two have produced very different models and very different attitudes in regard to the future.

The economic model traditionally was generally quite optimistic, and the ecological model in general was quite pessimistic, and the reason is that ecological systems take thousands and thousands and thousands of years to develop, they're fairly fragile, which to an ecologist means anything different from complete wilderness, and they

have a very romantic view of what that actually means, but, nonetheless, human intervention in ecological systems can only hurt them. So it has to be done with a certain type of care, and certainly if you spot something like damage that hothouse gases are causing then of course you refrain from that, but in order to make that happen of course you have to get through the human condition, which everybody's born at square one, and the last thing people are is acting in rational self-interest. Nobody's ever rational, and very few people even know what their self-interest is.

So it is problematic, but those two different approaches between the economic approach, which tended to be optimistic because the market is very inventive, and historically whenever the market was presented with a problem it generally found some sort of solution. So there was a very well-known bet between Paul Ehrlich and a well-known economist, and it was known in those circles simply as 'the bet' because it was a big deal, and it went on for a decade.

And the bet was that the price of the 10 most precious and most expensive rare metals would go up, which Paul Ehrlich, the ecologist, predicted, or the price would go down, which the economist predicted, because the economist said the market would find alternatives for these if their price continues to stay high. And Ehrlich is coming from the ecological view that things only get worse, so that's going to have to be true for the price of those precious metals as well. And, of course, the price of all 10 of them went down significantly, so the economist won.

Now, what's happened in the meantime is that we've developed something that is a hybrid mixture of the leading edges of human development, and the leading edges of technological development, and the leading edges of financial development, and all of the intermediate and lower levels of the human dimensions, and it's called globalization. So what globalization has come to mean is that even 20, 30 or 40 years ago, if a nation had a problem it could take certain steps itself, on its own, that would ameliorate or even cure the problem. Now virtually every major problem that humanity faces, taking any one nation doing anything won't have an impact on it at all, because the problem is now global, it's transnational, it involves the entire planet, and if we're going to change it, virtually every nation on the face of the planet has to change.

Global warming is a typical example, but it's not the only thing that's now global. Finances are now global. Markets are now global. Starvation is now global. Epidemics now go global. HIV became a global epidemic. And terrorism is now global. And anything that any one or two or five or 20 nations does can't deal with these problems, and that's why this is part of a long, long movement towards some sort of world federation, but in the meantime it's introduced into even disciplines like economics, which almost always can be counted on to be optimistic, it's introduced a pessimistic strand into even those, and the reason is that because nobody's in charge of these global systems they're open to forces that allow them to collapse in really ugly ways or to be taken over by really lowlife people.

So trafficking is now just exploding. Trafficking means basically human slavery. And it has exploded because high tech makes it possible to do all of these things now, and both pull it off, get around authorities, avoid authorities, and concentrate and make your means of human theft extremely efficient and effective, because you've got iPhones and computers and laptops and everything else in the world, and the Internet that allows you to move information and goods, including humans, in an extremely effective fashion. So there are millions of human beings that are now in slavery today even though slavery has been outlawed by every major industrial rational nation since the mid-1800s.

Marc Yeah. There are more slaves in the world than there actually ever were, about 17 million slaves in the world today, sexual and labor slaves.

Ken It's unbelievable.

Marc Yeah, it's astounding.

Ken Yeah, it's unbelievable.

Marc And people assume, especially Americans, they kind of grow up under the assumption that, oh, that was the Emancipation Proclamation, and then we won the war, and there's literally not an awareness that slavery actually dominates the landscape of the world today.

Ken Exactly, and the same thing in drug trafficking, etc. It's going up, and it's going up, and it's going up. And that's because the leading edge of technology has gone forward, while every human being is born at square one, and so we have people at levels that are referred to as power driven, power over, opportunistic, nasty names that apply to particularly the early levels of development that are egocentric and ethnocentric. And they not only don't see worldcentric realities, but they don't believe they're there.

So, most people that don't believe in global warming do so because they can't conceive of worldcentric realities, so they don't believe they exist. They're at ethnocentric levels of development. So it's not that they are all completely aware of all of the data on global warming, and have considered it rationally, and decided that they don't believe it. It's that they don't understand it, and so they just don't believe it's real, and so they just deny it's even there, and then they usually go on and go to their Bible worship group or whatever their ethnocentric little selves are about, and that's our problem.

And so as people look at the approaches to the future, and how to handle humanity's problems and so on, all they look at are these right hand dimensions. So they either look at just the technology alone and see things getting better and better, or they look at the actual realities of where technology is being used without understanding the interiors that are doing that. What they do see is bad things happening in the exteriors, so they see global warming or they see human trafficking or drug trafficking or arms trade, and so on, and so all they try to do of course, particularly liberals, is outlaw all of

it. So if we just had laws against all of that, gun control and all that stuff, then it would all go away, and of course almost none of it would, because the problems aren't out there, they're in here, they're interior problems.

And without putting those on the table and looking at the interior dimensions of these exterior correlates, we have no chance whatsoever of understanding them or dealing with them or addressing them in any effective way at all. So they just continue to be the main schools of techno-optimistic or ecologically pessimistic, and then economically either optimistic or pessimistic, and none of them are taking into account the most important dimensions of all, which are the interior human dimensions, the upper left and lower left, interiors of individuals, and interiors of collectives.

And until we do that then it's just as if we are in a sense encouraging the lowest common denominator of interiors, because we're not rewarding higher interiors, and we're not actually punishing lower interiors, or working with them, or trying to develop them, or trying to educate.

Marc No, it's fantastic. The truth is that with your usual brilliance – and usual brilliance, that's such a bad phrase, because then everyone kind of expects it, you've got to live up to it every time, which is a hard thing to do – but you've given this very, very beautiful and elegant – truth is beauty and beauty is truth in our 'Grecian Urn' – view of actually what's happening, and the relationship to interiors and exteriors, and how the techno-optimists, the environmental groups, and the economic pessimists kind of play together.

So let's go one last step, Ken, and let me try and outline the key question that I want to try and put on the table here. Whenever you have an epoch, you have an era, every era has its essential discernment, and then it has its own technology, its own methodology, its own practice to fulfill the value that it's discerned. So if we would look, for example, in very, very, very rough terms at, let's say, the Axial traditions, which is well into premodernity, but let's start there, because we've got to start someplace, so they have the sense of, well, you've got to wake up. You've got to wake up in one way or the other. Some of them talk about a second-person relationship to Source, others talk about a more first-person relationship, but there are technologies for waking up, and it might be a meditative technology, it might be a second-person prayer technology, but there are very sophisticated technologies that are developed to fulfill the goal of the premodern discernment, which emerges from the Axial religions and onwards.

Then you move forward and you get, let's say, from the premodern to the modern period. So, again, you have this discernment, and it's a discernment about order, that the world is ordered, the world has patterns, it's not random, it's not capricious, we can know those orders and we can discern them. Newton becomes a kind of revealer of the implicit Divine order in the cosmos, Newton in his virtually unimaginable brilliance. And there's a method, and the method is you can discern truth, and it's called the scientific method. You can use the eye of the senses and the eye of the mind to discern truth. We've got a method. We have our scientific method.

Then we move to postmodernity, and we have, oh, wow, one second, we forget about contexts. One of my favorite little essays of yours, your short essays – and thank god, Ken, you occasionally write essays, we appreciate that – is in “Marriage of Sense and Soul” where you’ve got a great five-page essay just on deconstruction. I think it’s one of maybe the best things I’ve seen, just a five-page gorgeous essay on deconstruction, but basically we’ve got this world which is, oh my god, we thought we kind of knew the essential nature of reality, because we were perceiving it through our technologies of waking up, and we actually didn’t realize that they’re all filtered through cultural prisms, and those cultural prisms matter.

So, for example, what we thought was absolute revelation might have actually just been culture. We begin to have to discern between surface structures and depth structures. And what was the method? The method was deconstruction. It was actually in some sense a deconstructive method. Let’s identify the power contexts, let’s identify the social contexts, let’s identify the cultural contexts that actually are infusing. And it liberated it an enormous amount, and each one of these eras had a great gift, it had a method, and each one had their pathologies and shadows.

So now we’re moving to this new era. Let’s roughly term it, as we have before, the Integral era or the evolutionary Integral era, and of course evolutionary and Integral actually mean the same thing, but what the heck, we’ll call it the evolutionary Integral era. There’s this new evolutionary Integral kind of worldview, and it’s all about the realization of development. It’s about the realization that it’s all evolving. That’s the discernment. The discernment is evolutionary. The discernment is there are patterns that connect. The discernment is that there is a grand narrative. It’s post-deconstruction. It’s a reconstructive project. The grand narrative comes back online.

So let me just take a stab then I’m going to turn it over to you, just because if my mother listens to the dialogue and I don’t say anything she’s going to be very upset, Ken. So let me just take a stab at it, and then I’ll turn it over to you, but what’s the method of this new period? And I would venture to suggest that there’s in a certain sense two methods of this new period.

One method is the method which you’ve deployed so gorgeously, and we might call it the method of linking, the method of meta theory, the method of articulating a new grand narrative, a new vision of Bateson’s famous phrase that Huston Smith borrowed, the patterns that connect, in other words, actually linking together the depth structures of different systems, and reconstructing the narrative. So the method is a reconstructive method, number one, as opposed to a deconstructive method. So that’s the first core cultural method which is core to the Integral enterprise.

And then there’s a second method, which is in some sense we might call it the method of transformation, or we’ve called it in the Integral world – and it’s kind of the theme of this conference, one of the three themes – growing up. In other words, growing up is a method. It’s to grow up is to transform, to transform to higher and higher levels of consciousness. And if I can introduce the phrase with your permission, we might want

to talk about the democratization of transformation. Transformation used to only take place in the elite. Basically people were born where they were born, and never changed, which is part of how we got in this situation which you were describing earlier of 70 percent of the world at an ethnocentric level. Why? Because they were born into it. Transformation actually doesn't happen. So actually the methodology of growing up, what catalyzes that methodology of growing up transformation is actually a very, very significant and important question.

So our methodologies are reconstruction and transformation. Then we need methodologies for accomplishing reconstruction, which is how do you construct meta-theories? How do you construct meta-narratives? How do you discern between surface and depth structures? That's one arena, but I actually want to focus and ask you about the second one, which is evolution equals transformation. Transformation is happening at all levels of reality, including us, meaning we do have the ability to evolve, we do have the ability to evolve interiors, and that's actually the optimistic good news. The good news is that interiors can be transformed, and that we can actually move towards an era of the democratization of transformation.

Then the question becomes, okay, wow, so that's exciting, so we all can grow up, and growing up's not about being a grown up, it's about growing up to higher and higher structure stages of consciousness, and to deeper and deeper levels of psychological maturity. Then the question becomes, okay, so what would the method be? What's the methodology for growing up? How do we actually catalyze growing up? Because we have all these wake up technologies, but because development was unknown obviously there are not a lot of obvious grow up technologies. We've talked about this offline, but it's a really, really important and critical question. What's the method of transformation to actually catalyze the emergence of this evolutionary Integral worldview? Is that a fair question?

Ken Sure. And there are a lot of ways to talk about that, but one of the things that I would emphasize is anything that could sort of go under the general name of Integral pluralism. And the reason for those two terms is they're in a sense drawn together, the two strands that you previously mentioned, but pluralism is particularly important, because what it means is that for the first time we've actually gotten away from the notion that one-size-fits-all will take care of it. So if we look at human intelligence, for example, it used to be there was only one human intelligence, it was generally called cognitive, and there was only one test you needed to determine it, and that was an I.Q. test. Now we have at least 8-12 multiple intelligences, and people that weren't that smart in cognitive intelligence could be absolute geniuses in one of the others. So there's a pluralism there.

There's a pluralism in terms of levels of development obviously. It was generally taken, well, first of all, very few people understood that there were levels of development, and so what they tended to do is interpret the world from their level and assume that that was the one correct way to do it, that they were seeing the world, the one pre-given real

world in the only way it could be seen, and all the people who were out there disagreeing with them were confused, wrong, infantile, loopy or something.

And we find that, well, no, wait, there's actually an enormous number of different levels of development, and every level creates a different world. You actually see a different world from those levels. So we're not only talking about levels of consciousness. We're talking about world spaces, actual worlds. Different worlds exist. There's a red world. There's an amber world. There's an orange world. There's a green world. And these are extremely different worlds, and they do not get together well at all, at least until you get to second tier. So that's another pluralism.

Of course we have states, and we don't have a good understanding of those. And, particularly in the West, we don't even understand waking up, which is moving from the lowest, narrowest, most confused and partial and broken state available, generally called ego, to the great liberation, the highest state, the state of the unity of the individual with the supreme reality, what the Sufis call the Supreme Identity, generally known as enlightenment, awakening, metamorphosis, etc, *moksha*. We don't have that. The West lost that in the first couple of centuries post A.D. and most of the forms of religion in the West reverted to being actually a low level of growing up, reverted to a mythic literal level of spiritual intelligence, which was just disastrous.

So spirituality has dropped out of the books in a lot of ways, even though paradoxically the higher levels of development all have spiritual aspects to them. So we're going from this era where originally in human beings every culture worldwide, God was everywhere, not a single culture denied the existence of spirit or spirits or god or goddess or something, and every single culture believed in that, that just God was everywhere, and then we hit modernity, and all of a sudden God is nowhere, literally no educated, enlightened, rational human being believes in God. And, as Immanuel Kant said, you can tell it's modernity, because if you go in and find somebody praying, they'll be embarrassed. So all of a sudden God is nowhere.

And now we're getting to the point where these higher stages into third tier are transpersonal stages, so we go from pre-personal to personal or transpersonal, or pre-rational to rational or transrational. So all of a sudden God is everywhere, and not just as a state that you can only discover if you voluntarily take up a practice, but as a stage that's given to all human beings just for being human beings and continuing to grow. They will grow into third tier spiritual realities. All of a sudden God's going to be everywhere again, but it's going to be a difficult transition, because all of the terms for God apply to pre-rational magic and mythic things, which is not what transrational third tier is like at all. So that's going to be interesting, but we're coming on that, but that's another pluralism that we're facing is with states.

So the whole AQAL model has terms like Integral methodological pluralism, and it's tying those together, because we're not just saying that these pluralisms are a mere eclecticism. What are we just supposed to do, throw everything together, and all of them are right, and you can't really make any judgments between them at all, and so on,

so we just throw everything on the table, and that big grab bag is now how we get at reality? Because that's just not true, and you can relate the different approaches, even though at a certain fundamental level everybody's right, but some people are more right than others.

One of the ways you relate that is the way Hegel did. He said every stage is adequate; every higher stage is more adequate. And we see the same thing with human development: every stage is true; every higher stage is more true. So we see this expansion going on throughout the various levels of human development. Each one becomes more loving, more caring, wider identity, more differentiated and integrated, more unified, more whole, etc, and we have tons of empirical evidence on those expansions.

So it's an Integral pluralism. There's an actual framework. Reality actually hangs together in a unified and integrated way, and that is something that's central to this dawning era. That's why it's sometimes indeed called an Integral or integrative level. All the pioneering developmentalists, the highest level that they would find, many of them would often give it a name like Integral or integrated or integrative, because it was displaying exactly that, it was the most unified, most whole, most integrated level that they had seen, and so they just called it the Integral level, from Gebser to Loevinger.

So all of that's true. So Integral indicates the integrated, unified, holistic, if you will, nature of the essential worldview that we're coming on, and the worldview itself is marked by this extraordinary pluralism in ways that are just more than almost any culture really has taken into account. If we just really took into account multiple lines and multiple levels and multiple states, we would have an unrecognizable culture. Things would be so different. It would be just unbelievable. We can hardly even get them to recognize the four quadrants, which are the most fundamental distinctions that a universe makes in order to get going in the first place.

So, all of those are central, all of those are essential, and all of those are slowly starting to come online. We're starting to become aware of them. Of course, they're already there. They're already operating, and they're slamming into us whether we know it or not. Mostly we don't know it, and that's the problem. So making those conscious is what we have to rely on at least in the beginning as this thing gets going on the more comprehensive maps that we make of that territory.

So people that are at that territory, and are looking at it and trying to interpret it for us, and are making maps of it and so on, are just as important as the early mapmakers that were making maps of the New World for all of the explorers that were coming over. And the maps, you know, Florida is the size of Greenland, it's all that kind of thing, but they were the first attempts, and that's what our maps of Integral are like, but we're trying, and we at least know it's there. We at least know the territory is there. So that's what makes that different.

Marc That's fantastic. So really, as we kind of close this dialogue – what a fantastic, fantastic dialogue – I'm going to try and capitulate and extract one core methodological dimension, which is of course exactly what you've said for the last six or seven minutes, but I want to just crystallize it. So the methodology is mapping. The methodology is pointing towards. The methodology is actually creating a strange attractor, and the way you create a strange attractor is by identifying what's already there.

So, for example, often when you hear a new word – perspicacity – or whatever it happens to be, you start noticing it in language a lot, although that might not apply to perspicacity, I don't notice that one too often, but often if you learn a new word you start to hear that new word everywhere. So the truth is the new word was always there, but you start noticing it because the nature of consciousness is that it's very, very fleeting and ephemeral. You have a great thought. If you don't write it down it's gone. So essentially what happens is by pointing towards new levels of consciousness, higher levels of consciousness, second tier levels of consciousness, what you essentially do is you activate those levels of consciousness, which are already latent in many people, but often they say, "Oh, that was a second tier moment." And then that heightens, it deepens, it creates a deeper identity with that, and it brings that actual level of consciousness online. And that's very, very powerful.

I've found often, Ken, in the last decade or so, since we've been talking, I'd say in the last decade I started teaching development. I want to actually bow to you, because, again, it's the same kind of thing. I was aware of development, but in your talking about it I became much more aware of it. I took it more seriously. It was just a piece of it. So I started teaching development, and started creating all sorts of ways of teaching it, and noticing it within Hebrew Kabbalistic sources. Again, it was there, I hadn't quite noticed it. And what I began to realize empirically is that in the same way that classical enlightenment teaching that I would do would activate both in myself – let's start there, right, it's a good reason to teach – just in yourself it activates your enlightened consciousness, and it gives a transmission of an outrageous enlightened consciousness to people listening, teaching development, actually the teaching itself, painting a vision of levels of consciousness, of structure stages of consciousness actually activates in some sense those structure stages.

Ken Yes.

Marc So actually painting the Integral model is – and I think you have a beautiful word for it – psychoactive.

Ken Right.

Marc It actually awakens the model in the same way, that articulating a second tier consciousness, an Integral vision of success. At this conference, at this summit that we're going to be at in a couple of weeks, which is happening October 30, 2014 – and whether you're listening to this dialogue after the summit or before – what we've done

at the summit is actually articulate a new Integral vision of success, and by articulating it, it actually becomes alive in us, it becomes alive in culture. And so it's not the old arid mapmaker. It's actually the erotic mapmaker. It's actually Eros at play. Integral is Eros at play, activating latent dimensions and carving new Kosmic grooves that are coming online, attracted by this new expression of Kosmic gorgeousness, higher development, evolutionary good, true and beautiful, coming online.

Ken Yeah, absolutely.

Marc That's awesome.

Ken Absolutely! It's so common, you hear the analogy that Eskimos have 28 words for snow, and it's funny, because usually the people that say that, for some reason, have sort of an anti-intellectual bias, but they're showing just the opposite. The more names you have for something is because the more you know it, the better you know it, so you should have more names. More names is not bad. We only have two names for snow, or even one, but Eskimos know it much, much better, and so they have 28 names for it. Zen masters had 28 names for emptiness. We don't have any. So it's not there. And of course we don't want to confuse the map with the territory, but if you have a map that doesn't include a particular territory, you're almost never going to go to that territory. You just won't know. You won't know to even look for it. You won't know to go there, even to try. So, indeed, learning, naming...

Marc Yeah, totally! I think that's really what we did in the last decade with Unique Self. In other words, Unique Self is implicit, of course, but then because it hasn't been articulated, so you've got huge schools of non-dual thought that are actually denying it explicitly, and in some sense by articulating it you begin to realize, oh, of course, yeah. And then you begin to be able to identify it.

And, as you said very beautifully, I was actually just looking at it, Ken, this morning, I was looking at our old dialogues that we did in 2012 on Unique Self where we talked about the evolutionary trajectory of Eros, creativity and uniqueness, uniqueness being the creative advance of novelty in which actually Unique Self becomes the strange attractor, which is actually bringing all of reality into existence. And here I'm using Unique Self not as a structure stage of second tier consciousness in the human being. Here I'm double-dipping and using Unique Self as this advance of novelty in which each part in the complexity is more and more unique, bringing it all on board. It's an exciting moment to be alive.

Ken Right, yeah, that part is. And that's something that you can put in the same column with techno-optimism.

Marc Yeah. Say one more sentence on that. Yeah, that's right, the Unique Self side, how do we fill in that Unique Self? How do we actually articulate its interiors?

Ken Right. And how do we articulate an Integral vision? That's part of the exciting point about this whole coming era.

Marc Yeah. Well, I'm beyond delighted to be in it with you. Loving you madly, as always, and Integrally loving you madly, as always.

Ken Yes, sir.

Marc Love's at the center of the whole thing, man. Love you.

Ken Okay, my friend, take care.

Marc Okay.

Ken Bye-bye.