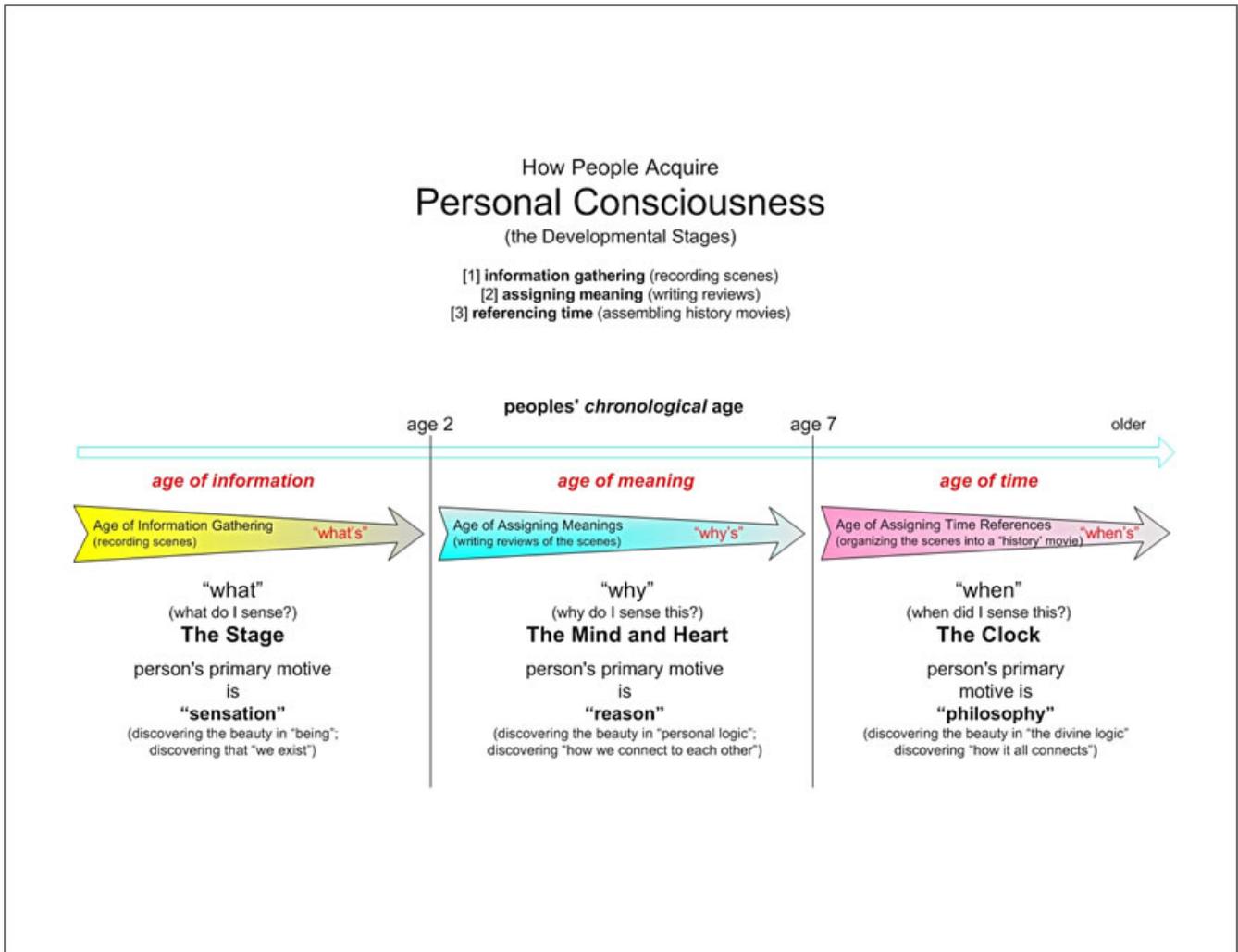


How Personal Consciousness Emerges

the Development, Wounding, and Healing of Personality

First in a series of five articles describing consciousness and how it emerges (emergence.) Topics covered include the development, wounding, and healing of personality. This first article offers an overview of how the three "tools of consciousness" emerge in healthy people.



Introduction to Personal Consciousness

Above, you'll find a diagram in which I have divided human life span into roughly three parts; conception to age two, age two through age seven, and age seven through old age. These three divisions represent the three Ages of Human Consciousness, the three times in peoples' lives during which they acquire a new life experience "tool." Thus, human consciousness develops in three stages; [1] the Age of Information (conception - age 2), [2] the Age of Meaning (ages 2 - 7), and [3] the Age of Time (ages 7 - old age).

Now in order to get a quick sense of what this sequence actually represents, consider, for a moment, how movie producers make movies. Actually, the process they go through has much in common with the way our nature develops, in that if we were to categorize and divide their work, we would find three, very

similar categories of experience.

Thus, we could say, movie producers begin their work by filming scenes (they gather visual information,) then judge the quality of these scenes (they decide what these scenes mean,) and finally, they edit these scenes into a comprehensible, historical time sequence (they assign each scene a historical time reference.)

The end result for movie producers, of course, is that they produce a "movie," while what we produce is a collection of "life events" we see as a life. My point? We humans produce our inner lives similarly to the way movie producers make movies, in that we both use the same sequence of three experiences; we gather information, we assign meaning, and we sort using time.

In a sense, then, we could call these three activities, our life "tools." However, before you think I am suggesting things are really this simple, please know, there is a second sequence of personality development with which the first sequence interacts. More over, these two sequences interact in an infinite variety of ways.

I call this second sequence, the "Layers of Aloneness."

"The Layers of Aloneness"

What is the "Layers of Aloneness?" It is a developmental sequence of ten categories of experience, ten increasingly sophisticated personal view points from which people analyze their lives. Moreover, taken as a whole, they reveal a pattern which underlies all human experience, that we humans use personal "view points" to insulate ourselves from the pain of aloneness.

Taken together then, these ten personal view points represent a rather comprehensive theory of personality. And like the three ages of human consciousness, they, too, have times wherein it is normal for them to develop. Unlike the Ages of Consciousness, though, which function much like movie producer's tool set, each layer in the Layers of Aloneness functions more like the view point of a particular "movie critic," with biases ranging from human interest and relatedness to humanity's over all interests, things like philosophy and spiritual beliefs.

Are we each our own "movie critics?" In a sense, yes we are. And the "critics" for everyone else's movies as well. In fact, without these view points, we would find it hard to function, both in daily life and in the larger scheme of things.

To take these analogies even further, we could call the *Three Ages of Human Consciousness*, the camera, the daily room, and the editing theater, and we could call the *Layers of Aloneness* the producer's view points, biases, and attitudes used to guide the use of these three sets of tools. Hence, taking this metaphor even further, we could say, we humans each use the *tools of consciousness* in a *personal way* to create *our own life movies*.

Why These New Theories?

Metaphors aside, at this point, let me just say, I am quite aware there have been many theories as to what consciousness is and how personality develops. So why posit two new theories?

For one thing and I can't repeat this point enough, these two theories *visually represent what they posit*. This means we can use these two theories to *visually represent* everything from child development to

being wounded and healing.

What's the big deal?

For now, all I'll say is this: If you can able these two theories and what they represent, then you will have tools you never thought possible, every thing from like how to better connect to your parents and children to how Einstein's Theory of Relativity works.

Of course, this assumes you are willing to do the work necessary to apply what you learn, as, of course, these things, like all good things, take time and work. Even so, think of the possibilities of what I've just implied.

I have just implied that if you can understand these two theories *and* how they interact, *and* if you can apply what you learn to the difficulties in your life, then you will see choices emerge you've never thought possible, everything from new ways to treat things like learning disabilities and learning in general, to better treatments for people with addictions including knowing much of what puts them at risk. Or if it's weight loss which stumps you and if you focus what you learn on this part of life, you'll gain new insights into peoples' problems with weight loss *and* gain, as well as new ways to look at diet and fitness in general. Even peoples' difficulties with relationships and with letting go will seem more understandable if you apply what you learn to these difficult areas.

Sound impossible? Admittedly, I present a rather grand picture. Even so, reconsider what I've just said. I did not say you would have the answers to all these problems. I said you would understand these problems in ways never seen before. More so, if you use what you discover, you will then have starting points from which to search for answers, not somebody else's answers but rather your own personal answers.

So what I've offered is visual starting points from which you can better manage your life. Others have offers these things before. So what makes these things different?

One thing. The absence of blame.

Thus, nothing here blames anyone for their suffering, not directly, nor indirectly. And because these things create blameless visions, I sometimes refer to these tools as "God's geometry." Thus, if I use the movie metaphor once more, once you've gained the ability to see how "movies are made," you'll be able to enjoy the behind the scenes view of life I sometimes imagine our Creator sees; blameless visions in which all people are innocent yet at the same time, accountable.

Getting back to my original point, now, I have said these two theories, like all the theories on this site, are visual. Why visual? Because vision is our first tool of consciousness, the one we all arrive with, even if we are born blind. (More on this "blind vision" later.) Further, vision is our primary tools from the beginning to about age two. In fact, even Aristotle referred to this same bias in the opening paragraph of his book, "The Metaphysics," which he began by saying, "All men love the senses, ... especially sight."

Framed once more as the movie metaphor, our built-in bias as human beings is to begin learning processes by "filming scenes." This holds true even for those who would say they are not "visual learners" and even for those born blind. Why? Because it is simply the way human consciousness is designed

whether you are good at this process or not. Thus, we all begin learning by collecting pictures, albeit some more analogous to physical reality than others, e.g. the nonlinear visions of the blind.

This, then, this is where we will begin as well; with exploring the first of the three Ages of Consciousness represented in the diagram above; the "Age of Information."

The Age of Information

Have you ever watched a young baby closely? If so, you know. Babies look intently at each and every thing they focus on. Just as quickly, then, babies become distracted and move on to the next, intensely fascinating thing.

During this age then, the first two years of life, babies are literally recording everything they see. How? They literally live in the same state stage hypnotists put people into; which is to say, they live in a trance state.

What this means for babies is, they are constantly wide-eyed and filming everything they see. Further, they explore everything they see with every sense they have, from vision and sound to intuition and taste. This is why young babies taste everything they touch. And listen to what these things sound like when shaken and dropped. And smell what these things smell like even when they smell "bad" to us.

This is pretty intense, if you think about it. Filming with all six senses, 24 / 7.

Now let me ask you something. What do you think makes them decide which things to film? The answer? The beauty in what they see. More so, they see this beauty in everything they look at, from how a fan turns to how a tree leaf falls.

The down side, of course, is that they literally do not know where to look next; thus, their, disjointed segues between scenes. They literally feel afraid to miss the next beautiful thing.

Please note, this tendency toward disjointed segues could literally be called, "driven to distraction." In fact, the word "tendency" is actually too mild a word. It's more like being driven to distraction is their way of life for the first tow years they're alive. And in truth, this is very accurate.

Now consider their inner lives and what this means.

The Inner Life of Babies

Babies spend each and every moment, including the moments in which they dream, filming endless quantities of scenes of what they see, hear, taste, touch, smell, and intuit. Further, they do this without a clue as to what they will do with these scenes later. Nor do they care, not even whether they will ever even use these scenes. Why? Because babies have no sense of what "later" means. In fact, they have no sense of time whatsoever. Except of course for the here and now. Nor does this matter to them. They simply do what interests them in the here and now and complain when they can not.

Not sure I'm right about babies being like this? Think about what babies are they like if you do try to interrupt their "movie making?" Not too happy, to say the least. In fact, they can get downright grumpy and mad at you if you interrupt one of their better moments. Unless, of course, you redirect them toward something which they find equally interesting.

Now consider what is going through babies heads during all this filming.

For one thing, they have no words yet, so it isn't words. Nor do they have moral and political values yet, so they aren't judging what they see morally or other wise. Nor do they care how people relate, and to be honest, they have yet to even know you are there. Except as a care giver.

No, to be honest, the only thing babies judge is whether there is beauty in things. And if there is, they film it.

Now consider what babies have collected during this nonverbal period, up to about age two. They have collected an enormous amount of short pieces of film. More so, all of these short films have been assigned no meaning other then the babies personal sense that there is some aesthetic or sensual, intrinsic beauty.

These eyes are the eyes of the artist. And the soul of the mystical poet.

Isn't it amazing we each live through this stage.

Unfortunately, what happens to us in the next life stage alters these perceptions so significantly that we pretty much lose all sense of every having lived this way. At least most of us do. And the few that don't? They literally become the poets and artists and musicians in our world.

Can you begin to see why we so undervalue these people? We love seeing though their eyes but see them as adult-aged babies; immature and irresponsible.

Sadly we don't really understand what we see in them.

Are they all artists and musicians? Hardly. Most become what some now call, ADD. No surprise some say these people are "driven to distraction."

And the prescription "speed" they give these people?

Simply a way to speed up their ability to keep up with distractions. Nothing more.

Back to babies though.

So what is a babies primary interest? Filming scenes.

And what makes them constantly film what they see?

Because they love filming what they see beauty in. More so, they love it without end, whether tired or rested.

In a sense, then, we could say this is what babies do, their main occupation.

Imagine this? Imagine loving your work this much?

In many ways, I do. Why? Because my primary occupation is teaching Emergence as a Therapy, and the

primary tool of emergence is working with scenes people have and have not filmed.

This and the fact that my inner life in many ways resembles the inner lives of the babies I've just described, the difference being, while my primary language (and their only language) is filmed scenes, my second language is words and logic. This makes me somewhat bilingual and an especially good translator between the world of visual beings and the world of logical beings. In other words, were I now six years old, I, like Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein, would probably be diagnosed ADD. Or as having Asperger's Syndrome. Or would be given some other medically judgmental label for having an inner bias toward the language of the first two years of life; visual information. This bias toward the visual is the conscious state I call, the First Age of Consciousness.

The Age of Meaning

Somewhere around two years old, babies begin to transition from the Age of Information into the second stage of consciousness, the Age of Meaning. This is the age in which babies begin to assign verbal captions to the things they film. No coincidence, children usually begin to talk around this age.

So is "talking," "assigning meaning?"

Not exactly. None the less, talking is how we begin this process, that of assigning meanings to the visual information we have spent two years collecting.

This is not to say most children do not repeat "word" sounds prior to this age. Usually, they do. None the less, imitating word sounds is not the same thing as making conscious connections between what you see and what you call what you see.

This later activity; connecting word sounds to what you see, hear, smell, taste, touch and intuit; is the activity I call, "captioning." And "captioning"; meaning, learning to attach word sounds to what you see; heralds the onset of the second age of consciousness; the Age of Meaning.

What is the Person Actually Becoming Conscious Of?

What exactly is happening here?

For one thing, babies become acutely aware that if they respond with the right sound, they get love or at least some form of positive attention. And lest you think this is a great thing, consider the baby's dilemma.

On the one hand, you love your current career; filming short movie scenes, each about something you find beautiful. On the other hand, if you stop filming and respond with the correct word sound or sounds, you love in the form of accolades for speaking.

Which would you choose?

If you are normal, meaning, if you fully transitioned into this second age of consciousness, then you actually made this choice in and around your third year of life. However, if you, like me, did not make this transition, for whatever reasons, then this choice is one you feel constantly asked to make and feel constantly stumped by.

How many adults live in this dilemma? A whole heck of a lot of people. More than has ever been

imagined, in fact. What do you think ADD really is. A medical problem? A processing deficit?

Please!

The truth is, we label more people ADD than ever before. So are we all getting worse? Not really. It is us getting better at parenting our children during the first year two years of their lives.

Babies love this time more now. And so do we. For them, though, it makes it harder to transition to a world wherein they feel totally a part of things to a world wherein they are one step removed from all the literal movies in which they were used to staring.

So is it a bad thing that most people transition into the second Age of Consciousness, the age of meaning?

No, not at all. The only thing failing is we make is, we fail to see the value in people whose primary language does not make this transition except casually. Thus, the musicians and artists and mystical poets of our world get looked down on. Except, of course, if they succeed in getting paid well for what they do.

The greatest irony here, too, is that we live in an age we call the "Information Age." Unfortunately, this "information" is more the cold, hard factual variety and not the living inner visions of our first two years of life.

Criticisms aside, the good news is, we can correct these failings. We can correct them by educating our children's' educators and their medical advisors and their therapists and guides. And then by following the process through from beginning to end with a whole lot of loving kindness and patience.

Now, if you think things are hard for those who do not transition into the second age of consciousness, you can not even imagine how difficult things are for those who fail to transition into the third stage of consciousness. And this is where we will explore next, the Third Age of Consciousness; the Age of Time.

The Age of Time: "Parroted Reason" Vs "Personal Reason"

Children generally learn to tell time somewhere around age seven. Back when I was seven, the Catholic Church began calling this age (seven), the "age of reason." Interestingly enough, if you were to examine their sense of the word, "reason," you would realize their references to "reason" had more to do with acquiring what I call, a "parroted" sense of "good" and "bad" and "right" and "wrong" than with a genuinely personal sense of "reason." Hence, while children do begin to develop a true sense of reason somewhere around age seven, "good" and "bad" and "right" and "wrong" are not examples of this true sense of reason.

In a way, we could call this first sense of reason, having a sense of the "rules," while we could call the second sense of reason, having a personal wisdom based on learning from one's past.

Children acquire this first sense of reason, then, what I call the "parroted" sense of reason, during the Second Age of Consciousness, between ages two and seven. Thus, while the Catholic Church was right in that people do acquire a genuine sense of reason somewhere around age seven, knowing "good" from "bad" and "knowing "right" from "wrong" in immature sense is something children acquire much earlier than age seven.

Why do I call this first sense of reason, a "parroted" sense of reason? Because when young children who

have not yet acquired an ability to learn from the past respond to the words, "good" and "bad," they are responding to these words simply as labels for reward and punishment, or worse, as the indicators of their personal worth. Worse yet, many people never see past this immature sense of reason and feel lovable or unlovable based largely on these leftovers from early childhood.

Sadly, the worst versions of this leftover sense of reason exist as the legalistic portions of religions and philosophies. Here, "bad" people aren't wounded people but rather people without consciences who deliberately hurt people. Then, too, part of what makes this first sense of reason survive into adulthood is peoples' lack of understanding as to how wounds happen and what wounds actually are.

These two questions aside, though, my point here is, peoples' inability to generalize learning across time is what makes the 2-7 year old's sense of reason what I call, a "parroted" sense of reason.

Am I saying this first sense of reason is flawed or defective? No, not at all. I say this because healthy people eventually evolve this "parroted" sense of reason into a genuinely logical sense of reason.

Thus, as healthy people grow, and as they self examine for flaws in the things they were taught earlier, most realize there are genuinely spiritual and moral reasons beneath the "rules" they were filled with during childhood. However, this sense of reason (obey the rules) becomes genuine only after the second sense of reason (learning from one's past) begins to exist.

Now let's examine this second sense of reason in more detail.

"Time" as a Continuum

As I've said, it is normal for people, at about age seven, to begin to have a sense of time as something which unfolds both forwards and backwards from the present. Learning to "tell time" is what heralds the onset of this age.

Have you ever watched someone acquire this sense of time?

Most people have, although with no training in consciousness, few recognize how profound this change really is.

As for me, I remember teaching a little boy once that time unfolds. His father, going through a painful divorce at the time, had no one to watch his son and so, had brought his son with him to therapy.

His son, about six and a half at the time, did his best to endure what at first must have seemed to be an interminably boring event.

Seeing this boy's discomfort and realizing it had been distracting his father, I decided to try to help.

At first, I simply looked for something I could give the boy to entertain himself. Eventually, though, I ran out of things and settled on my brass desk clock.

What I did was, I showed the boy the clock, a pretty interesting piece of mechanics to be sure. I then showed him how there were two main hands, a long one and a short one. Finally, I placed the clock on the desk right next to him and said, "when the long hand reaches here, you and your dad will get to go home."

Fascinated, I watched as the boy, previously unable to sit still, sat perfectly still. He had become totally immersed in learning how long it would take the longer hand to move. And while I'm sure he was at first largely motivated by the idea of leaving, he quickly forgot this as he continued to studied the clock.

Most telling was, as the session ended and as I moved the clock back onto my desk, he seemed mildly upset. Had I interrupted his study of time? Absolutely.

Now consider the concept present in this story, the idea of "time as a continuum."

Before beginning to see time as unfolding, the boy was restless and bored and unable to sit still. After beginning to see time unfold, he was peaceful and interested and totally immersed in his study of time.

"Restless and bored and unable to sit still." "Peaceful and interested and totally immersed in his study."
Can you see any parallels to these to conditions in your own life?

Grasping the question I've just asked is the key to understanding the Third Age of Consciousness.

Understanding the Third Age of Consciousness

Have you ever paid a bill late? Then you've lost your Third Age of Consciousness sense of time. Pay your bills late a lot? Then you have a wounded (BLocked) sense of how money and bills unfold together over time.

Have you ever been late to an appointment? Here again, if you have, then you've lost your Third Age of Consciousness sense of time. Are you late a lot? Then in all likelihood, you have a wounded sense of how time unfolds.

Some would now disagree, saying they are late with bills but do have sense of how time works. To be honest, they are right. Partially right anyway. Even so, in order for people to manage anything in life, they need more than this "logical" sense of how time works. They also need a "personal" sense of how time works.

Here again, I am referring to the two kinds of "reason," the Second Age of Consciousness "parroted" sense where things must happen in order for them (or the people doing them) to be "good," and the Third Age of Consciousness "personal" sense of reason, where things happen because people choose them based on an ongoing wisdom they acquire through comparing present events to their past.

Are you realizing yet how many of our world's beliefs are based on the "parroted" sense of reason people acquire during their Second Age of Consciousness? I would estimate more than half of what we believe.

Sound impossible?

If so, please give this idea time to bake, pun intended. In other words, please realize that anyone who believes they know what is true based only on rules they already know is literally living as if they are still in the Second Age of Consciousness. Translation. People who are closed to exploring new ideas are living as if they are still two to seven years old, at least with regard to being open to new learning.

Do many people live this way?

Most of us, in fact. I, myself, have spent most of my life this way and only after having a near death experience did I begin to open to the true meaning of time. Not surprisingly, others who have experienced similar events also report similar personal changes, differences which amount to a significant personal wisdom.

Taking this idea a step further, I would guess that the greatest humans to live, people like Buddha, Christ, and Gandhi, may have lived almost exclusively in this Third Age of Consciousness. This opinion aside though, even us normal folk can access such wisdom given we learn to recognize times wherein we lack a Third Age of Consciousness sense of time.

What's Next?

What follows now are four more articles, each describing how these Three Ages of Consciousness affect parts of our lives.

In the first of the articles, I will be describing how these three aspects of human consciousness affect how we get wounded, and in fact, actually create the inner structure of our wounds.

In the next article, I will expand on this idea and reveal how the three aspects of human consciousness affect how we heal and more, how knowing how these aspects affect healing can guide and bring about healing.

In the next article, I will be bringing these ideas down to the more pragmatic level, in that I will explore how a Third Age of Consciousness sense of time can be used to actually heal injury, with some brief examples.

Finally, I will close this series on consciousness by exploring how the Three Ages of Consciousness interact with the Layers of Aloneness, thereby revealing what is surely one of the more comprehensive theories of personality yet posited, and certainly one of the more loving.

As always, should you have any questions, or comments, please feel free to e-mail me. You'll find a link to do this below. Of course, I would ask that any requests for dialogue be done in the spirit of Carl Jung and William James' meetings in that I would ask that you limit your discussions to the message I've presented here rather than to critic the messenger. And as I've written here on the site in the welcome messages, please know I long for these Third Age of Consciousness discussions, better known as "uncomplicated conversations."

I look forward to talking with you.

Steven

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