

The Consciousness Solution

Pathways to a peaceful, prosperous, and
productive world

Richard Bellingham

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To Robert Carkhuff, Ph.D.: Prolific Creator of the Science of Possibilities, Ultimate Generator of New Capital Development Technologies, and Substantive Architect of the New Civilization

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 2 |
| A Consciousness Overview | 4 |
| A Brief History of Consciousness Theory | 5 |

“You can’t solve a problem with the same level of consciousness that created it.”

Albert Einstein

*“Love is what you were made for,
and love is who you are.*

When you live outside of love,
you do not live within your true being.

You do not live your true life,
and you do not live

with any high degree of consciousness.”

Richard Rohr

Introduction

Over the course of human history there have been on-going discussions from a variety of sources (religious, social, political, etc.) about how nice it would be if our global civilization could be more compassionate, empathic, loving, harmonious, interdependent and enlightened. Many of these pleas were aimed at reducing lawlessness, preventing wars and saving our souls. While those arguments and reasons for a more compassionate civilization are still compelling and valid, it is no longer just a “nice thing to do.” Creating a new platform for civilization is now a requirement for our survival. We need to elevate our dominant processing modes from physical security and tribal compliance to empathic love, harmonious inclusion, and enlightened service. This should have been taught in Sanity 101 decades ago, but it’s not too late. Thus the need for the consciousness solution.

If you need a few facts that will convince you to read this book, here they are. The average consumption of oil in the world today is about 5 barrels per person per year. There are about 7 billion people on the earth today with a projected population of 9-10 billion by 2050. In the developed countries, e.g. the United States and Canada, the average consumption of oil is about 25 barrels per person per year. Oil production (supply) has peaked at about 35 billion barrels per year (7 billion people at 5 barrels per person per year). If the developing countries, e.g. China, India, etc. increase consumption to 20 barrels of oil per person per year by 2050, then our demand will exceed our supply by 165 billion barrels per year (20 barrels x 10 billion people - 5 barrels x 7 billion people = 165 barrel deficit). This scarcity of resources combined with the abundance of weapons of mass destruction could produce unimaginable consequences for future generations.

The global crisis now facing us, however, is not as much a crisis of resources as it is a crisis of consciousness. Yes, our resource challenges are daunting and China is taking aggressive actions to corner resources around the globe. Lack of clean water may even turn out to be more of a problem than the lack of oil. The essence of any crisis, however, whether it is personal, resource, political, or global, is that the old norms and values of civilization are no longer working. Something new is being called for. In this case, the old way that is no longer working is our level of consciousness. The old level is destroying the world around us, and threatening the survival of our species. The time has come to evolve to a new level. We need to wake up to our true identity, to make the step that many saints, sages, and mystics have already made, and discover for ourselves the love, compassion, and harmony that lie at our core. The following sections will discuss the applications, implications, and strategies for elevating consciousness and for addressing these life threatening problems.

Thus, the purpose of this book is to lend a substantive perspective for addressing these “all too human” issues:

1. How to deal more clearly and calmly with the ultimate terror of the situation - our own death and the destruction of the planet.
2. How to find deeper meaning, given the reality of our situation, and tune into the ultimate possibilities of each moment.
3. How to elevate consciousness and thus create a more harmonious and inclusive world guided by enlightened service.

A Consciousness Overview

What it is: The state of being conscious; an acute awareness of one's own existence, sensations, thoughts, feelings, and intentions. Collectively, consciousness refers to the thoughts and feelings of an aggregate of people, e.g. the moral consciousness of a group, organization, or nation. Consciousness is a loosely defined concept that addresses the human awareness of both internal and external stimuli. This can refer to spiritual recognition, psychological understanding, medically altered states, or more modern-day concepts of life purpose, satisfaction, and self-actualization.

What it does: Heightened consciousness increases the full activity of the mind and senses; it awakens the body, mind and spirit; it makes one more aware of awareness. It enables us to bring more of all of ourselves to each moment.

Why it is important: Consciousness increases internal and external knowledge and the sense of what's right and wrong; it elevates perspective, quickens development and sharpens the sense of justice; it broadens and deepens the view of our lives and our role in the universe; it contributes to peaceful co-existence.

How does it work: Most theories map consciousness into a series of levels, some stages of which are more continuous or complex than others. Movement between stages is often bidirectional depending on internal and external conditions, with each mental ascension precipitating a change in reactivity. In the most basic sense, this alteration might lead to a reduced responsiveness as seen in anesthesiology; more abstract facets of tiered consciousness describe characteristics of insight, perception, or understanding. There are multiple ways to increase levels of consciousness, the most common of which are meditation, yoga, qigong, energy's way, and the science of possibilities.

A Brief History of Consciousness Theory

First appearing in the historical records of the ancient Mayan and Incan civilizations, various theories of multiple levels of consciousness have pervaded spiritual, psychological, medical, and moral speculations in both Eastern and Western cultures. Because of substantial overlap among hypotheses, there have recently been attempts to combine perspectives to form new models that integrate components of separate viewpoints.

Although many cultures have incorporated theories of layered consciousness into their belief structure, particularly for spiritual means, the Ancient Mayans were among the first to propose an organized sense of each level, its purpose, and its temporal connection to humankind.

The pyramid of consciousness has defined Mayan thought since the dawn of its civilization around 2000 BCE. Shamans and priests defined consciousness as an awareness of being aware, commonly referred to as a branch of metacognition. Because consciousness incorporates stimuli from the environment as well as internally, the Mayans believed it to be the most basic form of existence.

This existence, which they referred to as a loose translation of *Cosmos*, was made up of nine underworlds, depicted concretely through the nine-storied Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent in Chichen Itza, the Temple of the Jaguar in Tikal, and the Temple of the Inscriptions in Palenque. Within these nine underworlds are a specified “day” and “night”, symbolizing periods of enlightenment, increased consciousness, and a heightened ability to interact with the universe.

Mayan Perspective of the Evolution of Consciousness

| Cycle | First | Consciousness Developed |
|-----------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cellular | 16.4 billion years ago | Action/Reaction |
| Mammalian | 820 million years ago | Stimulus/Response |
| Familial | 41 million years ago | Stimulus/Individual Response |
| Tribal | 2 million years ago | Similarities/Differences |
| Cultural | 102,000 years ago | (Shared) Reasons |
| National | 3115 BCE | Law |
| Planetary | 1755 CE | Power |
| Galactic | January 5, 1999 | Ethics |
| Universal | February 10, 2011 | Conscious Co-Creation |

A common cause for debate is the exponentially accelerating dates separating each level of consciousness, where each stage occurs roughly 20 times faster than the previous one.

Whereas the Ancient Mayans defined consciousness in evolutionary terms, the Inca civilization considered it a progression of awareness and concern for others, similar to the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama.

| Level ("Attention") | External Change | Internal Change |
|---------------------|--|--|
| First | Perception of space and time | |
| Second | Ability to separate good from evil | |
| Third | Capable of discrimination | Choice to align with goodness rather than evil |
| Fourth | Reverence toward nature; oneness; against harming others | |

| Level ("Attention") | External Change | Internal Change |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Fifth | Ability to heal others in certain circumstances | Physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual restoration |
| Sixth | Ability to heal others in any condition | |
| Seventh | Teachers of all others | Exemplification of four principles of honesty, faithfulness, service, and truthfulness |

Although historical views of the separation of consciousness into various layers do not exactly mirror modern-day perspectives, many parallels can be gathered from the overarching themes found in Eastern and Western cultures.

Many specific similarities have been drawn between Ancient Incan and historical Eastern views of tiered consciousness. Within most Eastern belief structures is the principle of the Cosmos as a joint entity with human awareness. Many branches stress the importance of AUM, also written Om, as the first sound produced after the world was created. Within Christianity this concept can be likened to the first words of Genesis regarding the holiness of the Word.

The majority of Eastern perspectives assert that while consciousness originates from the sound of AUM, it has incorporated itself into flesh, which therefore gives humankind the goal of attaining oneness with the universe once more. Unlike Incan tradition, this oneness eliminates the separation of external and internal changes into one general indication of movement from stage to stage, commonly known as the Seven Shamanic Levels of Consciousness.

Shamanic Levels of Consciousness

| Consciousness | Description |
|---------------|---|
| Personal | Knowledge of the self and of personality |
| Mankind | Knowledge of human evolution and its experiences |
| Amphibious | Sense of separate identity between water and land |
| Spherical | Perception using the five bodily senses |
| Crystal | Perception using emotions, thoughts, and purity |
| Light | Attainment by near-death experiences; “tunnel effect” |
| Sound | Attunement of the mind to the world |

Like the Seven Shamanic Levels of Consciousness, yoga meditation practices as well as the teachings of Vedanta and Tantra emphasize the importance of self-realization, a concept that has become increasingly popular in Western philosophy after Abraham Maslow’s and Carl Rogers’s research in Humanistic Psychology.

In particular, the Advaita Vedanta school of Hindu philosophy has been a topic of extensive study in both Eastern and Western cultures for its tiered depiction of the steps toward attaining self-realization. Unlike the unidirectional nature of Mayan, Incan, and ancient shamanic perspectives, however, this particular belief structure arranges the attainment of oneness with OM through rows and domains, each of which constitutes a fragment of this vibratory sound.

| Row | Level | Realm | Description |
|----------|------------|---------------|--|
| 1: "A" | Waking | Conscious | External, active conscious |
| 2: "U" | Dreaming | Unconscious | Subtle images and impressions |
| 3: "M" | Deep Sleep | Subconscious | Focus on latent or inactive thought patterns |
| 4: "AUM" | Absolute | Consciousness | Equal permeation of all three levels |

Similarly, the seven levels of consciousness defined by modern-day OM mantras strive to reach Absolute Reality through the same four realms described in the Advaita Vedanta, with three transitional tiers in between each.

The ancient Indian Vedas texts have lent a comparable view of unified consciousness, with a key difference in the purpose of human ascension from stage to stage. Instead of oneness with the universe, the Vedic vision of consciousness emphasizes the importance of attaining knowledge and pure intelligence.

Fluctuations in consciousness theories are not particular to Eastern cultures. A surprising degree of overlap can be found within the field of health and social sciences with regard to dulled, standard, and heightened intensities of awareness, both naturally and as a result of injury or disorder.

Similar to previously mentioned psychological views, medical and pathological perspectives often hypothesize tiered consciousness as a result of disease or disorders. The Altered Levels of Consciousness (ALC) theory is one such measure, in which a person's responsiveness to environmental stimuli is classified by their behavioral response.

Although many such ALC tests take place in hospital settings, the primary evaluation of patient alertness is the Glasgow Coma Scale, which separates levels of consciousness from standard conscious awareness to a comatose state.

Glasgow Coma Scale of Physical Consciousness

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Conscious | Normal, attentive; oriented to self, place, and mind |
| Confused | Impaired or slowed thinking; disoriented |
| Delirious | Disoriented, restless, clear deficit in attention; possible incidence of hallucinations and delusions |
| Somnolent | Excessive drowsiness; little response to external stimuli |
| Obtunded | Decreased alertness, slowed motor responses; sleepiness |
| Stuporous | Conscious but sleep-like state associated with little or no activity; only responsiveness is in reaction to pain |
| Comatose | No response to stimuli, cannot be aroused; no gag reflex or pupil response to light |

Note that most of the definitions in the Glasgow Coma Scale represent alertness to external stimuli. There is very little regard for awareness of internal mental, emotional, and spiritual stimuli. This limitation of internal possibilities and heightened forms of consciousness reflects the perspective of Western scientific thought, i.e. almost all attention is focused on external, objective measures vs. internal, subjective measures. In the *Science of Possibilities*, Robert Carkhuff describes this perspective as probabilistic science based entirely on the process of describe, predict and control. The science of possibilities, on the other hand, incorporates and honors the process of describe and predict, but then suggests that the next steps are relate, empower, and free. Increasing levels of consciousness requires adoption of the entire five step process:

The Science of Possibilities Process for Elevating Consciousness

1. Describe
2. Predict
3. Relate
4. Empower
5. Free

Although many of the previously mentioned theories are still widely held today in various groups, a majority of commonly

accepted perspectives stem from the beginning of the 21st century. These hypothesized structures of awareness draw from many historical and early eighteenth- or nineteenth-century theories to form an integrated and overarching generalization of consciousness as a means of determining inner and outer recognition of stimuli.

Richard Barrett proposes seven stages of consciousness that progress in a logical order. The progression focuses on “existential” needs directly connected to and dependent on the human condition, all of which are motivating factors for daily interactions.

Barrett’s Seven Stages of Consciousness

| Reference | Drive |
|---------------------|--|
| Survival | Feel protected or unprotected |
| Relationship | Feel in or out of a group |
| Self-esteem | Feel positive or negative about yourself |
| Transformation | Act out of your true self |
| Internal Cohesion | Find similarities between your views and goals |
| Making a Difference | Align your views with others to make a greater impact |
| Service | Live through voluntary service to meet your personal goals |

In his book *Power vs. Force: The Hidden Determinants of Human Behavior*, David R. Hawkins offers numerous levels of consciousness, which arguably maintain a more specific and psychologically driven perspective of internal awareness than the modern views previously mentioned. The features of each level are explicit enough that individuals can most likely place themselves in a stage depending on their perceived state.

Hawkins Psychological Levels of Consciousness

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Shame | Close to 'rock bottom'; possibly caused by a life-threatening or traumatizing event |
| Guilt | Questioning oneself; difficulty letting go of unfortunate past events |
| Apathy | Defenselessness and weakness; minimal power to change the current situation |
| Grief | Sadness, deep loss |
| Fear | Uneasiness; feeling pressured or sensing a need to act quickly to change the current situation |
| Desire | Greed; the need to acquire things; can lead to addictions |
| Anger | Anxiety; typically a result of not meeting expectations while at lower levels |
| Pride | False positive; happiness in high statuses or other superficial benefits; leads to defensiveness and rebellion |
| Courage | Able to rationalize choices and control vision |
| Neutrality | 'No strings attached'; content with current situation and no effort to change |
| Willingness | Moving forward; openness to embark on new adventures |
| Acceptance | Reactive; stepping out of comfort zones; putting goals and values to action after discovering them in lower levels |
| Reason | Separating objectives and tackling tasks that align with strengths |
| Love | Empathy; making decisions from true values |
| Joy | Optimism, possibly caused by a life-changing event |
| Peace | Completeness |
| Enlightenment | Large impact; vision of progress |

The Hawkins Chart represents many levels and few dimensions. Most of the levels relate to feelings and don't take into account physical, intellectual (with the exception of courage and reason), or spiritual dimensions. Hawkins calibrates levels of consciousness using a scale of 1 to 1,000. He posits that there are only 6 people (unnamed) on the planet who have a consciousness level above

600. 85%, he claims, are below 200. Hawkins, an MD/PhD, has researched and calibrated consciousness levels for over 30 years. In his book, *Power vs. Force*, he suggests that people at lower levels of consciousness attempt to achieve their goals through force, which may succeed in the short term but invariably fail in the long term. At higher levels of consciousness people effect change through the power of their being and their Presence. Hawkins challenges us to move beyond a dualistic approach to life to a non-dualistic being in which we are at One with All and the Absolute.

In the book *Human Possibilities*, Carkhuff explores levels of physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual functioning that lead to a more complete understanding of our human condition and possibilities. Carkhuff created five-point scales for each dimension of our lives. A modification of those scales is as follows:

Physical: The degree of flexibility, endurance, strength, and cardio-respiratory efficiency.

- 5: Stamina
- 4: Energetic
- 3: Fit
- 2: Out of shape
- 1: Clinically sick

Emotional: The primary style of relating to people and the environment.

- 5: Initiative
- 4: Additive
- 3: Responsive
- 2: Attentive
- 1: Non-attentive

Intellectual: The pre-dominant approach to solving problems and seizing opportunities.

- 5: Generative and purpose oriented
- 4: Creative and skills oriented

- 3: Principle-driven
- 2: Factually informed and conceptually oriented
- 1: Ignorant

Spiritual:

- 5: Enlightened and service oriented
- 4: Inclusive and mission oriented
- 3: Loving
- 2: Tribal
- 1: Self Oriented

The applicability of this tiered system can be generalized to rank objects, events, and entire societies rather than just individual people. Barrett hypothesizes that the average human being can fluctuate naturally between levels due to environmental effects, including media, people, places, material objects, food, and awareness of world events.

Alain Morin describes a four-tiered integration of nine past awareness models, focusing explicitly on the two common aspects underlying each belief structure: the perception of the self in time and the complexity of those self-representations.

Morin's Four Tiered Integration of Awareness Models

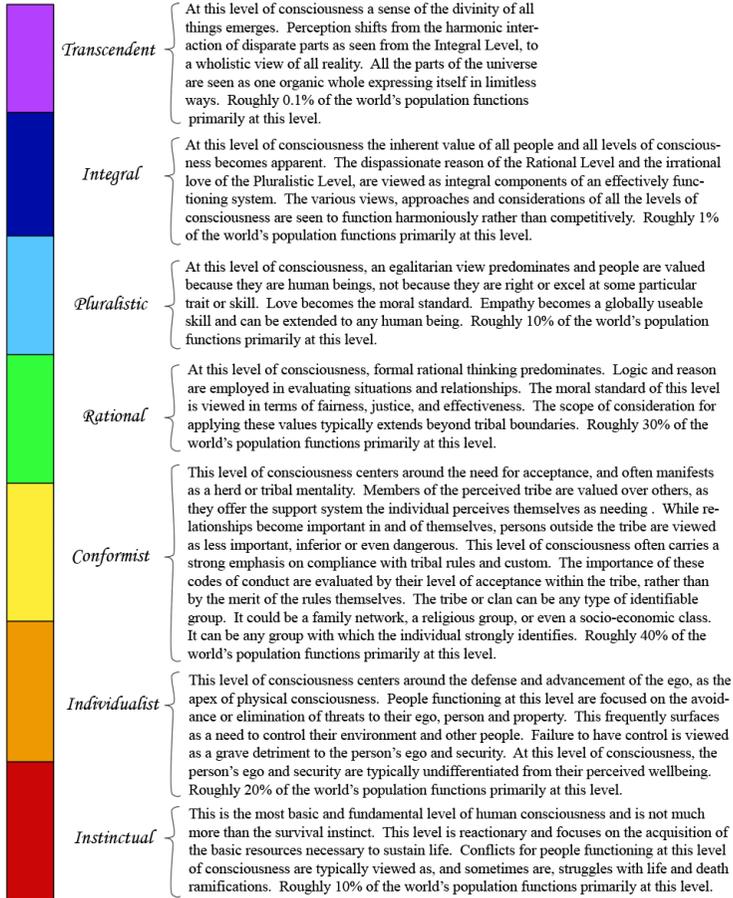
| Level | Description |
|---------------------|--|
| Unconsciousness | Non-responsive to self and environment |
| Consciousness | Focusing attention on environment; processing incoming external stimuli |
| Self-awareness | Focusing attention on self; processing private and public self-information |
| Meta-self-awareness | Aware that one is self-aware |

Morin concludes that from the many concepts discussed above it is near impossible to settle for only one theory without accepting at least a fraction of another. Although each hypothesis has been

debated either in scientific or more spiritually focused literature, she states that consciousness is related most directly to the subjective perception of self-recognition and language, both of which are determined by culture and our external environment as a whole.

In *The Consciousness Paradigm*, John Smotherman suggests seven levels of consciousness, the higher levels of which will improve personal happiness, the ability to help others, and heal the world. Smotherman suggests that each level of consciousness has implications for our self awareness, our moral responsibility, and our interpersonal relationships. The following chart describes each of the levels.

The 7 Levels of Consciousness



(c) John Smotherman 2010

Ken Wilber, in his book *Integral Psychology*, suggests that consciousness and development are leveled and linked. His theory is sometimes summarized as all levels and all quadrants. The four levels are body, mind, soul, and spirit; the four quadrants are intentional subjective, behavioral/biological, social/political/scientific, and cultural. In order to heighten our consciousness, we need

to take into account all four quadrants (internal and external) as they influence all four levels.

Wilber's All Quadrants All Levels

| Intentional (I) Subjective | Behavioral Biological | Social Political Scientific (It) | Cultural (We) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| Body | | | |
| Mind | | | |
| Soul | | | |
| Spirit | | | |

Wilber makes the point that differentiation among levels and quadrants was a good thing, but what has happened over the past century is dissociation and dominance that limit a harmonious view of our lives and our world.

Wilber suggests that evolution is about transcendence and inclusion, not transcendence and oppression - which describes what has happened in the past. He posits that we have suffered from scientific imperialism (all right side - objective) at the expense of the left side (intentional/cultural). This difference is particularly acute in the on-going debate between scientists and spiritualists regarding the nature of consciousness. Most scientists dismiss the idea of consciousness residing outside the brain and giving instructions to the brain. They cling fiercely to a materialistic reductionism that denies an immaterial consciousness outright. So for a large share of the scientific community, the whole idea of consciousness is a non-starter. On the other hand, most spiritually minded people believe that purpose, love, peace, equanimity, gratitude, meaning, and spontaneity can only come from an evolving consciousness.

In Carkhuff's terms, the science of probabilities denied the value of the science of possibilities by ending with control instead of

progressing into relate, empower, and free. In short, a strictly probabilistic, scientific view limits the possibilities of subjective, internal experiences. Similarly, a strictly humanistic view (subjective, cultural, internal) limits the value of the scientific view.

All of this theory can be summarized simplistically as follows:

Fundamental Dimensions of consciousness.

Help yourself

Help others

Help the world

A more inclusive and complex scale, developed by the authors, incorporates most of the theory discussed above.

7: **Enlightened Service** (transcendent and universal, wholistic reality, spontaneous expression, at one, super awake and aware of being aware)

6: **Harmonious Inclusion** (unified, at peace, interdependent, awake and aware)

5: **Empathic love** (psychological affiliation, in touch, in tune, collaborative)

4: **Logical thinking** (ideological and achievement oriented, calculated, independent)

3: **Tribal compliance** (religious, political, or social conformity, competitive)

2: **Physical security** (naive and mythological, imposed, controlling)

1: **Survival instinct** (reactive and ego-centric, unconscious, dependent, asleep, unaware)