

“YOU”- to - “ME – to – “WE

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“In the history of the collective as in the history of the individual, everything depends on the development of consciousness.”—Carl Jung

To solve the extraordinary challenges facing the world today we need to accelerate the evolution of consciousness and identity. Especially the transition from excessively independent "ME" to interdependent "WE" systemic thinking and values. War, financial greed, hunger, environmental degradation and unproductive conflict are widespread and on the rise. At the root of all these issues is a lack of consciousness and over-identification with mindsets/beliefs/roles resulting in excessive “ME” first thinking— self-centered independence and ego driven competitiveness. Issues born of excessive “ME” thinking are the major source of problems in couples, groups and organizations, classrooms, communities, cultures and among nations.

Jane Loevinger, Bill Torbert, and Robert Kegan have all postulated somewhat comparable models of stages of development in adults that illustrates the evolution of consciousness and identity-- from “YOU” to "ME" to "WE" thinking or worldview. Torbert’s terms are in parenthesis.

1. **Conformist – (Diplomat) “YOU”**
 - Strong need to fit in and get along. Tend to conform with or rely on decisions of others.
2. **Conscientious - Conformist – Expert / (Technician) “YOU” to "ME"**
 - Conforms and exhibits self-discipline, self-control and reliance on own experience and judgment.
3. **Conscientious – (Achiever) "ME"**
 - Excessive independence, strong intention to succeed, be the best. Low mutuality - projects problems onto others.
4. **Inter-individualistic – (Strategist) "ME" to "WE"**
 - Shift towards concern for interpersonal relations, strategic systemic thinking and shared goals. Growing self knowledge, appreciation of individual uniqueness and loosening of identifications leads to less projection and greater mutuality.
5. **Autonomist – Magician (Alchemist) "WE"**
 - Autonomy of self and others - true interdependent relationships – spontaneity, generosity, creativity, uniqueness and diversity - synthesizes opposites and provides transformative events for others. Sense of purpose.



Torbert’s model also has a second ME stage, the Individualist, following the Achiever. Roberto Assagioli, Abe Maslow and Ken Wilber have also formulated something similar stages. Studies have shown that less than 15% of the general population and less than 5% of managers have achieved the Strategist level of development. Yet a rapidly growing number of managers today that formerly competed for power and resources now recognize that they share responsibility for one another's success. What used to be "ME" is heading toward "WE."

The practice fields for developing "WE" thinking are Individuals, Couples, Groups and Organizations, Classrooms and Communities. All of which are contexts that Self-organizing Inquiry, Presencing, Psychosynthesis, Dialogue, Mindfulness, Systems Thinking and other methods can be applied. In human systems everything self organizes around identity. Systemic thinking, dis-identification and recognizing individual uniqueness enables people to situationally suspend ME-based competitiveness and work, live

and collaborate with others, not only with respect for differences, but with authentic appreciation, complementarity, mutuality and collective knowing.

We in the psychological, organizational development, education and systems thinking communities are potentially Magicians or modern day alchemists and our role / purpose is to catalyze the development and evolution of each other and others. Now more than ever, there is a need to bring the tools and techniques of Psychology/Psychosynthesis and Systems Thinking to the world around us.

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