

States and STAGES: Waking up Developmentally

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Abstract. For millennia, the great traditions have influenced our understanding of the states of consciousness that we encounter. More recently, models for assessing meaning-making in developmental terms have been proposed. One example is the STAGES model, which measures human perspectives that behold content differently at different developmental levels. Several scholars have attempted to connect states with developmental stages by studying their relationships, for example, using the Wilber-Combs Matrix. This article traces the history of theorizing about the relationship between states and stages and shows an evolutionary view that examines states through the developmental perspectives of stages. This approach suggests that we can trace state phenomena through developmental stages, with state and stage development affecting each other in an interpenetrative fashion.

Introduction

In 2010, I wrote a peer-reviewed paper for the Integral Theory Conference titled *The Collapse of the Wilber Combs Matrix*, in which I traced a history of theorizing about the relationship between states and stages, noting several configurations between them. This paper was updated in 2018, and provided, what I felt were the most relevant aspects of these relationships, however both versions of the paper ended with the question, “What is the next *evolutionary* version of the relationship of stages with states?” In the pages below, I trace an “either/or” version of this question to a “both/and” version. This paper extends these previous understandings by adding an “interpenetrative” theory that is supported by preliminary research and an evolutionary understanding of how the relationship between states and stages matures over time. The term interpenetrative here means that each construct (in this case states and stages) co-defines, co-creates, and/or co-emerges with the other. Embedded in this preliminary theory is an evolutionary underpinning of the unfolding of states and stages, where each requires the other in this evolving relationship.

This paper includes five parts:

Part 1: “Laying the Landscape” describes a history of the evolution regarding how states and stages are related as well as the proposed theory of the evolutionary interpenetration of states and stages.

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Part 2: "Setting up the Inquiry" establishes a research approach to support this inquiry, which shows the importance of selecting the appropriate subjects for this research and how this affects the results.

Part 3: "Preliminary Research" provides the evidence I have so far to delve into the theory of how the stages and states interpenetrate and how this relationship evolves. This section includes brief descriptions of the research that has been conducted to support this theory.

Part 4: "Getting more Granular" includes:

- A. The definitions of the words "states" and "stages."
- B. The trajectory of states that are in the developmental levels.
- C. The fundamental areas that states and stages have in common:
 1. phenomena
 2. the self
 3. space
 4. time
- D. The confusions that both hinder and support the development of a state to a stage.
- E. Three repeating tenets that tie states and stages together into interpenetration:
 1. Necessary but not sufficient
 2. The confusions
 3. Turn it back on yourself.

Part 5: "The Interpenetrating of States and Stages" regards a step-by-step description of the outcome of these discoveries gleaned from the research that is described in Part 1.

- A. A description of what state is necessary but not sufficient to move from one stage to the next stage.
- B. A description of relevant confusions at each stage.
- C. Describing what one must do with the state in order to advance to the next stage and what must be done with the stage to advance it to the next state.
- D. Putting it all together: A preliminary and evolving theory of the interpenetration of states and stages.

Part 1: Laying the Landscape

Prior Theoretical Models

Spiritual states have been recognized across many traditions for millennia, however developmental stages have first gained recognition in the later part of the 18th century, including the early research of James Mark Baldwin (1901) who began his studies in theology.

Even earlier, Darwin (1859) had proposed his (atheistic) principles of evolution which were controversial in many religious paths. However, Baldwin's early teacher James McCosh was a proponent of both evolution and how it could be applied to Christianity (Wikipedia entry for James McCosh). This perhaps represents some beginning roots of considering the relationship between states (handed down from the great traditions) and stages, which began to highlight an

evolutionary process of human development. Thus, while relatively new, this inquiry has grown from these early roots.

As developmental stages became more prominently recognized, more and more developmental models arose. Wilber (2000) has mapped over 100 of them and has been a main spokesperson about how states and stages relate to each other (2006).

In his first explanation of the relationship between states and stages, he describes several prior models that stack the great states onto the latest understanding of stages (Wilber, 1995). This prior understanding of structure stages having subtle and causal structures being stacked on top of the basic stages can be viewed as an "either/or" choice. Wilber traces this perspective through several philosophic views (Wilber, 1995, pp. 343-345), with Figure 1 showing a summary below:

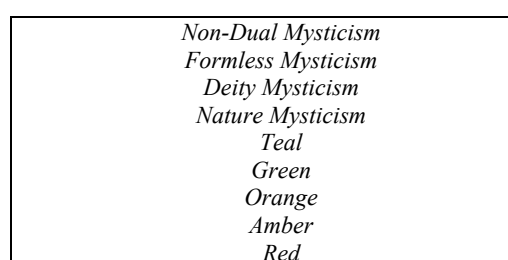


Figure 1. Either Structure Stages or State Stages.

This description of the relationship between structure and state stages continued to develop over the years and eventually evolved to become a "both/and" description. Wilber describes this advancement from the earlier one shown above:

And so typically what we did was simply take the highest stage in Western psychological models – which was somewhere around SD's Global view, Loevinger's integrated or the centaur – and then take the 3 or 4 major stages of meditation (gross, subtle, causal, non-dual – or initiation, purification illumination, unification) and stack those stages *on top* of the other stages...It was a start – at least some people were taking both Western and Eastern approaches seriously – but problems immediately arose. Do you really have to progress through all of Loevinger's stages to have a spiritual experience? (Wilber, 2006, pp. 88-89)

The shift from the "either/or" view to the "both/and" reciprocal view between structure and state stages is illustrated below in the Wilber (2006) Combs (2002) Matrix.

Wilber and Combs separately developed versions of this reciprocal model (Wilber, 2006), which posits that the great states (gross, subtle, causal, and non-dual, which are relatively representative of many of the great spiritual traditions) are available at all stages (see Wilber, 2006, p. 88).

This theoretical model places the states horizontally and the stages vertically in an orthogonal configuration. This allows us to hypothesize that you can have all the great states at any stage, however the states will be interpreted through the lens of the developmental level in which they

arise. The horizontal states and vertical stages are in reciprocity (both/and) with each other (O'Fallon, 2010; 2018).

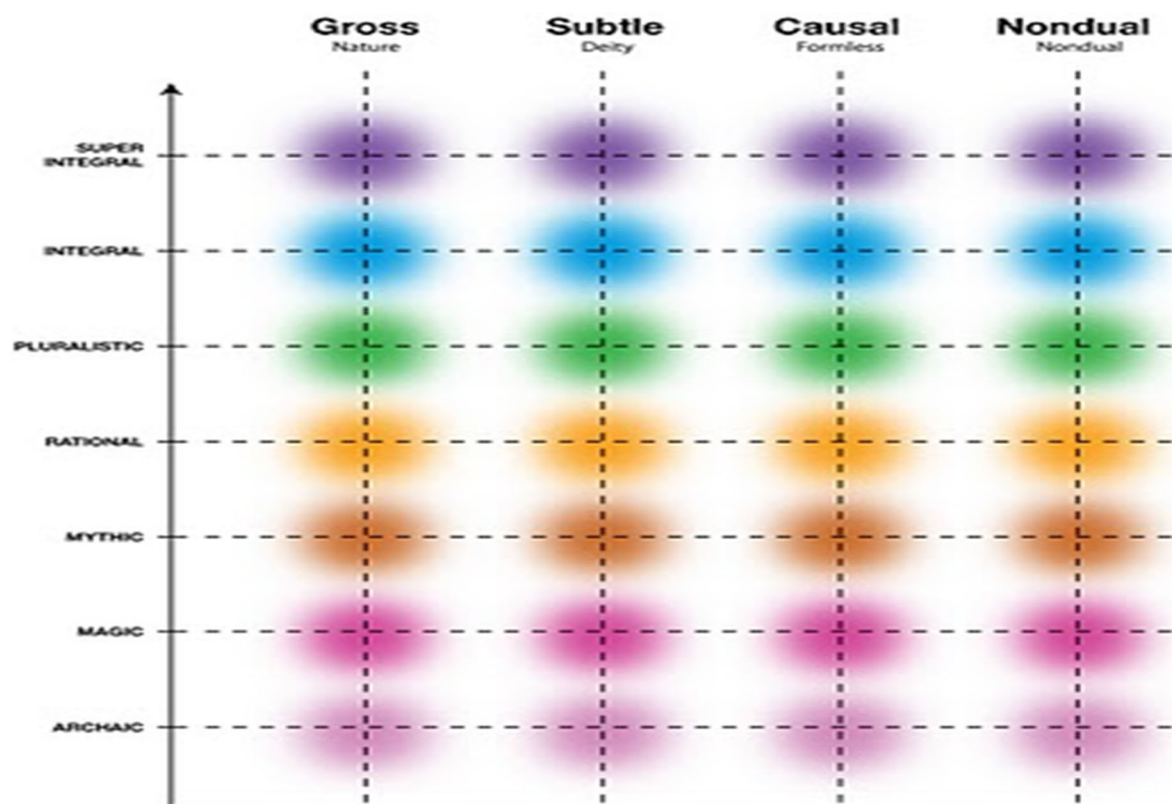


Figure 2. The Wilber-Combs Matrix: a “both/and” model.

Diperna (2014), who proposes a more granular and complex model called the Spiritual Developmental Cube (p. 122), adds a third dimension to the Wilber-Combs Matrix. He views the vantage point “states” as the “knower,” the developmental stages as “knowing,” and adds states/realms in which the events arise, change, and pass away (the known) (p. 123). The gross, subtle, causal, and non-dual vantage points are described in a more granular form and shown as horizontal, while the stages are depicted as vertical.

The most recent approach that I have encountered is Integral Polarity Practice (IPP) envisioned by John Kesler, who was one of the original members of the STAGES research team.

John explains his model:

IPP essentially holds that states, stages, types and more, as deeply interpenetrating and beyond that: are different manifestations of the same thing which all show up in five themes: Ground, gross, subtle, causal and integrated [in an evolutionary direction] or Ground, causal, subtle, gross integrated [in a involutory direction]....IPP is grounded in the full range of states being inherent in every stage in both a horizontal and vertical sense, and so for instance in the physical or physiological realm being deeply relaxed is a concrete causal realization, being mentally and emotionally calm is

a subtle causal realization, and experiencing deep tranquility is an even more subtle or causal manifestation of the causal. This is another example of how states have important vertical implications relating to each stage, and all of these are on the form or fullness side of the causal and there is an emptiness side to all of those which is simply empty. (Kesler, personal communication, April 2, 2020; and see www.theippinstitute.com)

Kesler's IPP seems to add more granularity to the preceding models and additionally integrates emptiness and fullness within while using both states and stages. This seems to represent an integrative model which points to the evolutionary interpenetration that I am curious about.

In summary, while seeking a next possible model, I wondered: Is there an evolutionary trajectory to the relationship between states and stages, where states can also be found to be developmental as well as horizontal?

When considering the trajectory of perspective taking, we begin with the concrete, subtle, and metaware perspective of "either/or" (the stacking model), then move to the concrete, subtle, and metaware person perspectives of both/and (the Wilber-Combs matrix (2005) and the more granular Diperna (2014) Integral Cube model, and finally the concrete, subtle, and metaware person perspectives of Kesler's updated IPP model. Viewing from the STAGES model, we can posit that there could be another interpenetrative theory that has not yet been explored.

The STAGES Model

There are many developmental models to utilize when examining the relationship between states and stages. In this inquiry, we use the STAGES matrix as the developmental model for several reasons: Firstly, it has specific repeating parameter patterns that define each person perspective. Secondly, it spans development from birth to the latest researched stages, which allows us to view these repeating patterns through *concrete* developmental levels, the more common adult *subtle* developmental levels, and the later *metaware* developmental levels. Thirdly, this model is supported by peer-reviewed replicability research (O'Fallon, Polissar, Neradilek, & Murray, 2020), longitudinal research (O'Fallon & Murray, 2020), word studies, and descriptive qualitative studies which include both states and stages. Most importantly, the replicability study provides evidence for the validity of three parameters of the STAGES model, one of which is the process trajectory of receptive, active (either/or), reciprocal (both/and), and interpenetrative. This process leads to the interpenetration of states and stages and our inquiry, "Is there an interpenetrative version of the relationship between states and stages?"

The qualities of the STAGES Matrix, supported by research, provide useful fodder to compare states and stages from an interpenetrative perspective and are informed by Wilber's (1995) AQAL model (individual/collective; interior and exterior quadrants, the zones, developmental levels, and states). The matrix integrates all of this with the Loevinger ego development lineage (Hy & Loevinger, 1996; Cook-Greuter, 1998; Torbert & Livne-Tarandach, 2009).

The STAGES Matrix defines the 12 person perspectives (PP) using three questions: What are the *phenomenological objects* that arise at each tier? Does the person lean more into an *individual view* or a *collective view*? What is the trajectory of the *learning process* (receptive, active, reciprocal, or interpenetrative) represented by repeating zones?

In addition, STAGES (and all ego development models in the Loevinger lineage) focus on “Who am I?” This question particularly arises at the 1.0, 3.0, and 5.0 developmental stages articulated in the STAGES Matrix below and is also a fundamental question often posed in state practices. Figure 3 shows a summary of this model.

The STAGES Matrix & the Three Questions

PP	TIER	SOCIAL	LEARNING SEQUENCE PATTERN	STAGE NAME
1.0	Concrete	Individual	Receptive	Impulsive
1.5	Concrete	Individual	Active	Egocentric
2.0	Concrete	Collective	Reciprocal	Rule Oriented
2.5	Concrete	Collective	Interpenetrative	Conformist
3.0	Subtle	Individual	Receptive	Expert
3.5	Subtle	Individual	Active	Achiever
4.0	Subtle	Collective	Reciprocal	Pluralist
4.5	Subtle	Collective	Interpenetrative	Strategist
5.0	MetAware	Individual	Receptive	Construct Aware
5.5	MetAware	Individual	Active	Transpersonal
6.0	MetAware	Collective	Reciprocal	Universal
6.5	MetAware	Collective	Interpenetrative	Illumined

Figure 3. The Stages Matrix: An Interpenetrative model.

To understand the rest of this paper, it is important to observe that in the STAGES Matrix, each stage represents a “perspective”. The first column in the matrix above shows the person perspective (PP) of each stage. Each perspective has a combination of three parameters that is distinct from every other perspective (the second, third, and fourth columns). Each PP is defined by the number in the PP column (1.0, 1.5, 2.0...). There are repeating patterns in this matrix, wherein each tier mirrors the previous and only the *phenomenal objects*, represented in the first “tier” column, change from concrete, to subtle, to metaware. Of special interest, the fourth column specifies when the either/or (active), both/and (reciprocal), and interpenetrative perspectives arise.

The STAGES model innovates over prior developmental models in the same lineage by specifying a small set of underlying parameters (dimensions) that lead to the unfolding of development (i.e., the three questions in the figure). In addition, compared to prior models, STAGES includes additional details about the earliest and latest stages (i.e., 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5; and 5.0, 5.5, 6.0, 6.5). This level of detail over a fuller range of the developmental spectrum allows us to notice foundational repeating patterns that would have been difficult to observe in prior models. This new theoretical model has been provisionally but strongly validated through a number of studies. For research on assessing STAGES developmental levels, see *The Validation of a New Scoring Method for assessing Ego Development Based on Three Dimensions of Language* (O'Fallon et al., 2020) and several research reports appearing in this issue.

In our exploration of the question, “How do states and stages interpenetrate?” we can begin by testing a theory that seeks two things: “Are certain states required to move into new stages?” and “does stage development propel the arising of new states?” This theory assumes that the previous models (based on either/or and both/and logic) are correct but that they may include insufficient detail regarding the whole developmental span required to form an interpenetrative model.

Part 2: Establishing the Inquiry: Proposing Research for an Interpenetrative Theory of Stages and States

Research Viewing Stages through the Frame of states

Various research studies have probed the relationship between developmental levels and state attainment. Some of this research has been conducted by *examining development through the eyes of horizontal states* in relationship to development. This approach addresses the question, “*Is there a relationship between one’s spiritual attainment and their developmental level?*”

To answer this question, a researcher would select a population of people who demonstrate designated states or are receiving state training, give them each a developmental inventory, and observe whether there is a relationship between their state attainment and their developmental level. This research thus far seems to indicate that there is little or no relationship. Spiritual practitioners with prominent state development seem to score, developmentally, all over the map. This research supports the Wilber-Combs and Diperna views that there is little or no relationship between state attainment and stage development. Concerning the view of horizontal states, these elegant approaches are correct and supported by research.

However, I am interested in another method to establish a research study using a question about this relationship: “*What are the states that arise at each developmental level?*” To answer this question, you would need to select a different population, of people who have already been tested developmentally, and then observe which states occur at each developmental level. The notion of vertical state development arises in purely state-based models (the great traditions) and are clearly described by Wilber (Wilber, Engler, & Brown, 1986; Wilber, 1983; 1991; 2006) and Diperna (2014) in their writing. However these theoretical models depict states as horizontal. Is there a theory highlighted by research that relates to how stages and states interpenetrate? This would require vertical states to interpenetrate with vertical development and still allow the

possibility of horizontal states and horizontal stages. In other words, a model like this would transcend and include both the either/or models and the both/and models. Delving into this question could add supportive research to Kesler's IPP model. It represents the approach I utilize to support this theory.

Part 3: Preliminary Research: Viewing States through the Developmental Frame

This section includes a summary of the research that my colleagues and I have conducted over the past years to support a vertical view from the developmental levels and the states that naturally seem to arise at each level.

Early and late research. Using the STAGES developmental model, I have collected data on the developmental perspectives of humans from age around 4 years old at the 1.5 developmental level through the latest 6.5 developmental level. This included regular inventories that we score daily which mostly score at 3.0 Expert through 6.0 Universal and includes participants in the Generating Transformative Change program who scored approximately from the 3.5 Achiever stage to the 5.5 Transpersonal stage. The child research project, supported by the Brisbane Independent School in Australia, provided information from the 1.5 through the 2.5 developmental levels. We also conducted a study on the levels of the MetAware tier: 5.0 Construct Aware, 5.5 Transpersonal, 6.0 Universal, and 6.5 Illumined (O'Fallon et al., 2020).

The STAGES research thus includes the developmental levels from 1.5 through 6.5 (comprising eleven levels, as babies are too young for reliable research on their "perspectives").

Using this kind of span, we can perform quantitative and qualitative research at each developmental level and observe what they have in common, including states.

Longitudinal research: Fifteen years ago, I also initiated an ongoing longitudinal study of participants in the Pacific Integral's "Generating Transformative Change" program. In addition, I have been following a number of people who have scored in the MetAware tier and have performed retakes of their inventories several times. This research shows people's stage-to-stage trajectory from 3.0 Expert through 6.5 Illumined. The MetAware research supports this movement from stage to stage in the MetAware tier stages from 5.0 Construct Aware, to 5.5 Transpersonal, to 6.0 Universal, to 6.5 Illumined.

Word Studies: I also provided data for two research studies that responded to the question: "What are the prominent words that arise at each developmental level? The first research study, which I conducted, used 275,000 words in our developmental database, and four years later the second study conducted by Tom Murray covered 1.1 million words. Although there were minimal differences between these two studies, they confirmed that common state words (and their synonyms) consistently arise at particular stages. These include "focus/concentration" at the third person perspective; "aware" at the fourth person perspective; aware of aware (and synonyms) at the fifth person perspective, and "timeless and boundless" (and synonyms) at the 6th person perspective.

Qualitative Studies: In addition, I completed qualitative research on approximately 3,600 sentence completions on a specialty inventory on love, supported by Marj Britt. This research included every developmental level and supported the meaning of the developmental spiritual words that arose in the above word study. The descriptions that this research provided were close to the same descriptions of many of the traditions.

Preliminary Literature Review: I have carefully studied Ken Wilber (1981; 1983; 1991; 1995; 2006; 2017), Diperna (2014), Aurobindo (1990; 1992), the Free Library “Higher Stages of Development (n.d.), Brown (2006), Dalal (2001) and others as a means of connecting the literature with the preliminary results of our research in order to weave these various research studies together with a literature review.

Although these studies are not exhaustive, they support experiential reports and literature reviews of commonly accepted definitions of states and stages and their intersection. The combination of these studies allows us to make meaning across them all to begin to respond to the question, “*What states arise at each developmental level?*”

Part 4: Getting More Granular

A broader examination of the research projects and larger question can provide a useful overview of the roots of this preliminary evolutionary theory regarding the interpenetration of stages and states, but as is often mentioned, “the devil is in the details.” We would want this theory to have an adequate overview that makes sense along with a more granular process that would support views ranging from a drop of water to the entire ocean. We thus begin with definitions.

Definitions

To establish a research project to respond to the question “What states arise at each developmental level?” several preliminary questions must be answered.

1. What is our definition of “stages” (perspectives)?
2. What is our definition of “states?”
 - Cognitive/mind-based “views”
 - Sensory, emotional-based experiences
3. What do states and stages have in common?
4. What is the definition of unification.

Definition of “Stages”

We define stages as successive developmental perspectives which each transcend and include the previous perspective. Robert Kegan employs a similar definition in his subject/object research: “The subject of one stage becomes the object of the subject of the next stage” (Kegan, 1994).

Definition of “States”

We provide two “state” definitions, with the first relating to emptiness and the other to fullness.

First, we define mind-based states as *temporary*, successive vantage points from which one views levels of reality, and these states gradually mature until they become a permanent “state stage.” Each vantage point transcends and includes the previous ones. These states increase capacities to utilize later and later views, and their viewing position is generally considered to be “empty” (while of course viewing objects that represent fullness). This indicates a vertical development of viewing or vantage point states.

Second, we define body-based, sensory emotional experiences such as temporary experiences of love, elation, gratitude, awe, fear, sadness, jealousy, etc. These states often form the basis of happiness or misery, and the positive states can be cultivated. Our research shows that these emotional states “grow up” as well (examples include concrete experiences of happiness, subtle experiences of elation, and MetAware experiences of a refinement of ecstasy). These states are felt in the body and often represent aspects of fullness.

These definitions have a common “transcend and include” evolutionary nature to them. This research utilizes the vantage point states since they represent the emptiness side of the states. The body-based states are not specifically tracked but are part of the fullness or “relative reality states” (which arise inside of the emptiness states).

Definition of Awakening/Unification

Awakening concerns the unification of all emptiness and fullness of all available objects currently found in the latest stages and stages that humanity can access. A more granular description shows what states and stages have in common related to emptiness and fullness: phenomena (fullness) with the emptiness of phenomena (emptiness), self (fullness) with the emptiness of a self (emptiness), space (fullness) with the emptiness/boundlessness of space (emptiness), and time (fullness) with the emptiness of time (emptiness). A form of awakening can occur any time after one has experienced the necessary developmental forms of concrete phenomena, space, self, and time (see Table 1 below). However, full awakening would include the interpenetration of all possible vantage points along with all the developmental stages that have thus far evolved in humanity.

States and Stages: Common Tenets; What are the fundamental areas that states and stages have in common?

As we examine the knowledgebase of states and stages, it is helpful to determine whether we can simplify to the most basic areas that both might have in common. Based on my preliminary studies, four areas seem to be in common, and states seem to be a mirror to the stages.

1. **Phenomena.** Both states and stages recognize and apprehend *phenomena* (objects) from their own views. In the STAGES developmental trajectory, research supports concrete objects, subtle objects, and MetAware objects.

In the states trajectory, there are similarly states that hold *gross phenomena*, *subtle phenomena*, and *very subtle phenomena*. These phenomena have been previously defined in different ways depending on the tradition's particular definition, however they essentially mirror the opposite of relative phenomena: emptiness of concrete phenomena, of subtle phenomena, and of metaware phenomena. These kinds of states can occur horizontally (i.e., they arose before development was recognized). As a tenet of this theory, we utilize these states developmentally (as above) rather than horizontally.

2. **A Self.** In the developmental spectrum, we experience different levels of an ego: a concrete self, (our physical body), a subtle self (our identity beyond our physical body such as an authentic self), and a metaware self (identity as "conscious awareness").

We also apprehend the mirror opposite: the absence of a physical self, absence of a subtle self, and the absence of any form of self, which have been referred to as various forms of "no-self." These are a mirror to the ego selves that develop in the stages and represent the emptiness aspects of state views.

3. **Space:** In the STAGES developmental trajectory, a sense of space begins when a baby is about 6 months old, when their eyes begin to mature and synchronize to result in depth perception. Beyond that, the experience of space develops when one becomes aware of boundaries, firstly regarding physical boundaries at 1.0 and 1.5 after depth perception occurs but more importantly the boundaries that rules provide, which arise for the first time at the 2.0 Rule Oriented stage. These morph into subtle boundaries and the MetAware boundaries of infinity (infinity arises earlier but not in relationship to eternity).

In the states vantage points, one experiences the mirror opposite: the emptiness of concrete spaces, subtle spaces, and very subtle spaces where boundlessness arises on the other side of boundaries.

4. **Time.** In the developmental spectrum, we experience "in-the-moment" timelessness at 1.0 Impulsive and 1.5 Egocentric. About halfway through the 2.0 second person perspective (at about age 8), we experience an understanding of clock time of the past for the first time due to a consolidation of memory capacity. A sense of time continues to develop through the subtle understanding of time such as the future and a Metaware understanding of eternity (eternity is accessed earlier, but an understanding of its relationship to space has not yet arisen).

From a state perspective, children are in oceanic "in the moment" time until about age 8. At this age, they begin to perceive a "past" due to the development of memory (stable visualizations + self-talk), and once ensconced in time, they can theoretically discover timelessness on the other side of time.

Anyone who has this first understanding of time can hypothetically experience the timeless (which is an empty mirror of time) sometime during the second person

perspectives but not earlier. We thus posit that a baby or toddler cannot “awaken” since they still lack the understanding of socially constructed time and thus cannot unify time and the timeless.

Stage and States Mirroring

The table below shows the mirroring between stages and states as they occur in the STAGES concrete tier.

Table 1. Relationship of Stages and States in the Concrete Tier.

Birth experience (phenomena are out of consciousness)	Developmental Trajectory of Phenomena	State trajectory Formless/emptiness	Unification of columns 2 and 3
No conception of objects->	Phenomenal Objects (1.0) ->	Object-less on the other side of objects	Phenomenal Objects + formlessness of objects
No conception of Self ->	A Phenomenal self (1.5) ->	Selfless on the other side of self	Self + selfless
No conception of space->	Phenomenal Space (1.0, 2.0) ->	Boundless on the other side of the bounded	Space + boundless
No conception of time ->	Phenomenal Time (2.0) ->	Timelessness on the other side of time	Time + timeless

If you cannot apprehend a sense of the emptiness of objects until you have the capacity to identify objects; if you cannot apprehend the emptiness of self until you have a self; if you cannot apprehend an experience of the boundlessness of space until you first have a sense of boundaries/space; and if you cannot apprehend an experience of the timeless until you experience time, then it would seem that you must have a developmental experience of objects, self, the bounded, and time before you can transcend them into the understanding of formlessness/emptiness. Once you achieve an understanding of a full self (the second column in the diagram above), you can begin to see its formlessness/emptiness (the third column). However, various kinds of *unification* arise when combining these two columns, which is not possible in this theory when only the first column exists.

If we define unification as the interpenetration of relative phenomena (developmental stages) and formless emptiness, it seems that there must be some process where development and states require each other for interpenetration to occur. In this theory, fullness (the developmental reality of form and formlessness on the other side of form [empty state views or vantage points]) would combine into the wholeness of unification.

When activating our unification experiences, we observe that they include both form and the formless. However, state practices in the past did not recognize developmental levels of adults.

Research indicates that the cognitive complexity required to deeply understand human development does not occur until 4.5 Strategist, which is a relatively new stage culturally, which causes me to wonder, how easy would it be to recognize interpenetrations of states and stages if you only had an understanding of states but not stages?

From the developmental side, we have recognized form but have not considered the trajectory of the hidden states through 12 developmental levels to determine how states might contribute to stage development, because it seems that the first 8 STAGES do not need to apprehend an experience of the “empty formless viewpoints” in order to continue to develop. Many people never arrive in the MetAware tier, where the trajectory of developmental vantage point views begins to display. Nonetheless, although they may form a hidden support for developmental growth, they may not be recognized as such.

This preliminary evolutionary theory of the interpenetration of states and stages concerns the developmental trajectory, where states are required at each stage to develop from the early life of young children through the latest researched level of 6.5 Illumined.

Looking at the relationship between stages and states from the view of each tier

We pose a series of questions below that motivate our discussion in the following sections.

The Concrete Tier interpenetration of States and Stages. From the above theory, we can posit that specific stages are required for these four empty/formless vantage point (view) states to arise in the concrete tier (see Table 1). However, there is a new question to consider, “Are there some states that the concrete stages require in order for the next concrete stage to occur that are not considered in the lineup of the great states (gross, subtle, causal, and non-dual)?”

The Subtle Tier interpenetration of States and Stages. Our research points to the understanding that the emptiness of phenomena, the emptiness of self, the boundlessness of space, and timelessness can arise at each of the subtle tier stages and are interpreted by the stage perspectives in which they manifest (the Wilber-Combs Matrix both/and model). However, is it possible that under the radar of the Wilber-Combs Matrix, certain states *must* arise in order for the next stage to mature?

The MetAware Tier interpenetration of States and Stages. MetAware longitudinal research studies highlight the necessity of a state for entry into the next stage. However, in this tier is it also possible that certain stages are required for the full manifestation of unification at the leading edge of developmental consciousness (all states and all stages)?

Summary: Our research and preliminary theorizing show the necessity of states for stage development in all three tiers as well as the necessity of stages to occur in order for the next vertical state to develop in all three tiers.

Part 5: The Interpenetration of States and Stages

The STAGES model shows that our capacities progress from *receptive* (one concept at a time), to *active* ("either/or," where one idea predominates), to *reciprocal* ("both-and," where the concepts have equal importance and we consider their interrelatedness), to *interpenetrative* ("one-within the other," where we see how the concepts co-define and co-emerge). We can posit that theories and models evolve along a similar trajectory of complexity. We noted how the Wilber-Combs matrix represents a "both-and" representation of states vs. stages, where each is separate and equally important, as a key advancement over prior "either-or" interpretations. Our model attempts to proceed to an interpenetrative interpretation of states and stages, whereby each is viewed as an integral component in the development of the other.

Although these theoretical suppositions may be interesting, how would they work on a granular rather than orienting generalization level? What existing research supports this process, which state fuels the next stage, and which will create the next state that will be necessary for the ensuing stage to occur?

The triangulation of the quantitative longitudinal study, the 1.1 million word study, and the qualitative studies that categorize the experiential descriptions that arise at each stage provides preliminary evidence that states are required to grow our developmental perspectives and that developmental stages are required for full unification states (if they are to include *all* relative reality available in all stages rather than merely part of relative reality). I have used these research studies to begin to document the states that arise at each developmental perspective. Of all these studies, four tenets have emerged that seem to contribute to this preliminary theory.

Four tenets that repeat to provide the interpenetration between Stages and States

In our theory, we extend the concept of "state" beyond those associated with spiritual or contemplative practices through all the developmental levels. In this way, basic capacities such as the ability to visualize or to notice one's own thinking process are also states.

1. States are necessary but not sufficient for moving from one developmental level to the next.

For example, visualization is a necessary state for the 1.5 Egocentric to move into the 2.0 stage, but it is not sufficient since something else must happen first. Visualization at this stage is a "state."

2. Each stage transformation has at least one primary confusion that must resolve in order to mature to the next developmental level.

For example, the 1.5 Egocentric must overcome the following confusion: Visualization as a state does not recognize the difference between seeing on the inside (visualization)

from seeing on the outside (observing with physical eyes). This represents a confusion that they need to address and grow through in order to progress to the mature part of 1.5.

3. To advance to the new stage, the view capacity of a particular state must be turned toward answering the confusion. Shining the light of that state onto the conundrum allows the confusion to resolve into clarity and the state to grow into a mature and stable person perspective stage.

For example, once the 1.5 has achieved this differentiation, they can use visualization as a tool since it is a fundamental part of the final mature 1.5 stage. Visualization (separated from “seeing” with one’s exterior eyes) has become a state stage that is married to the final 1.5 structure stage.

4. Likewise, in order to “flip” from a stage into the next state which initiates the next stage, one must turn the present view of the mature stage back onto the self in order to reach the new state.

This allows the maturing 1.5 to transition into 2.0. They can adopt the perspective of someone else by turning their visualizations, like a mirror, back on themselves, allowing them to notice that the other person is looking back at *them*. “I see you see me” is the fundamental requirement of entering into 2.0 Rule Oriented, which is initially an orientating state that comes and goes, ushering in a second person perspective.

This first recognition of turning visualizations back on themselves and thereby seeing that someone else is seeing them is a “state,” which they cannot hold. This state is necessary but not sufficient to move into 2.5 Conformist, and this pattern repeats from one stage to the next and from tier to tier. These four steps are described in Table 2 below.

The next section details this theory of the interpenetration of stages and states and how it would function in a feet-on-the-ground application. I begin by covering the vertical states that are necessary but not sufficient for development to occur followed by the confusions that appear during transitions from state to stage. Lastly, I combine them into a matrix to show how these three areas integrate with each other to provide the developmental engine for transformation. It is important to note that I am using the STAGES developmental model in this theory.

Viewing States Through the Developmental Frame

States undergo a trajectory from gross, to subtle, to empty and to unification. States can be expressed both vertically (looking through developmental lens) and horizontally (through the lens of the Wilber Combs Matrix or Diperna's Spiritual Developmental Cube).

Below I have listed vertical states that seem to be required for development to occur at each stage. I arrived at these by accessing words often described in the traditions that landed solidly for the first time at each stage of development as determined by our 1.1 million word study. An example of one of these words is “awareness”. The descriptions were accessed through the qualitative research of sentence completions at each stage from 1.5 through 6.5. As I integrated

these two research studies, state categories began to emerge. These are the names I have given or borrowed for the vertical states that are required for the maturing of development at each stage in this theory.

In this trajectory of states, the states in italics are in the receptive and reciprocal stages. The developmental levels of the reflector “view” or “Vantage point” states are in bold letters, and are found in active and interpenetrative stages.

States that are Necessary but not Sufficient for a Stage Transformation

Below we list states that exist at each level, and are necessary (but not sufficient) for the transition to the next level. We note the capacities that manifest with successive person perspectives as sensing (1stPP), thinking (2ndPP), cognition (3rdPP), awareness (4thPP), and consciousness (5thPP); and we use the term meta (as in meta-thinking) to note the latter or active half of each person perspective. These words have many meanings and are used here as convenient handles; however their definitions are not necessarily the same as the conventional definition of the words, as they each regard a specific definition that relates to its relevant person perspective.

The reflector states are the “meta” experience that is mature. For example, sensing begins with exterior sensing, and meta-sensing concerns interior sensing such as visualization. I call these reflector states since the first immature state is required to reach the reflector state, which takes a “reflective view” of the preceding immature state.

- 1.0 ***Sensing***. Receiving through the senses and early recognition of concrete objects/phenomena.
- 1.5 **Meta-sensing: Concrete Individual View (Reflector #1)**. Visualizing and self-talk begin as interior senses that are disconnected from each other. Visualizing is reflecting on sensing: “I see me” and “I see you.” A concrete “self-identity” arises.
- 2.0 ***Thinking***: Visualization and self-talk interpenetrate into concrete operations (Piaget, 1969) where a child needs manipulatives to reason. I see you see me (Fowler, 1989); I see you when you are not looking; you can see me when I am not looking. This “seeing” fuels rules, roles, and reciprocity.
- 2.5 **Meta-thinking: Concrete Collective View (Reflector #2)**. This is formal operations (Piaget, 1969) which can adopt a reflective view of thinking. This allows them to reason without manipulatives and supports moral principles that are “us,” including reasoning about you as me and me as you. This prepares one to progress into the subtle tier.
- 3.0 ***Cognition***: Abstract Cognition. This concerns focusing/concentration (*zooms in*) on subtle objects.
- 3.5 **Metacognition Subtle Individual View (Reflector #3)**: This includes reflecting on cognition and regards subtle thinking about thinking, feeling, and their relationship to their own behavior.

- 4.0 **Awareness of metacognition:** This involves *zooming out* which allows seeing subpersonalities (each of which has thinking, feeling, and behavior), contexts, and complex adaptive systems.
- 4.5 **Met-Awareness + focus; Subtle Collective View (Reflector #4) (Zooming in and out)** This concerns the awareness of you being aware of me, of me being aware of you, of interior and exterior contexts and systems in me and you, of the trajectory of development in me and you and of projections. This prepares one to progress into the MetAware tier.
- 5.0 **Consciousness:** This allows the apprehension of highly subtle sensing (receiving subtle presence, attunement, meta-reflection, and projection in the moment and the integration of mind/body/spirit), the emptiness of word meaning, and boundaries.
- 5.5 **Meta-Consciousness- MetAware Individual Active View (Reflector # 5)** This regards the consciousness of awareness, which allows the seeing of the timeless and of the boundlessness (disconnected).
- 6.0 **Higher Mind:** This concerns the timeless/boundless integrated with meta-conscious relative reality.
- 6.5 **Illumined Witness: Meta-Conscious Collective View (Reflector #6).** A witness as a space illumines the interpenetration of the concrete mind, subtle mind, MetAware mind, and Meta-conscious mind along with the concrete senses, subtle senses, and meta-conscious of the evolutionary trajectory of matter, life, and mind.

The Confusions

Another area that states and stages have in common are “confusions”. John Churchill (2018) describes state confusions in his dissertation and there seem to be stage confusions as well.

People entering new vertical states initially experience unconscious confusions (described above in the four tenets) and cannot see them until they transform to the mature part of their stage. Below I describe some of the stage confusions that seem to arise at the beginning of each developmental level and are resolved by the end of that level in order to achieve a mature developmental state stage that can turn those aspects back on themselves. Once this occurs, they are able to enter into the new state which marks the beginning of a new developmental stage (described at 1.0 below). This pattern continues throughout the confusions. Please see table 2 below for a full description of this process.

Table 2. The Confusions.

THE CONFUSIONS

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1.0 | Confuses physical self with other selves: fusion belief (“who am I?”). They cannot differentiate between where their body ends and another phenomenon begins. They must resolve these confusions before they can access the new self that arises when transitioning to the new 1.5 stage. The confusions are not initially recognized, and then the recognition |
|-----|---|

occurs intermittently as they begin to see them. Once they see that there is a separation between themselves and other objects, they can turn that recognition back on themselves (i.e., the reflection of themselves they see in the mirror), and when sufficiently mature they progress to the next stage where they have identified a phenomenal self (and further confusions arise).

1.5	Confuses 1) visualizations & self-talk with physical reality; 2) confuses yours and mine; 3) confuses truth and lies.
2.0	Confuses the pronouns as moving objects ("I" and "you"): For example, everything recognized until this time has a name that stays with the object, however now language becomes more nuanced. The word "I" means "you" when you use that word and means "me" when I use it; and the word "you" means you when I use that word but means "me" when you use it. Word labels thus do not stick to the "objects" (you-me).
2.5	Confuses individual thought and action with collective thought and action: They think that they are making individual decisions and taking individual actions, but their thinking and actions are conformed to their identified group.
3.0	"Who am I?" Confuses their 2.5 collective identity with their 3.0 individual identity: They are beginning to make individual decisions and take individual action but cannot identify this difference with the collective thought and action taken in the 2.5 stage.
3.5	Confuses the fantasy/visualizations of the future with reality: They visualize a goal in the future and believe that it represents the reality that they will reach once the goal is achieved. When they reach their goal, they find that the reality is not the same as their visualizations of the future.
4.0	Confuses individual subtle insights/awareness with collective synchronicity: Their group discussions are long and nuanced, and eventually they see a decision emerge. They often label this as synchronicity and do not recognize the process of eliminating thoughts achieved by the group discussion--or the subtle insights that are conditioned in them from subtle social conditioning (social construction of reality). They cannot differentiate between the experience of being socially constructed and their own individuality.
4.5	Confuses one's own individual projections on others with other's projections on them. They will see that others judge them but don't see how they judge others.
5.0	Who am I? Confuses their 4.5 authentic identity (achieved through thought) with their newly forming MetAware identity: conscious awareness.
5.5	Confuses one's individual constructions with reified reality: Sees that their constructions are a story but does not see how acting on their own constructions becomes a reified reality. Confuses time with the timeless and space with the boundless.
6.0	Confuses infinity and eternity with the boundless/timeless.
6.5	Confuses witnessing as a location with non-dual awakening.

The Relationship between the States and Stages

There seems to be an evolutionary cycling that occurs between the states and stages. When transforming into a new perspective, certain states relevant to that stage occur, however they are not stable enough to ground the perspective. As the states become more grounded, they encounter confusions for that stage. To mature the state into a trait (the mature part of a stage), they must shine the light of the state onto the confusions in order to gain the clarity to resolve them (and thus "defuse" the tension of the confusion).

Once the stage is mature, they must turn the mature stage back on itself, which is sufficient to trigger the new state that is required for entry into the next developmental level. This new state is necessary but not sufficient to move into the new stage, because first it must sufficiently stabilize to encounter and clarify the confusions. This turns the unstable state into a mature trait which finalizes the stage, and then the state turned into a stage turns back on itself to trigger the next state required to mature into the next stage. This cycling continues to evolve the next state and stage, which is described in the Table below. Note that there is insufficient space to include full descriptions of the states, the confusions, the state to stage, and the stage to state. These are described above while Table 3 below shows how the interpenetration occurs and fuels development from one stage to the next.

Table 3. Interpenetration of States and Stages.

	States (necessary but not sufficient)	Confusions	State to Stage	Stage to State (necessary and sufficient)
	<i>Views/vantage points...</i>	<i>Confuses...</i>	<i>State becomes trait...</i>	<i>Stage turning back on self...</i>
1.0	Sensing: I receive from sight, sounds, touch (etc.) from concrete exterior objects/people	Physical me and you. Who am I?	Sensing becomes a stage: depth perception, hearing, touching integrates	Turning sensing back on the self: Concrete identity—"I see me," "I see you." (1.5)
1.5	Meta-sensing (interior visualizing disconnected with self-talk)	Visualizations with concrete reality. Yours with mine. Truth with lie	Visualizing & self-talk becomes a stage. Reflector # 1	Turning visualizations back on the self ("I see you see me") on reflection (2.0)
2.0	Thinking (visualizing/self-talk integrates.) Needs exterior manipulatives and reciprocity with others to think (con-op)	Pronouns as moving objects "I" and "you." See "confusions" described above.	"Thinking" with manipulatives and others becomes a stage (relativity, reciprocity, rules)	Turning "thinking" back on the self (2.5) "I am you"
2.5	Meta-thinking (formal operations-interior concrete thinking/ reasoning). Reasoning about you as me	Individual thought and action with collective thought and action	Meta-thinking becomes a stage. Interpenetration of self and other	Turning meta-thinking back on the self (3.0) "I see subtle me" on reflection

	Reasoning about me as you Reasoning about trajectory of moral principles that are us.		(concrete principles). Reflector # 2	
3.0	Cognition (abstract operations-subtle sensing: I receive subtle ideas, subtle emotions subtle reasoning using exterior subtle objects: maps, diagrams, tables, formulas etc., and people <i>Focus/concentration</i> arises	Subtle Me and you. Who am I?	Cognition becomes a stage. Subtle perception of seeing, hearing, and emotions	Turning cognition back on the self (3.5) ("I see subtle me," "I see subtle you").
3.5	Metacognition (thinking about thinking and feeling and how that affects behavior	Metacognitive thoughts and visualization of the future with reality	Metacognition becomes a stage. Reflector # 3	Turning metacognition back on the self. (4.0) Subtle "I see you see subtle me" on reflection
4.0	Awareness of Metacognition (sub-personalities, subtle reciprocity, subtle contexts and complex adaptive systems	Individual awareness with collective synchronicity	Awareness becomes a stage (subtle relativity and reciprocity).	Turning subtle awareness back on the self. (4.5) "I am you"
4.5	Meta Awareness Aware of you being aware of me Aware of me being aware of you. Aware of interior and exterior contexts and complex adaptive systems in me and you. Aware of trajectory of development in me and you.	One's own individual projections on others with other's projections on them.	MetAwareness becomes a stage. Interpenetration of subtle self with subtle other. Sees projection on reflection. Reflector # 4	Turning MetAwareness back on the self (5.0) I see MetAware "me" on reflection
5.0	Consciousness MetAware sensing (receiving very subtle presence, attunement, meta-reflection, projection in the moment, integration of mind/body/spirit	Conscious me and you. Who am I now?	Consciousness becomes a stage. Individual sees emptiness/deconstruction of word meaning and boundaries.	Turning consciousness back on the self (5.5). I see conscious you; I see conscious me.
5.5	Meta-consciousness Consciousness of awareness. Sees timeless and boundless (disconnected)	Individual constructions with reification of reality	Meta-consciousness becomes a stage. Conscious of subtle ego, reification, and creativity with	Turning meta-consciousness back on the self (60). Meta-conscious "I see you see me" on reflection

			empty/deconstructed boundaries and word meaning on reflection.	
			Reflecting Knower #5.	
6.0	Higher Mind (timeless integrated with boundless) experiences meta-conscious relative reality (cosmos whole)	Infinity and eternity with timeless-boundless	Higher mind becomes a stage. Reciprocity between timeless/boundless and meta-conscious relative reality (ocean and waves metaphor)	Turning higher mind back on the self (6.5): "I am you"
6.5	Illumined Timeless/boundless illumines. The concrete mind, subtle mind, MetAware mind, and meta-conscious mind; The concrete senses, subtle senses and meta-conscious evolutionary trajectory of matter, life, and mind	Confuses the formless witness with unification	Illumined mind becomes a stage. Interpenetration of witness and witnessed upon reflection. Reflecting Knower Witness #6	Turning illumined mind back on the self (7.0) (unification) "I am"

Viewing from full developmental trajectory through the tiers

Viewing from the full developmental trajectory of 12 stages brings new understandings that cannot be observed when viewing only from the first 4 concrete stages (1.0 Impulsive through 2.5 Conformist) and the first 8 concrete and subtle stages (1.0 Impulsive through 4.5 Strategist). The four concrete tier stages and four latest MetAware stages can be viewed significantly differently when viewed from the whole.

Our intention below is to enrich prior descriptions of the MetAware tier by using the patterns observed in the concrete tier as a framework for understanding the MetAware tier.

View of the Four Stages in the Concrete tier from the Whole Developmental Trajectory

At birth, the 1.0 Impulsive level does not recognize objects although they can see with their eyes. They also have little recognition of space since their eyes do not mature and sync with each other to provide depth perception until around 6 months old. They gradually acquire a perception of objects and ability to point to them when labeled, and they gradually orient themselves in space when they begin to crawl and walk. However, they still lack a sense of their physical self as "me."

The 1.5 Egocentric level (sometimes called the archaic, purple, and the terrible twos) is initiated when the sense of identity of a physical self occurs, but while they have a sense of space they do not yet have a sense of boundaries, which continues to develop.

Upon entry to 2.0 Rule Oriented level (sometimes called archaic/magic, early second person perspective) they begin to identify boundaries in rules but do not yet understand the concept of time.

Although a person who does not understand time might be viewed as being in the “timeless,” these three levels (1.0, 1.5, entry 2.0) are in a timelessness that is “before” time (see Table 1 above). Their memory capacity is not sufficiently mature to possess a stable sense of time, and thus they cannot progress beyond time to access the timeless and thus cannot unify time with the timeless. You will often hear a child at this stage repeatedly ask “Are we there yet?” when traveling.

Unification calls for unifying phenomena with the formlessness/emptiness of phenomena, the boundlessness on the other side of bounded space, the formless/empty self on the other side of the ego-identity of self, and timeless on the other side of time. Timelessness on the other side of time would provide the necessary and sufficient state to allow for the unification of time and the timeless.

In children, the concept and experience of time does not manifest until approximately 8 years old, and thus full unification does not seem possible until after the age of 8, and we would not be able to make the claim that all stages can access the gross, subtle, formless/emptiness, and unification states before then. As Table 1 above highlights, 1.0 Impulsive, 1.5 Egocentric, and part of 2.0 Rule Oriented stages do not yet have the developmental experience to reach the emptiness/formlessness of time which, in this theory, is a requirement for states of unification.

The first time this logically occurs is at the 2.5 Conformist stage, where we find a concrete unification in some traditions (for example, Theravada Buddhism and other conformist versions of the traditions).

View of the Four Stages in the MetAware tier from Whole Developmental Trajectory

The last four developmental levels at the MetAware tier progressively explore the formless/emptiness of objects depicted by words and labels (words/concepts and boundaries are viewed as constructs at 5.0), the self (constructed ego aware seen at 5.5), and the timeless (entry to 6.0).

Notice that these three stages mirror the first three stages of the concrete tier. The concrete tier stage of 1.0 Impulsive accesses the relative reality of concrete phenomena and space, while the MetAware tier stage of 5.0 Construct Aware accesses the formlessness of word meaning (phenomena) and bounded space.

The 1.5 Egocentric accesses the identity of a concrete self, while 5.5 Transpersonal accesses the formlessness of the subtle ego and consciousness of awareness as their identity.

Entry 2.0 Rule Oriented develops a sense of time, while the transition into 6.0 Universal requires access to the timeless.

The stages and states between these two tiers (the Subtle tier) seem to developmentally access everything else. In other words, the concrete tier stages require access to concrete objects (phenomena), a concrete self, concrete space, and concrete time, while the MetAware tier requires access to the formlessness/emptiness of phenomena/objects; the meaning-making of labels and stories; the emptiness of the meaning of a self; and the boundless and timeless.

The subtle tier then has access to both the relative and the emptiness/formless. You can continue to develop (if you mature the required state into a stage) and can continue to “awaken” (because you already have access to the required relative understanding to see beyond into emptiness). This allows someone to develop into the subtle stages (3.0-4.5) without moving into the emptiness/formlessness states and also allows one to attain all of the emptiness formless states and bring them into unification with any of these particular stages. One can thus achieve one (receptive 3.0), or the other (3.5 active either/or), or both (4.0 both/and) – everything in between the concrete and MetAware tiers).

The Wilber-Combs Matrix (Wilber, 2006) and its derivatives (Diperna, 2014) seem to resonate well here. I wish to clarify that both Wilber and Diperna describe states and stage recognition up through the MetAware tier. Their models regard orienting generalizations which do not delve into the granularity of a theory of how states and stages relate to each other in an interpenetrative manner. It is clear to me that this model is not likely to provide followers of their models any new understandings on a grand perspective, but perhaps it can support a more granular theory that uses research findings to interweave with theory creation and support a developmental practice of integrating states and stages in ways not previously considered.

It appears that much of our experience in the concrete tier, with states and developmental stages in their various combination, is viewed after the first two or three stages, where insufficient development has occurred to provide the relative side of reality for unifying the relative and the formless.

In the MetAware tier, development is adequate on the relative side of reality, however the states required for continued development and unification may have not yet been acquired. In this theory. A person could develop through 4.5 Strategist without accessing any kind of formless state.

This theory is supported by our analysis of vocabulary frequencies in a 1.1 million word study, the qualitative research studies conducted on every developmental level, and the word definitions and descriptions that arise at each stage. This all is supported by our peer-reviewed article describing the validity of the STAGES model (O'Fallon et al., 2020).

This preliminary theory attempts to utilize something more finely grained than orientating generalizations and responds to the question, can we gradually awaken simply by growing up?

Remaining questions include: Both vertical and horizontal states have been recognized, but what about vertical and horizontal stages? How are evolution and involution related to this theory?

Summary

This article has proposed a preliminary theory about the interpenetration of states and stages. The history of the evolution of theories regarding how states and stages are related seems to hint at ever-ensuing theories about their relationship. The proposed theory of the evolutionary interpenetration of states and stages that this article proposes represents one possible next step.

Because research partly underpins this theory, it is important to understand what kind of research approach supports this inquiry and how selecting the appropriate subjects for this research would affect the results. The research studies do not verify the theory but do provide part of the triangulation and some evidence that can highlight theoretical aspects and cull aspects that seem to be detractors and not fundamental to a theory. Each study we have conducted supports the view shaping this theory.

This research, then, uses the evidence I have gathered so far to delve into the theory of how the stages and states interpenetrate and how this relationship evolves.

In order to support a clear understanding, a set of definitions is required, and thus the next stage of this theory building is to define the words and concepts of “states, stages, and awakening/unification.” It is also important to note the trajectory of how states mature and grow and the areas they have in common with stages: phenomena, self, space, and time. Although there may be other more detailed and complex commonalities, it seems that these are the most primary or basic categories we can utilize.

In the stages model, phenomena arise in the first column of the matrix, while the self/collective arises in the second column. Space and time, which are evolutionary and have trajectories, arise in the repeating patterns of the third column since these trajectories of receptive, active, reciprocal, and interpenetrative become increasingly wider as they progress through the three tiers.

Proposing three repeating tenets that tie states and stages together into interpenetration represents the next step: 1.) Necessary but not sufficient 2.) The confusions 3.) Turn it back on yourself.

These components combine in this beginning theory that describes an evolutionary sweep of repeating patterns between states, confusions, and stages and how they interact to fuel the interpenetration of state and stage development.

An evolutionary theory is never complete, and I look forward to watching it unfold and engaging in the delightful questions that emerge.

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