



the
**integral
vision**

**A Very Short Introduction to the Revolutionary Integral
Approach to Life, God, the Universe, and Everything**

Ken Wilber

SUPPOSE WE TOOK EVERYTHING that all the various world cultures have to tell us about human potential—about psychological, spiritual, and social growth—and identified the basic patterns that connect these pieces of knowledge. What if we attempted to create an all-inclusive map that touches the most important factors from all of the world's great traditions?

Ken Wilber's *Integral Vision* provides just such a map. Using all the known systems and models of human growth—from the ancient sages to the latest breakthroughs in cognitive science—it distills their major components into five simple elements, and, moreover, ones that readers can verify in their own experience right now.

In any field of interest—such as business, law, science, psychology, health, art, or everyday living and learning—the *Integral Vision* ensures that we are utilizing the full range of resources for the situation, leading to a greater likelihood of success and fulfillment. With easily understood explanations, exercises, and familiar examples, *The Integral Vision* shows how we can accelerate growth and development to higher, wider, deeper ways of being, embodied in self, shared in community, and connected to the planet, which can literally help with everything from spiritual enlightenment to business success to personal relationships.

Ken Wilber is the author of over twenty books. He is the founder of Integral Institute, a think-tank for studying integral theory and practice, with outreach through local and online communities such as Integral Naked, Integral University, Integral Training, and Integral Spiritual Center.

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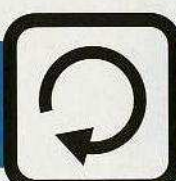
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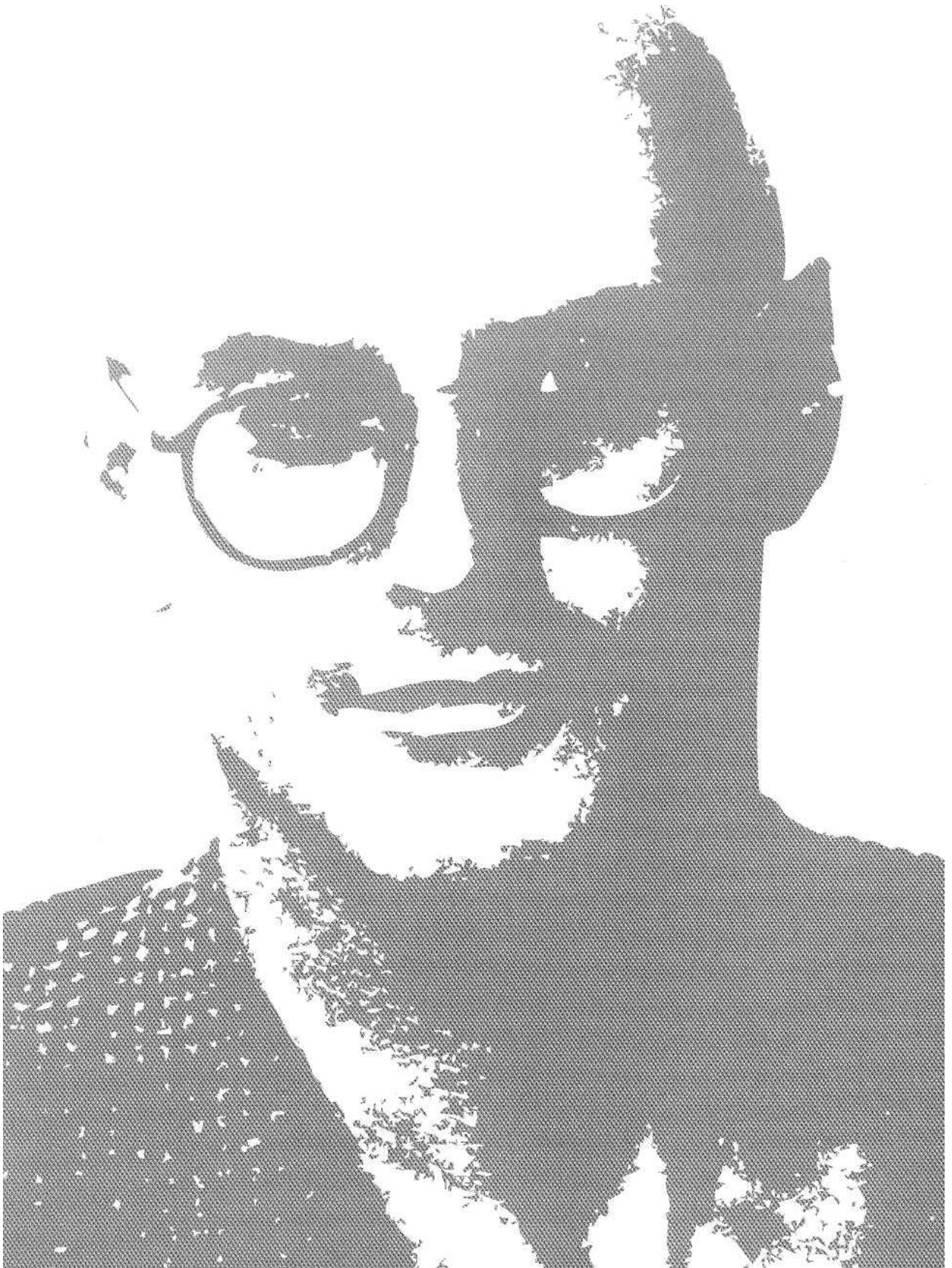
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THE INTEGRAL VISION

We will also be exploring what is perhaps the most important use of the Integral Map or Operating System. Because an IOS can be used to help index any activity—from art to dance to business to psychology to politics to ecology to spirituality—it allows each of those domains to talk to the others. Using IOS, business has the terminology with which to communicate fully with ecology, which can communicate with art, which can communicate with law, which can communicate with poetry and education and medicine and spirituality. In the history of humankind, this has never really happened before.

By using the Integral Approach—by using an Integral Map or Integral Operating System—we are able to facilitate and dramatically accelerate cross-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary knowledge, thus creating the world's first truly integral learning community: Integral University. And when it comes to religion and spirituality, using the Integral Approach has allowed the creation of Integral Spiritual Center, where some of the world's leading spiritual teachers from all major religions have come together not only to listen to each other but to “teach the teachers,” resulting in one of the most extraordinary learning events imaginable. We will return to this important gathering, and ways you can join in this community if you wish.

But it all starts with these simple 5 elements in the contours of your own consciousness.

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SOME OF THE FEATURES OF THE INTEGRAL MAP REFER TO subjective realities in you, some refer to objective realities out there in the world, and others refer to collective or communal realities shared with others. Let's start with states of consciousness, which refer to subjective realities.

States of Consciousness

Everybody is familiar with major **states of consciousness**, such as waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. Right now, you are in a waking state of consciousness (or, if you are tired, perhaps a daydream state of consciousness). There are all sorts of different states of consciousness, including *meditative states* (induced by yoga, contemplative prayer, meditation, and so on), *altered states* (such as drug-induced), and a variety of *peak experiences*, many of which can be triggered by intense experiences like making love, walking in nature, or listening to exquisite music.

The great wisdom traditions (such as Christian mysticism, Vedanta Hinduism, Vajrayana Buddhism, and Jewish Kabbalah) maintain that the 3 *natural states* of consciousness—waking, dreaming, and deep formless sleep—actually contain a treasure trove of spiritual wisdom and spiritual awakening . . . if we know how to use them correctly. We usually think of the



peak experiences: lightning strikes!

dream state as less real, but what if you could enter it while awake? And the same with deep sleep? Might you learn something extraordinary in those awakened states? In a special sense, which we will explore as we go along, the 3 great natural states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep might contain an entire spectrum of spiritual enlightenment. You've probably heard of satori, yes?, which is a Zen term for a profound experience of spiritual awakening, which is said to contain the ultimate secrets—or secret—of the universe itself.

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But on a much simpler, more mundane level, everybody experiences various states of consciousness, and these states often provide profound motivation, meaning, and drives, in both yourself and others. Think of the many “aha!” experiences of brilliantly creative insight: what if we could tap into those whenever needed for intense problem solving? In any particular situation, states of consciousness may not be a very important factor, or they may be the determining factor, but no integral approach can afford to ignore them. Whenever you are using **IOS**, you will automatically be prompted to check and see if you are touching bases with these important subjective realities. This is an example of how a map—in this case, the IOS or Integral Map—can help you look for territory you might not have even suspected was there, and then give you tools to navigate it. . . .

Stages or Levels of Development

There’s an interesting thing about states of consciousness: they come and they go. Even great peak experiences or altered states, no matter how profound, will come, stay a bit, then pass. No matter how wonderful their capacities, they are temporary.

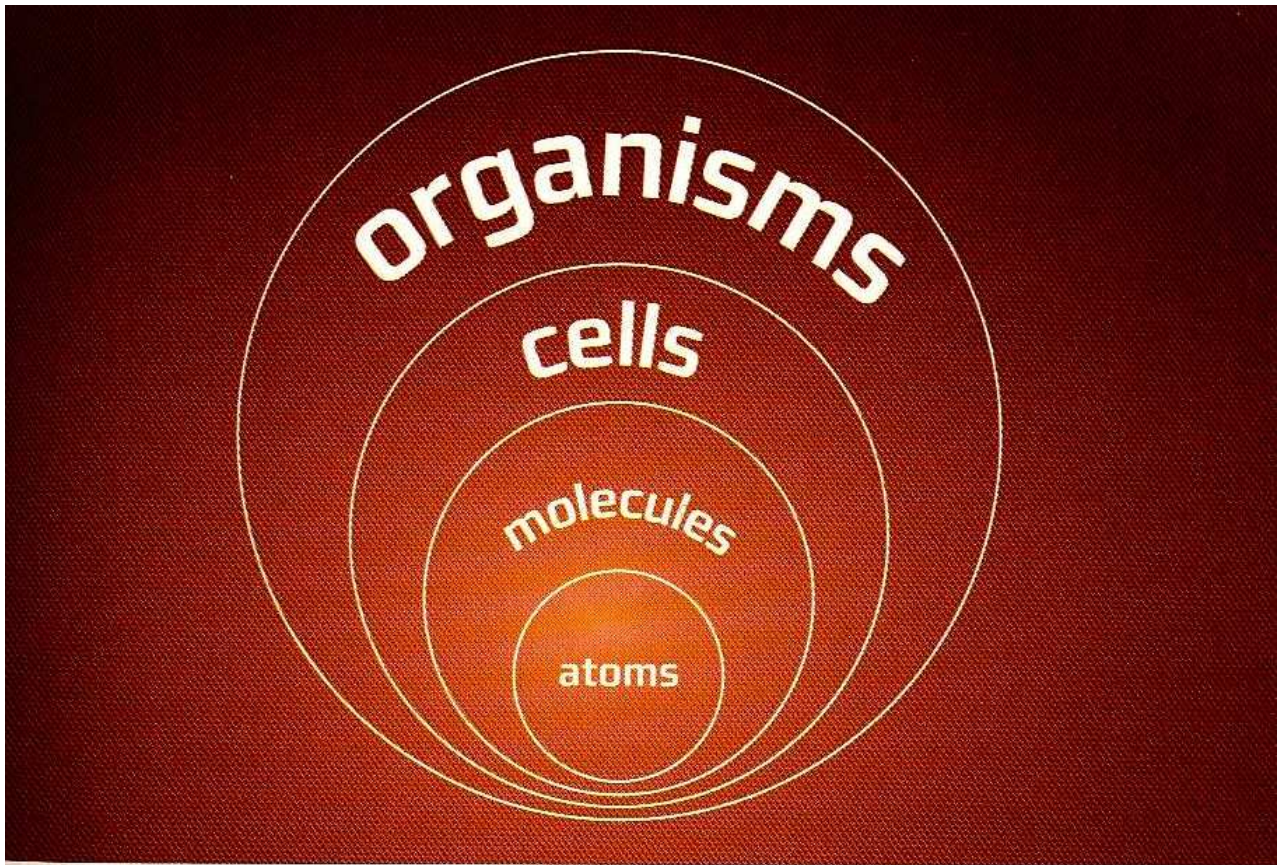


Figure 1. *Levels: All Development Is Envelopment.*

Where states of consciousness are temporary, **stages of consciousness** are permanent. Stages represent the actual milestones of growth and development. Once you are at a stage, it is an enduring acquisition. For example, once a child develops through the linguistic stages of development, the child has permanent access to language. Language isn't a peak experience, present one minute and gone the next. The same thing happens with other types of growth. Once you

Egocentric, Ethnocentric, and Worldcentric

To grasp what is involved with levels or stages, let's use a very simple model possessing only 3 of them. If we look at moral development, for example, we find that an infant at birth has not yet been socialized into the culture's ethics and conventions; this is called the **preconventional stage**. It is also called **egocentric**, in that the infant's awareness is largely self-absorbed. But as the young child begins to learn its culture's rules and norms, it grows into the **conventional stage** of morals. This stage is also called **ethnocentric**, in that it centers on the child's particular group, tribe, clan, or nation, and it therefore tends to exclude those not of its group. But at the next major stage of moral development, the **post-conventional stage**, the individual's identity expands once again, this time to include a care and concern for all peoples, regardless of race, color, sex, or creed, which is why this stage is also called **worldcentric**.

Thus, moral development tends to move from "me" (egocentric) to "us" (ethnocentric) to "all of us" (worldcentric)—a good example of the unfolding waves of consciousness.

Another way to picture these 3 stages is as **body**, **mind**, and **spirit**. Those words all have many different and valid



Figure 2. *Psychological Development Also Is Envelopment.*



Do You Have an Integral Vision?

- Are you passionate about how **EVERYTHING** makes sense and fits together? Religion, psychology, sociology, physics, anthropology, consciousness, capitalism, gender... existence itself?
- Do you want a new way to see all these elements in a single framework, a way that applies consciousness and care to the problems of the world—and to your own life?
- Are you looking for a community of others who are asking the same kinds of questions?

Join Integral Institute today!

For more information about member benefits, visit www.Join-I.org
Or call us directly at 1-866-603-9456

Integral Institute is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, founded by the American philosopher Ken Wilber, whose mission is to make the Integral vision a reality.

Integral Institute is developing more inclusive and balanced approaches to education, business, personal development, spirituality, gender, and dozens of other fields—for a world that desperately needs it.

Join **Integral Institute** today. Members gain access to a universe of integral resources, and the full Integral community, including Ken Wilber and other cutting-edge Integral thinkers and leaders.