

The Integral Model in Coaching



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Introduction

- An integral approach is a call for inclusiveness and integration.
- A helicopter view allows me to see how everything is connected.
- I could focus on individual aspects such as buildings, trees and people, or expand my perception and focus in order to witness and comprehend the totality of the scene below me.
- Why, then, do I lose this perspective the minute I set foot on the ground?
- Why is it so difficult to "see" how everything is related and connected when we are "in it", as opposed to viewing it from above?

Integration vs fragmentation

- There are many reasons we become separated from ourselves, others and the world: daily pressures of work, family demands, finances, multiple distractions, religious and ideological differences, economic realities and a performance culture all require us to 'split' ourselves.
- What we need to be complete humans (time, space, energy, perspective) are drowned out by constant demands.
- If we cannot see how all things are interrelated, then all we can know is separation.
- The aim and intent of an integral approach is to turn the traditional trend of fragmentation, division and separation around.

Chaos, complexity, uncertainty and volatility

- We are increasingly faced with globalisation, complexity, uncertainty and volatility.
- We require new ways of making sense of and understanding a chaotic world.
- Old ways of understanding, thinking and reasoning are insufficient to assist us in making the kinds of decisions that are required in today's complex world.
- These unrelenting and multi-faceted demands on business and leadership require creative and holistic approaches.

Integral and integration

- Integration is defined as
 - a process of making into a whole by bringing all parts together,
 - a combination and co-ordination of separate and diverse elements or units into a more complex and harmonious whole, and
 - a unification and mutual adjustment of diverse groups or elements into a relatively co-ordinated and harmonious whole".
- "The word integral means comprehensive, inclusive, non-marginalizing, embracing.
- Integral approaches to any field attempt to be exactly that: to include as many perspectives, styles, and methodologies as possible within a coherent view of the topic.

Combining multiple perspectives

- Integral approaches draw together existing and separate [world views and perspectives] into an interrelated network of approaches that are mutually enriching".
- Integration implies harmony, balance and equilibrium
- An integral approach can be used in a variety of ways:
 - enquiry,
 - dialogue,
 - implementing change and/or
 - developmental planning.
- An integral approach encourages contemplation, discovery, reflection and action.

4 ways of understanding 'integral'

1. Framework or set of concepts and theories to Interpret the world.
2. Methodology or a set of principles to enquire about the world.
3. Community of embodied people using integral theories and the methodology, and/or.
4. Way to study the developmental stages of human beings (set of skills, capacities and mental complexity – modes of thinking).

Helicopter and on the ground views

- Integral Theory proposes that elements of reality are connected, leveraged and aligned to help address the challenges and opportunities in the world.
- Integral Theory is a way of looking at the world that allows to us to observe the various aspects or domains of reality, such as mind, matter, culture, nature or systems.
- An integral approach allows both a holistic “helicopter view” and an in-depth, detailed, “on the ground” view as one would get from standing close to something to inspect it.
- Integral Theory provides us with both a telescope and a microscope with which to observe and understand people and things (both natural and manufactured).

The AQAL Model

- This four-quadrant map or model, '*All Quadrants. All Levels, All Lines. All States, All Types*'; known as AQAL, is central to his Integral Theory.
- This Integral Model explores and links various elements or perceptions of reality (subjective, objective, inter-subjective and inter-objective), and maintains that these four realities require individual and collective consideration.

Subjective: "I".

- The world as "I" see it.
- It is dependent on an individual's perspective and experience, and is based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions (I may like something, but you may not, so my "liking" is subjective).

Objective: "IT".

- Things that can be observed in an unbiased and neutral way, or have standard measures of value.
- For example, a person's blood type which is classified and measured as Type A, B, AB or O is the same across the world.
- Another example is that if you and I want to know who is taller, we measure ourselves in centimeters.
- A centimeter is an objective measurement as it is always the same and is not influenced by anyone's personal perspective.

Inter-subjective: "WE".

- Inter means "between"; it refers to those feelings, languages, tastes or opinions that are shared between or among groups of people.
- Eg. people in the sales department may view budget cuts differently from the way in which people in the accounting department view them.

Inter-objective: "ITS":

- Literarily meaning "between things".
- This includes "things" such as structures and systems and nature that can be objectively observed and experienced, such as a road network, car, mountain range or building.

Complexity

- Wilber's model is extremely complex.
- Its application in coaching needs to be simplified to be practical. (Angelo Kehayas 2016)

The Major Rule

"I have one major rule: everybody is right. More specifically, everybody - including me - has some important pieces of the truth. and all of those pieces need to be honored, cherished, and included in a more gracious, spacious, and compassionate embrace."

- Introduction to the Collected Works of Ken Wilber

Although Ken Wilber highlighted his "one rule" above, closer inspection of his work indicates that there are actually a few central values that follow from his "one rule".

The central values of the “one rule”

Openness to methodological pluralism

- *Methodological*: A body of practices, procedures, and rules used by those who work in a discipline or engage in an inquiry; a set of working methods.
- *Pluralism*: Two or more states, groups, principles or sources of authority.

Essentially, 'methodological pluralism' means keeping an open mind to different points of view and ways of thinking and multiple perspectives.

- *Methodological Pluralism* is a view that respects all perspective and acknowledge that most perspectives are interrelated and warrant inclusion when considering reality and knowledge. An example could be including both western and African perspectives in our thinking and not marginalizing those perspectives foreign to us.

Multiple knowledge building methodologies

- An integral approach emphasizes the inclusion of multiple knowledge building methodologies.
- A classic example of this would be the age-old nature/nurture debate, with some ascribing individual qualities to genetic determinism and others emphasizing the role of nurturing and socialization.
- An integral approach would encourage an exploration of a "both/and" perspective rather than an "either/or" debate.
- This supports the view, that integrated and integral thinking is more than just a philosophy of inclusion; it is an actual tool that leads to advancement and development and assists us in knowing more and doing better.
- Peter Elbow explained that in methodological pluralism it is not that "everybody is right". It is that "anybody could be right" - everybody is partially right from their perspective - and there may be an acknowledgement that "I may be wrong".

Multiple perspectives

- Cultivating multiple perspectives clearly involves thinking about things in comprehensive and holistic ways.
- It also involves EQ (emotional intelligence) - the ability to notice and manage one's emotions and reactions and the awareness of the emotions and reactions of others) skills, because being open to and understanding multiple and sometimes seemingly conflicting perspectives can be difficult and frustrating and therefore requires both tolerance and empathy.

Wilber urged people to respect and combine learnings from:

- The individual, the group, and the system.
- The body, mind (intellect), and emotions .
- The arts, sciences, and morality.
- The ego (me), ethnos (us), and world (all of us) ourselves, others, and nature.
- Beauty, goodness, and truth.
- Group, national, and global, and the personal, the integrated, and the transpersonal.

Consider and respect divergent perspectives

- An integral approach requires the careful consideration of multiple perspectives or points of view, in conjunction with each other, in an attempt to gain as much intellectual inclusion as possible.
- According to Wilber, a truly integral perspective requires tolerance and respect for all points of views, religions, methodologies and paradigms.

"Value rule" 2: Integration

- It is not enough simply to use our "rationality" to accept that there are different perspectives, but we are required to use cognition and deploy a type of "vision-logic/network logic" (terms coined by Wilber) in order to see different points of view as elements in an integrated whole.
- South Africa, despite its growing pains, is an example of integration, where people with different perspectives and from various cultures and backgrounds have, to a large extent, integrated into one nation.

"Value rule" 3: Awareness and respect for the disparate aspects of reality

- An integral approach requires us to be enquiring and question our paradigms and the boundaries of our often-limited personal perspectives.
- The integral approach actively endorses and encourages the exploration of alternate perspectives, and in this way accesses diverse approaches that might be applicable to diverse situations.
- Integral Theory aims to provide a unifying framework that acknowledges and values differences, and thereby honours the unity within diversity.

"Value rule" 4: Accepting knowledge uncertainty (epistemological indeterminacy)

- An integral perspective requires that there is no universal truth. "Knowing" is context dependent and constantly shifting and open to revision.
- The fundamentally uncertain "nature of knowledge" question is: *how do we deal with this/cope with this uncertainty?*
- An integral approach requires us to acknowledge that knowledge is uncertain and urges us to try to find productive and effective ways to deal with this reality.

"Value rule" 5: Neutrality or balanced awareness

Integral AQAL is a neutral framework;

- it does not dictate what one should think or force any particular ideologies on anyone;
- it merely requires us to expand our awareness and be inclusive in our thinking (Wilber, 2005).
- As such, we are called on to maintain an equal or balanced awareness and understanding of all the four quadrants as they relate to any phenomena we may be studying.
- There are other values linked to the integral model – the 5 described above give a broad overview of the theory.

Dual perspectives

- The beauty of the AQAL model is that it allows us to have dual perspectives with which to look at reality.
- In this way one can switch between a focused, intense investigation of something, and also allowing oneself to *"take a step back"* and obtain a wider, *"softer"* field of vision that is more expansive, thereby allowing things that may at first seem disconnected and separated to come into a wider integrated view and perspective.

Why use the integral Map?

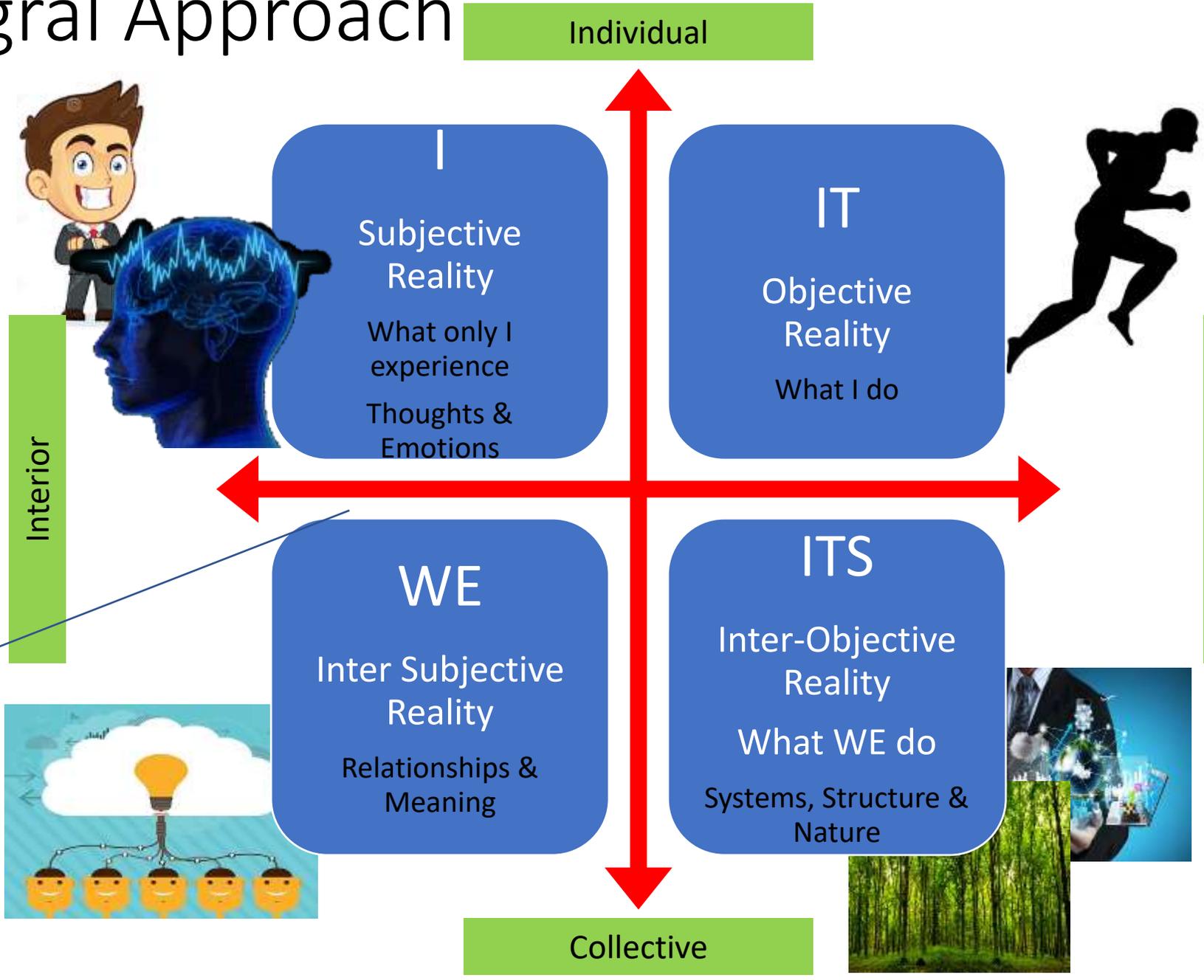
- An Integral Map or Model helps us to make sure that we are taking various factors and data into account, thereby "touching all the bases"
- It allows us to safeguard against missing any potential resources, thereby increasing our chance of success when planning a coaching or organizational change intervention.
- It also equips us with a way of making sense of our own lives and experience of awareness.
- No experience takes place in only one quadrant or even at only one line or level.

The Integral Approach

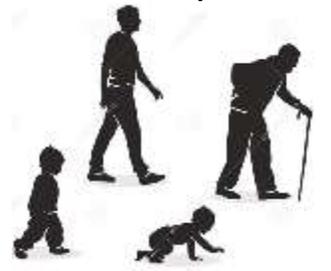
- All Quadrants
- All Lines
- All stages
- All levels
- All types



All Quadrants Are interrelated



All Levels of development



All Stages Consciousness



All Lines

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Cognitive |  Emotional |
|  Somatic/ Body |  Interpersonal |
|  Values |  Morals |
|  Needs (Maslow) |  Self-Identity |

All quadrants – the 4 domains

- Integral Theory allows a coach or organisational development practitioner to explore individual and organisational realities, challenges", opportunities and experiences as they relate to all four quadrants of the Integral Model.
- Furthermore, Integral Theory emphasises the relationship between the four Quadrants and thereby guides our understanding of the inherent interconnectedness of people and things.
- Every experience or event also has a *subjective, an objective, an inter-subjective and an inter-objective dimension*, and all four of these quadrants require and warrant equal attention.

The 4 quadrants

1. **I** - *Subjective perspective or individual experience*, such as values, emotions and thoughts; the individual viewed from the interior or self.
2. **IT** - *Objective perspective or behavioural experience*, such as the physical body, biology and behaviour: the Individual viewed from the exterior; observable data.
3. **WE** - *Inter-subjective perspective or cultural & relational experience*. Such as relationships, shared meaning. Culture; the collective viewed from the Interior.
4. **ITS** - *Inter-objective perspective or systemic and environmental experience*, such as systems, environments, economy and technology; the collective viewed from the exterior.

The Exterior Dimension

- The exterior dimension (Quadrant:2 "IT" and 4 "ITS) refers to that which can be *seen and observed* (from the outside: exterior] by the naked eye, or by a microscope or test (such as a blood test. heart rate or DNA test).
- It refers to *observable behaviour and actions*, the body; "things" such as cars, building and organisms, and systems and structures (Edwards, 2005)45.
- The exterior dimension can therefore also be described as the *qualitative or empirical dimension*.
- For example your behaviour and your body are observable.

The Interior Dimension

- This refers to those experiences, perceptions, thoughts and emotions that *only you can be aware of and know* if you are either "inside" the head of the person having the experience or if you are part of the "WE".
- Therefore, the interior could also be described as the *qualitative or phenomenological dimension*.

Individual -Collective

- The *individual-collective dimension* refers to the relationship between "the individual world of self-agency ("ME" and "I", or first person) and the collective world of social communion ("WE" and "US", or second person) (Edwards, 2005)

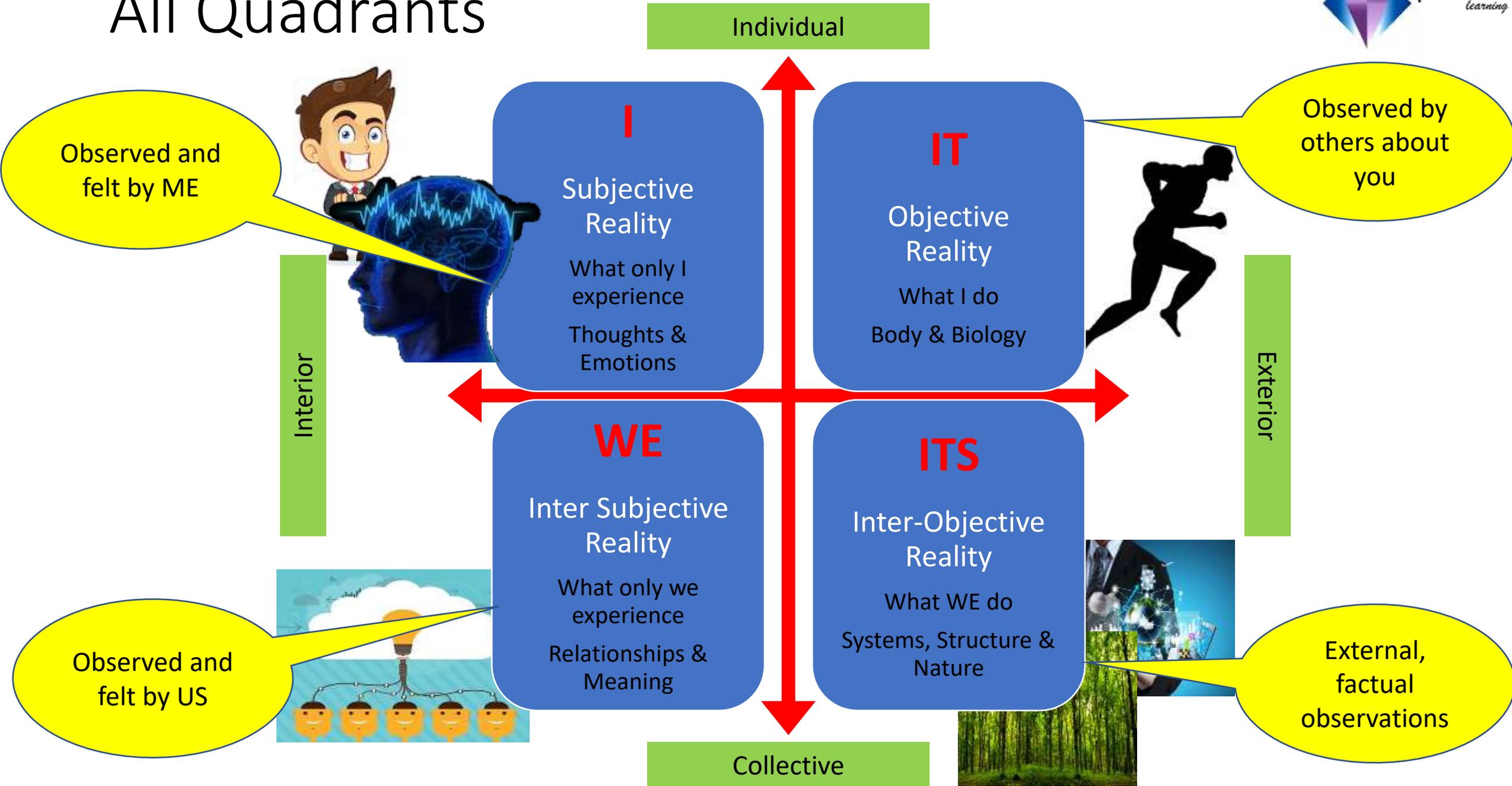
Coaching using Integral Theory

- Integral Theory suggests that a comprehensive description of any phenomenon requires one to account for all four of these irreducible perspectives.
- For example, when coaching a client, it would be important to consider all 4 quadrants:
 1. The client's interior world such as his/her thoughts and feelings,
 2. The exterior aspect of his/her body and behaviour such as posture, agility, fitness level or body language,
 3. The coachee's inter- subjective experience of relationships and meaning - 'does he/she have healthy relationships and a support system.
 4. and lastly, the inter-objective reality of his /her world such as the company he/she works for, the technology he/she uses and the country he/she lives in.

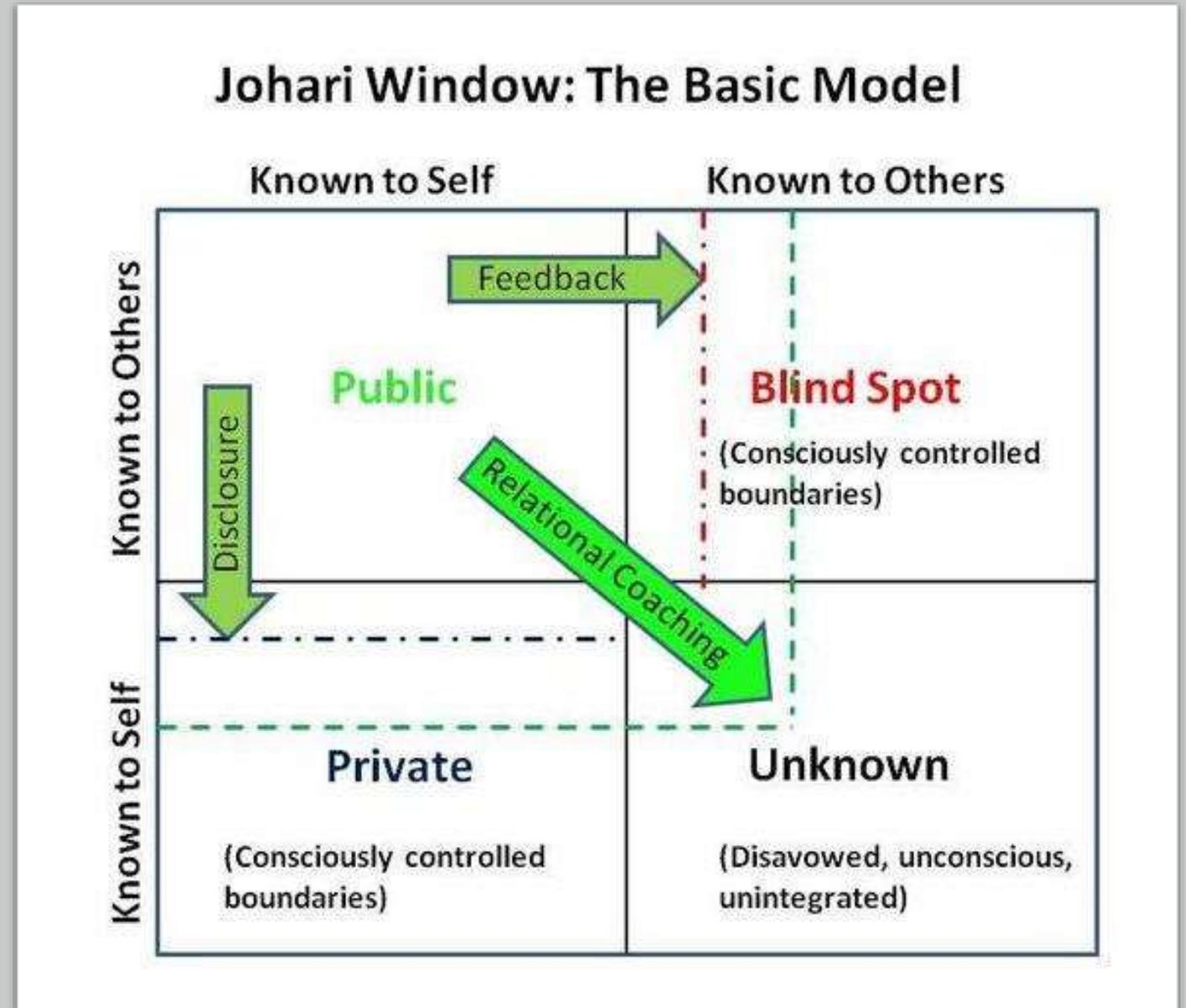
Coaching using Integral Theory

- As a coach, it would be necessary to understand and explore all four quadrants individually and in relation to each other In order to obtain a comprehensive view of the client's reality. (*Current reality – R in GROW*)
- These four quadrants also impact on each other.
- For instance, if the client suffers from a severe lack of sleep “IT” (2)it may impact on his/her emotions and ability to think clearly "I" (1).
- From an integral perspective, it is therefore important to investigate and understand how a phenomenon shows up in each individual quadrant, and also how quadrants 1, 2, 3 and 4 impact on and relate to each other.

All Quadrants



There is a lot of overlap between the quadrants in this model and the Johari window – Think about it



Notes on the quadrants:

- Quadrant 1 is the crucial ingredient in moving people toward different kinds of practices and beliefs. **This is where we can apply “time to think”.**
- We have a natural tendency to emphasise some quadrants and not others.
- For example a busy executive who spends a great deal time thinking (Quadrant 1), using technology (Quadrant 4), and building networks with colleagues (Quadrant 3), yet never pays attention to his health (eating on the run, while also spending most of his time behind a desk with little or no exercise) (Quadrant 2).
- The quadrants we ignore get us into trouble. Relate this to the Wheel of Life.

Systemic thinking is required

Interior

Knowing the reality

Thoughts & Emotions

- Values, Certainty
- Personal mastery
- Mental models
- Thoughts(inner critic, self praise)
- Hopes & desires
- Awareness & emotions
- Attitudes, values & self esteem
- Motivations, empathy, trust

Individual

Self, me or I

Body & Biology

- Brain & biology
- Genetics
- Movement
- Body Chemistry & bodily systems
- Body language
- Fitness , health & diet
- Actions
- Participation

Each quadrant impacts on the other

All 4 quadrants have values and need to be viewed in relation to each other

WE

Relationship & Meaning

- Group & team shared values
- Culture & web of culture
- Communication
- Group attitudes & beliefs
- Customs , norms , boundaries
- Stories , myths & narratives
- Shared visions & goals
- Shared meanings
- Language
- Relationships

Group, whole, we, us, ours

Collective

ITS

Systems , Structures & Nature

- Social systems & structures
- Environment(nature & man made)
- Economic systems
- Natural resources
- Political systems & legal systems
- Technology , time & tools
- Laws, policies & protocols
- Community Infrastructure(housing, roads , lighting)

Is observable & can be seen

Exterior



All Levels or stages of development

- A level is a general measure of higher and lower.
- Any specific level has an actual structure and tends to unfold in a sequence and thus progress through stages.
- Levels are not rigidly separated from each other but are rather fluid and overlapping waves.

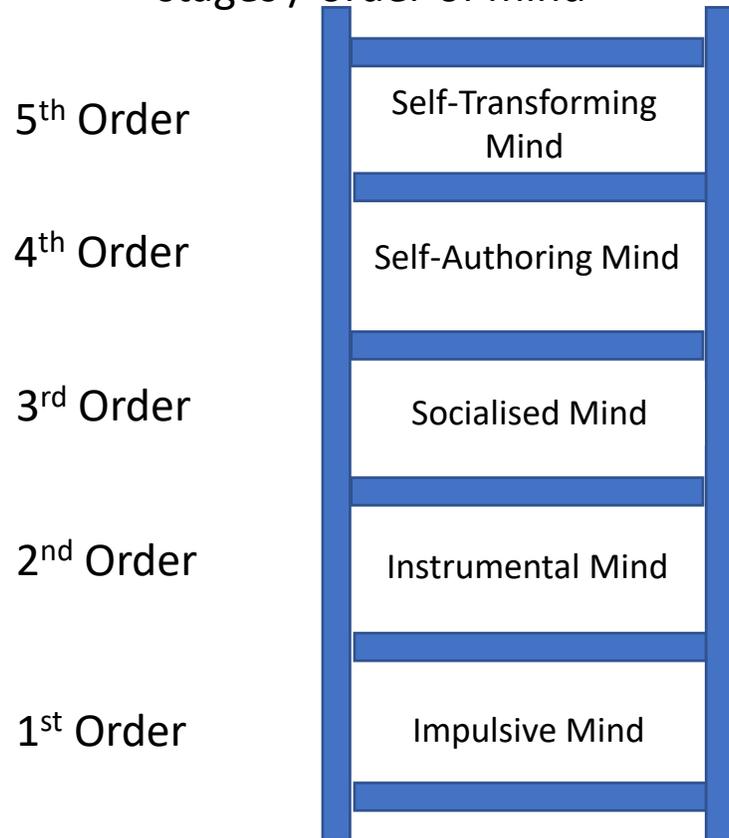
-(TheAQALGlossary)

Examples are CMM, human development stages, emotional maturity

All Levels – levels or stages of development in each of the quadrants or domains CMM, Maturity, Developmental phases

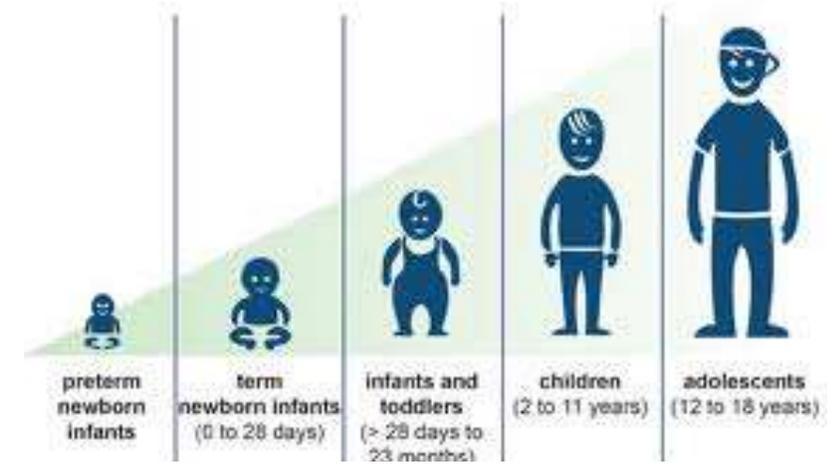
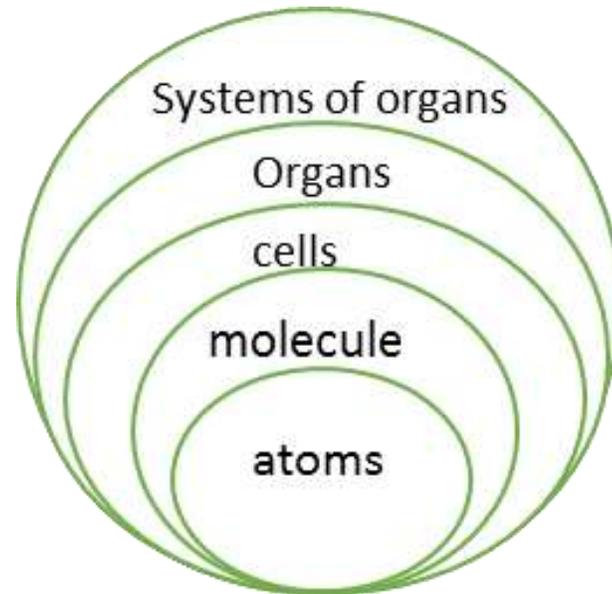


Robert Kegan's Developmental stages / order of mind



HOLONS (nested Levels)

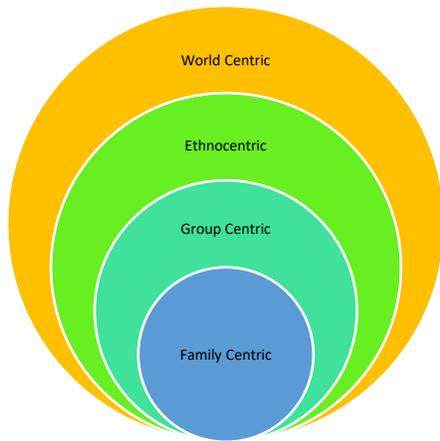
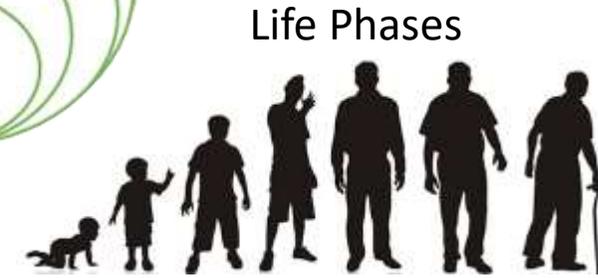
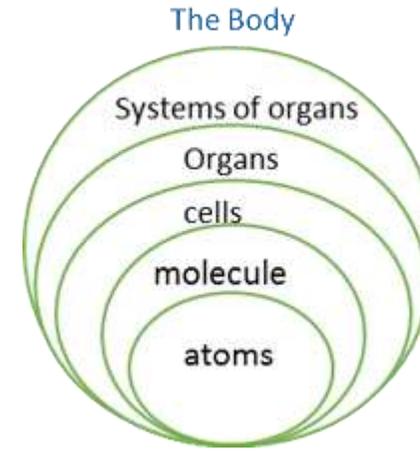
The Body



All Levels

- All four quadrants have dimensions of growth, development, or evolution.
- That is, they all show some sort of stages or levels of development.
- There are many different types of stages or levels that we go through, not only as human beings but also as institutions, countries or societies.
- Robert Kegan's levels of development is an example.
- Other theories, such as those by Erik Erikson – stages of psychosocial development.

Robert Kegan's Developmental stages / order of mind



Organisational states



Systems and Holons

- Simply defined, a system means a collection of parts which are connected and joined together by a web of relationships, whereas holons are parts within other parts that form a whole.
- In systems theory; one part can be related to another. But It can also form and stand independently.
- In terms of a holon, the whole develops as a result of the parts within it.
- For example, an organisation cannot exist without the parts of which it is comprised.

All Lines – Multiple intelligences or capacities

- Lines can broadly be defined as "multiple Intelligences" or capacities.
- They refer to the human "Capacities, areas or streams" within which people develop.
- Ken Wilber drew from Howard Gardner's research on multiple intelligences. Lines are specific aspects of development of a human being. He identified more than a dozen developmental lines in quadrant 1.
- Eg Dancing can be at a beginner, intermediate or advanced level. In this example, dancing is the line (or capacity).
- While beginner, Intermediate or advanced would be the level of the dancing.

All Lines – Lines and Streams of growth and development – multiple intelligences

All quadrants have developmental lines

This example is in quadrant 1

An individual operates at different levels for each line



Cognitive



Emotional



Somatic/ Body



Interpersonal



Values



Morals



Needs (Maslow)



Self-Identity

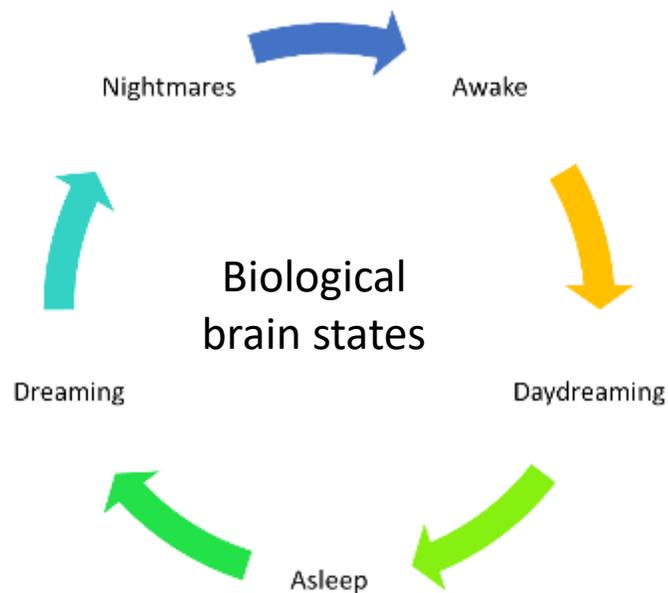
All Lines

- It is more important to be aware of them and recognise where one needs attention than it is to excel at all of them.
- All people are unevenly developed and we need to be aware of both our strengths and limitations. This is where other tools such as positive psychology or strengthsfinder can be used.
- A strategy that could work for one person may not work or be appropriate for the next.
- A high level of development in one line (for example, interpersonal relationships) does not necessarily imply a high level of development in another. Eg. Emotional intelligence.

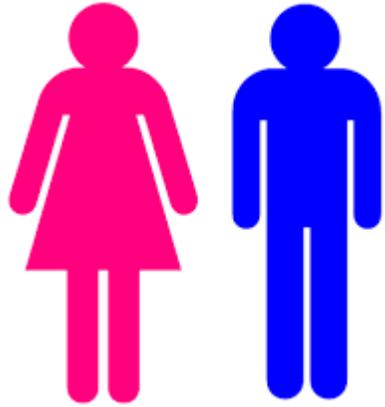
All states – temporary expressions, consciousness and awareness

- States are temporary (seconds to years) occurrences of aspects or reality.
- They also tend to be incompatible with each other or polar opposites – eg drunk and sober.
- We require an understanding of the various states of consciousness because our
- Consciousness is inextricably linked to our ability to be aware of ourselves, others and the world around us.
- The higher our level of consciousness, the greater our ability to take in and "hold" information and also to respond and react to the information we perceive.

All States – of consciousness or awareness



All types: of classification/ categories



Male/ Female



Black/ White



Culture or ethnicity

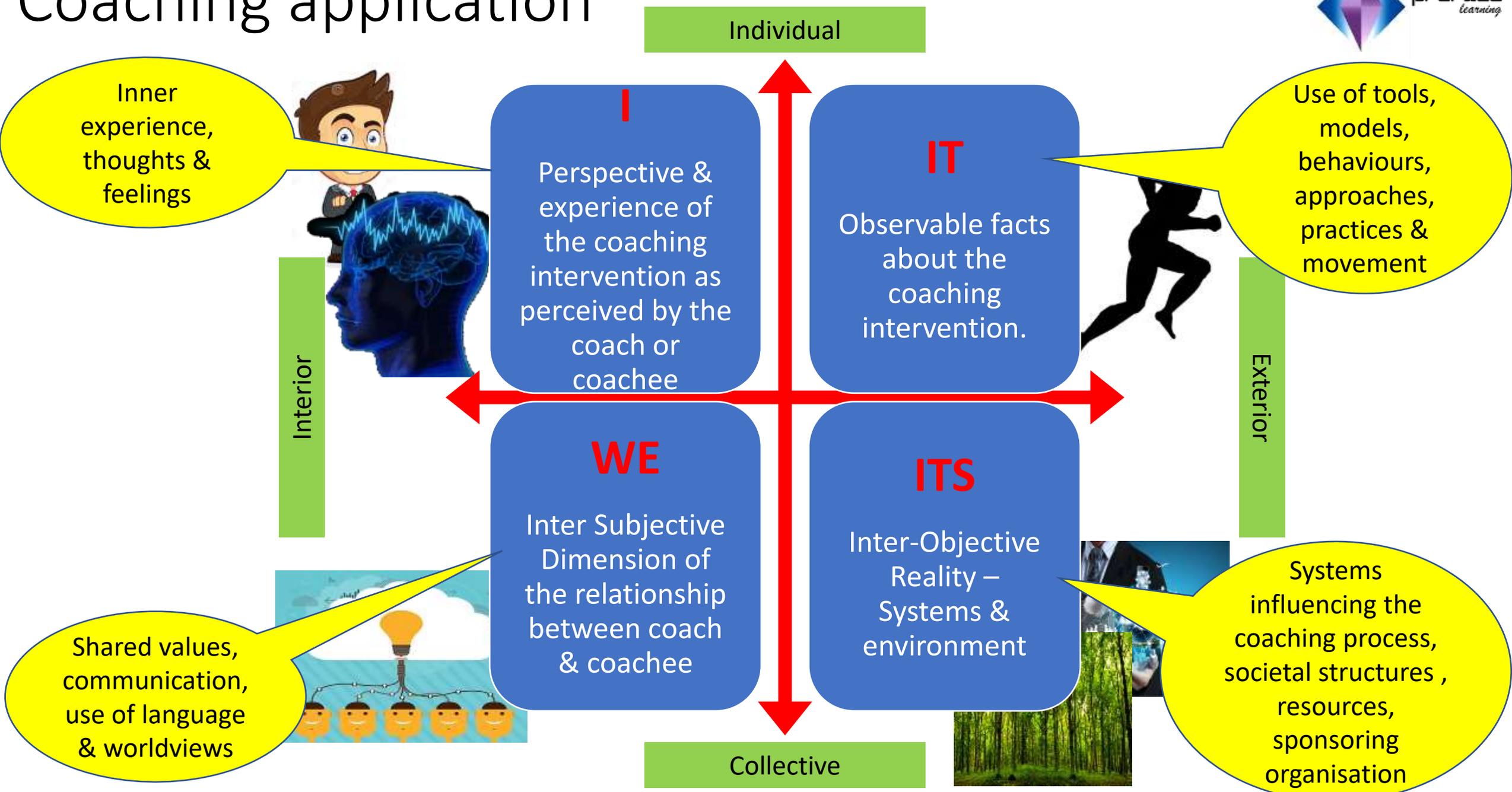
All types

- All types refers to biological types such as male or female or adult and child but it also refers to psychological types, for example, the psychological typing of various personalities such as the Myers Briggs MBTI or Enneagram personality typing system.
- In addition, it could also be applied to various categories such as nationality.
- According to the integral approach. no "type" is deemed "more" or "better"; they are simply different in terms of classification.

Coaching summary

- Coaching can be applied to and informed by the 4 quadrants.
- Coaching can focus on all or some of the dimensions.

Coaching application



References

- Natalie Cunningham - Rethink