

Catalyzing Emergence: Integral, Evolutionary, and Spiritual Perspectives on Chinese Medicine, Part III

By Lonny S. Jarrett

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Note: This article is abstracted from Jarrett's new book in progress, tentatively titled *Deepening Perspectives on Chinese Medicine*, in which he focuses on integral, evolutionary, and spiritual perspectives on the practice of Chinese medicine. It is the third of three parts; the first two parts were published in *Meridians: The Journal of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine*.

Introduction

In the first two parts of this series, the basics were set in place for understanding Integral Theory as a foundation for the emergence of an integral medicine, a non-dual medicine that leaves no significant dimension of the self behind. In Part III, I present the lines of development and the nature of typing systems as the fourth and fifth fundamental aspects of Integral Theory (States, Stages, Quadrants, Lines, and Types). I also discuss the import of evolutionary and spiritual perspectives for the practice of integral medicine.

Lines of Development

Regarding "lines of development," we are referring to the multiplicity of capacities that are potentially available for human beings to manifest. This includes the physical, cognitive, psychological, ego, soul, spiritual, artistic, creative, philosophical, emotional, sexual, empathic, communicative, relational, and ethical lines of development. The 4Q map in Fig. 1 charts the course of the individual (UL), relational (LL), physical (UR), and societal (LR) lines of development.

Individuals evidence different degrees of development across a broad range of capacities. From this perspective, one is not an entity fixed in time and space but rather appears as a work in progress. We are constituted of different streams of development all contributing to the emergence of a compound self in a complex process of becoming.

The self, as a process, is not separate in any way from the process of Kosmic evolution.[1] This leads us to a foundational principle of integral medicine; through the transformation of the patient's self, we have access to the heart of the whole. The practitioner and patient are on a journey together, and meaningful development occurs in the self, culture, and consciousness as one.

Figure 1.

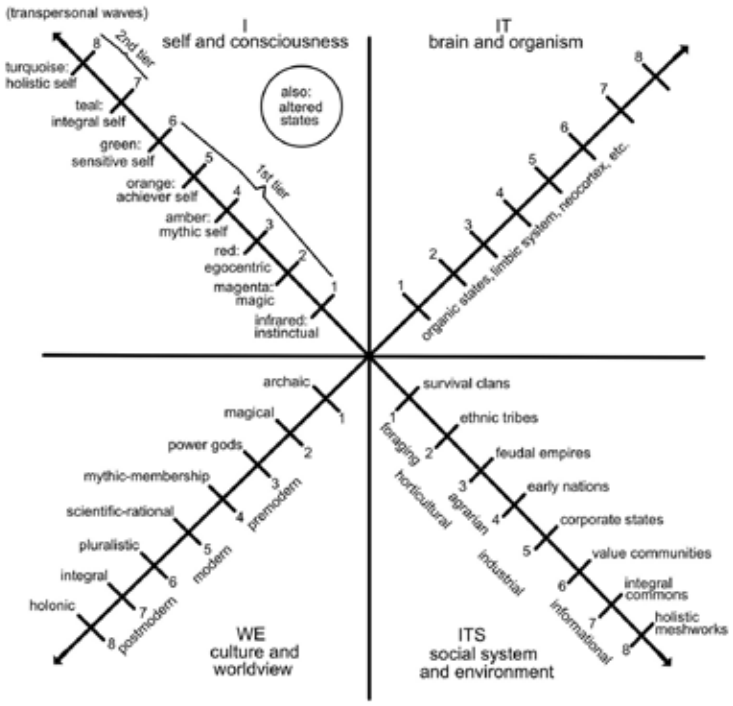


Figure 1: The quadrants define four perspectives that every sentient being looks *through*. Illustrated here are depicted stages in the evolution of the self (I), culture (We), the body (It), and society and ecosphere (Its). The trajectory of each line in each quadrant is toward increased complexity and integration.

Adapted from: Wilber K. A Theory of Everything: An Integral Vision for Business, Politics, Science, and Spirituality. Boston: Shambhala; 2000.

We are never treating just the individual, but always culture, society, and Kosmos as well. Medicine is a potent vehicle for change.

Lines develop relatively independently of each other. Each of us has some lines which are more highly developed, some that are at a moderate stage of development, and others that are less so. We can all think of great artists and musicians whose artistic and creative lines of development were so elevated that they served as a channel for soul and spirit to enter into the world, moving and even transforming us in those subtle dimensions.

These very same individuals, however, can lack emotional and relational maturity, evidencing little capacity to lead a balanced, integrated, wholesome life. We've also had sufficient evidence in the last 100 years demonstrating that the elevation of an individual's spiritual line can far exceed their ethical, relational, and psychological line of development. Clearly, as a whole, humanity's technological prowess based on our cognitive capacity has far exceeded our soul, spiritual, and ethical lines of development.

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As practitioners who aspire toward an integral embrace of medicine, a significant dimension of diagnosis involves the assessment of the relative balance of a patient's different lines of development. We must note which lines are most developed and are therefore most relied on and which are weakest, having been neglected and therefore underdeveloped.

Over the course of treatment we expect the neglected lines to develop as we support the patient to direct attention to cultivating them (for example the nutritional, physical, cognitive, hygienic, and/or ethical lines). We also expect the highly developed lines to be less relied on as a dysfunctional way of avoiding neglected, repressed, and underdeveloped aspects of the self.

Types

"Types" is the fifth element of Integral Theory and are found in all quadrants. There are many typing systems with various degrees of nuance that are common in culture. In the UL, these include gender, enneagram, Myers-Briggs, and personality types. Typing such as the Aryuvedic doshas, the directions of the Native American medicine wheel, and astrological signs tend to implicate all four quadrants.[2]

Chinese medicine utilizes a variety of typing systems in diagnosis and treatment. The most well-known is that of Five-element constitution that I've covered extensively in my writing.[3] Eight principle syndrome patterns, exit/entry blocks, and the six-paired meridians can all be used as typing systems. Even herbal formulas can be used as a typing system, as we may denote a patient to be a *xiao yao wan* or a *gui pi tang* conformation or "type." Correlating various typing systems creates a synthesis of perspectives yielding a more nuanced view of the patient and clinical reality.[4]

A significant attribute of the Five-element constitutional typing systems is that each type is present in each state, stage, and quadrant, influencing all lines of development. For example, an infant who is a water constitution at Stage 1 will still be water through any and all subsequent stages (See Figure 2). Their water

constitutional type may be thought of as a lens that both admits, and denies, certain types of information and experience from entering consciousness. This filter is always in place throughout the entire spectrum of development, essentially skewing it in a particular elementally and constitutionally determined direction.

All lines of development are influenced by constitutional type. For the water type, their quality of ambition, will, degree of flow vs. contraction, and relationship to fear and resources—all attributes of the water element— will influence for better or worse the emergence and development of their individual capacities (UL), relationships (LL), phenotype (UR), functional fit in society (LR) and sensitivity to environmental conditions (LR). See Fig. 2 below.

Figure 2. Types, Lines, Stages

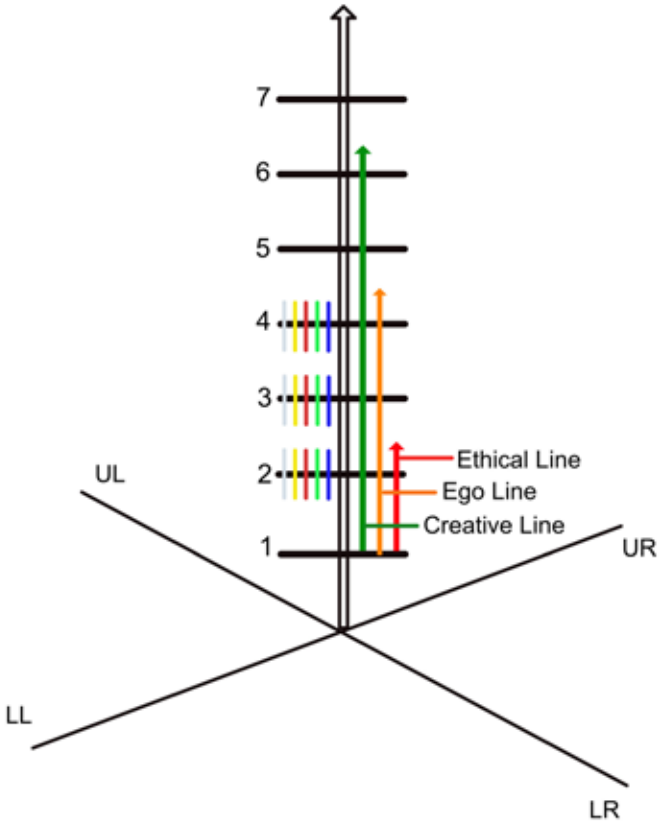


Figure 2: Here I've mapped lines, types, and stages of development, superimposing them over the four-quadrants. On the right, different capacities within the self (creativity, ego, ethics) are depicted at different stages of development. From right to left and shortest to highest these are magic/mythic (red meme), rational (orange meme), and pluralistic respectively (green meme).[i]

On the left, each stage is depicted as being translated by one of the five elemental constitutional types. Each of the five vertical lines at stages 2, 3, and 4 represent the constitutional filter of each element. These are color coded blue, green, red, yellow, and white respectively for their association with water, wood, fire, earth, and metal.[ii]

Constitution skews development in each stage toward a particular elemental expression, coloring the meaning attached to experience as well as its embodiment. In the course of development through the stages, the ethical line of development associated with each stage evolves toward an increased embrace of "other" as "self." As thought and feeling are revealed as objects in awareness in the transpersonal stages, identification shifts to soul and spirit, and the elemental virtues of wisdom, humility, benevolence, propriety, compassion, integrity, reciprocity, and righteousness manifest.[5]

Even an individual at the highest non-dual stage embodies innately determined constitutional tendencies. It appears to be a myth that at the highest stage, all lines converge as one becomes a living manifestation of the absolute. I doubt Jesus or Buddha played great jazz sax. Nonetheless, it is possible to experience the pull toward the confluence of all lines, Tielhard de Chardin's "Omega Point," in the heart.[6]

II. Evolution

The Chinese philosophical tradition placed great emphasis on transformation. The term for transformation, *hua* (化) refers merely to the change of one thing into another with no hierarchical distinction that might imply evolution.[7] A Chinese term for "evolution," *yanbian* （衍變）depicts water (氵) moving (*xing*: 行，the same character in *wuxing*, 五行， "Five-elements" or "Five-transformations). This is paired with the character *bian* (變) meaning "change." This couplet imparts a sense of both descent and return, of water flowing cyclically back to the sea.

Though consistent with Daoism's circular view of time, it is diametrically opposed to the sense of emergence and increased degree of complexity and integration implied by the English word "evolution." Evolutionary transformation implies vertical ascent from the lower to the higher; the emergence of new stages, not the return to former ones.

The theories of CM orient us primarily to cyclic transformation as embodied in the Five-element *sheng* cycle or the rotation of the 64 *Yijing* hexagrams. The integral AQAL map (Fig. 1) orients us toward evolution over the course of linear time. Taken together, the circle and the straight line yield the evolutionary spiral embodied in the double helix of DNA (hence the name "Spiral Dynamics" for the system that assess the evolution of values in culture).[8]

Much of what we've already covered in this series of articles is based on an evolutionary perspective. The great traditions postulated an endpoint to development expressed in the West

i. In the online version of the article these are colored to depict their memetic associations. I've discussed these in Jarrett (2004), pp. 745-766.

ii. These are depicted in color in the online version of the article.

as "heaven" and in the East as "enlightenment." Both denoted a mythic state of omniscience, omnipotence, and eternal light, bliss, and love. To make a caricature, in the West, you get to have ice cream for eternity with everyone you loved during life and in the East, you receive an eternal "get out of jail free" card, never having to return to incarnational suffering (from the perspective of Theravada).

For the sake of brevity, I will sum up the import of the deeper dimensions of evolution for our conversation thusly: implicit in our endeavor to develop an integral medicine that neglects no essential part of the self is the recognition of the imperative enabling the self to evolve in all its dimensions and capacities, while indulging no inherent sense of limitation or preconceived end point. Health and evolution are one and the same. When stagnation is released, *qi* flows, excesses are reduced and deficiencies are tonified, and *shen* interpenetrates with *jing*, evolution of the self is the result (See Figure 3).

III. Spirit, Medicine

Matter, body, mind, and soul are vehicles for the expression of spirit. The states, stages, quadrants, lines, and types forming the integral map, chart the hierarchical expression of spirit (consciousness) through self, culture, body, society, and Kosmos. In Figures 1, 2, and 3, spirit is the central axis arising out of the center of the circle as well as the field the entire map of creation arises from, and exists in. Spirit is the source, the path, and the goal of creation.

When expressed through the human vehicle, it has two directions, all the way up and all the way down. Ascension is the direction of spirit as the creative impulse, Eros, evolution, the authentic self, the life impulse, as it pushes to manifest that which has never been, endeavoring always beyond the bounds of the known. The descending direction of spirit manifests as an opening to source, Agape, involution, and Thanatos.[9]

In Daoism this opening is interpreted as a "return" to Laozi's "wilderness before the dawn." As spirit is liberated, we simultaneously recognize ourselves as the empty ground of all being, and the creative explosion surging forth from emptiness. We discover that there is nothing to overcome because nothing has ever happened, and we step into a place, beyond the known that is ever new, where spirit has never been before. These two directions of spirit manifest in health as spiritual self-confidence (trust in the positivity of the process) and soul depth (wisdom, knowledge of emptiness) respectively. The heart/kidney axis, held in place by will, is the physiological vessel for this simultaneous expansion into height and depth.

Figure 3.

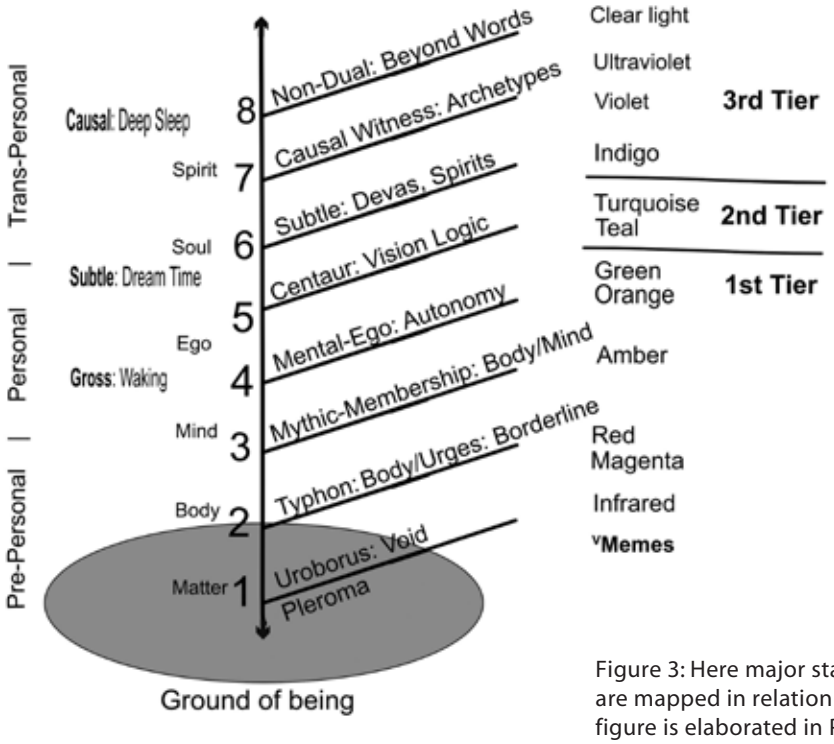


Figure 3: Here major states and stages are mapped in relation to each other. This figure is elaborated in Part II of this series.

Stagnation is illness; evolution is health. In CM we speak of working with "*qi*," but *qi* has no ethical imperative; it's a resource, like money, whose usefulness reflects the values of the person spending it. The heart of medicine is focused on the transmission of spirit as it catalyzes the emergence of virtue of a higher and more deeply integrated self. As stagnation is moved and upright influences are liberated, spirit opens to source catalyzing the evolution of a self that is capable of cognizing and responding in a more wholesome way to increased complexity. In CM we speak of this as the interpenetration of *shen* and *jing*.

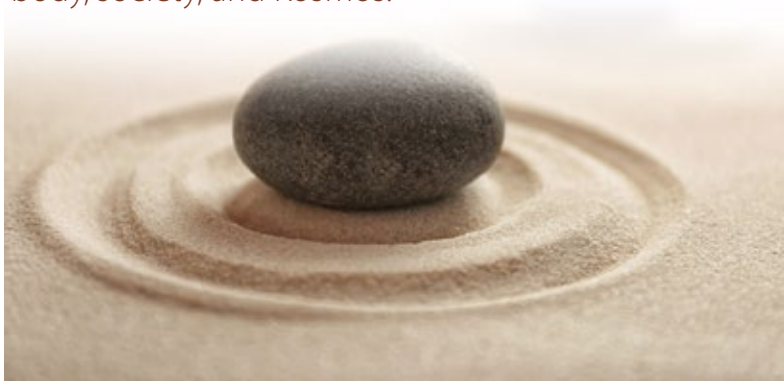
Realization of the source (0) discovery of that dimension of the self where nothing ever happened that isn't wounded, victimized, traumatized or cynical, and has nothing to overcome, manifests as ease of being in the face of stress. Awakening to the self as the Eros, the creative impulse (+1), we awaken to selfless passion, meeting each new challenge and every interaction as an opportunity to catalyze more wholesome emergence. From this perspective we have learned to live with a broken heart, holding all our suffering as having brought us to this point of authentically being able to serve others, spirit, and evolution itself. This attainment is a pillar of the physician's capacity to heal within the context of integral medicine.

We can talk about ways to facilitate, such healing with medicine, herbs, and/or needles, with all the techniques and knowledge at our disposal. In the end, the foundation of our efficacy in the practice of integral medicine arises from possessing an increasing measure of victory on the path of medicine ourselves.

Conclusion

In this series of articles I've provided a brief introduction to Integral Theory and its application to Chinese medicine. I've presented the integral, evolutionary, and spiritual perspectives as one unified view. The meridians, acupuncture points, herbs, and their actions can be elaborated across the continuum of body, mind, ego, soul, and spirit as regards introjected and repressed experience, projected shadow content, its stage specific location, and its implications for development according to the integral map. My new text, tentatively titled, *Deepening Perspectives on Chinese Medicine* will address these issues and more as a synthesis of my clinical experience and understanding.

"Matter, body, mind, and soul are vehicles for the expression of spirit. The states, stages, quadrants, lines, and types forming the integral map, chart the hierarchical expression of spirit (consciousness) through self, culture, body, society, and Kosmos."



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1. Cosmos with a "c" denotes the material universe, kosmos with a capital "K" includes all exterior surfaces as well as the corresponding interior dimension of evolving consciousness thus leaving no part behind.
2. Personality Types see, Friedman, M.; Rosenman, R. (1959). For a discussion of the Doshas in the context of pulse diagnosis see Eckman, P: 2014.
3. Jarrett, LS (1999).
4. For a correlation of the Five-element system, Ayurvedic doshas, and the Korean constitutional approach see Eckman, P: 2014.
5. See Jarrett (1999) for a discussion of the five-elements and the transformation of dysfunctional relationship to thought and feeling into virtue.
6. Jesuit scholar Teilhard De Chardin coined the term "Omega Point" as a distant moment of divine unification where all matter becomes self-aware as god. This is alluded to in his statement, "The day will come when, after harnessing space, the winds, the tides, and gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love. And on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, we shall have discovered fire." Chardin, pp. 86-87.
7. CP: pp.746-748.
8. For a review of Spiral Dynamics in relation to the evolution of Chinese medicine see Jarrett, LS (2004), pp. 751-770. Also see Beck, D., and Cowan, C., (1995)
9. Eros is synonymous with the rising of *yang*, manifest as the life impulse. Thanatos, as the death impulse can be a destructive force counter to Eros. However it also can be understood as that force undermining the notions that embed us to cause stagnation, thus helping us "die to self" let go, and evolve. I will elaborate Eros and Thanatos in future writing relative to the *hun, po* and the *sheng* cycle.