

**WHY MEDITATE?**  
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Some of us today, are simply not motivated to experiment with meditation. It does not seem urgent. It seems to be a waste of time. When Africa is starving why sit and watch your breath going in and out? "When a terrorist bomb may explode the bus I am riding on, how in the world will yoga positions and accupressure help? When my family back home are scraping out a living from the dirt or approaching senility and death, what am I doing sitting for an hour everyday feeling and looking useless and ridiculous? We need to be doing something about our human situation, not pursuing our personal well-being, improving our body tone or working on our individual development. Useful, employable skills and keeping busy at what I already know how to do are much more critical."

Strangely enough, meditation is dealing with precisely this situation. It is not going to change the situation if I alone or each of us separately reach unity consciousness; but if the whole world population (even 1/3 or 1/5 would do) could only grasp their oneness with each other, we would be "saving our own lives." And it is happening. According to Peter Russell in The Global Brain this revolution is increasing more rapidly than the information revolution, and by the year 2000 it will outstrip it. We'd better find the crowd and join in or at least find a way to serve this resurgence!

If this is what is happening, those who have the earth's benefits will see to it that those who do not have them get more of them. The mad craze for more pleasure, more gadgets, more thrills, more comfort, more personally exciting experiences and conversations will evaporate - unworthy of our human greatness. Our passions will be redirected toward

these things, even in abundance, are not mad, bad people. But we who have and those of us who don't have - the whole human race together - are victims of a mind warp, a twisted sense of priorities. We even know that this is true, but we seem to lack the will, the creativity, the courage or the commitment to take care of each other. Meditation is about re-opening these channels of care.

Meditation is something all humans do in some form or another. It deals with how we cope with the human condition, how we relate to what is really going on here. Maybe it is only when we are forced to stop and think ...listening to popular music, reading the newspaper, sleeping more, walking, keep moving ... maybe then, something will occur to you. We are looking for or trying to invent a form that will enable all people to stop and think. "Don't think twice" is a Michael Jackson line that points to the gift and the danger in this way of living.

Throughout human history people have accumulated a vast storehouse of wisdom about how to meditate. However, in the 20th century the door to this storehouse has gotten locked or barricaded. All that wisdom is unavailable to most of us. Either changes have happened so rapidly that we fail to see any value at all in the old ways or we have been so caught up in science, technology and all its material benefits and creature comforts that we think rationally ordering the universe and living an exciting, pleasurable life in it is the only way to be human.

It is this latter absorption in material, pleasurable achievements that has cut us off from either our lower levels of consciousness (social identity, the healthy use of our physical bodies or the deep well springs of our unconsciousness) or our higher levels of consciousness (intuition, soul, spirit or unity consciousness).

animals. It transcends uroboric consciousness. For some of us its recovery is a new consciousness.

**MEMBERSHIP** This level has to do with the awareness of being a part of your people - your family, your tribe or clan, your language group or your nation. Socially it is an awareness of being part of a team or a group of people. It has to do with care for other people and the awareness it takes to give and take, to adapt and assert yourself as a person among other persons. It transcends both body consciousness and uroboric consciousness. It is recovered for our day by being in a team in a group workshop or working in a village.

**MENTAL/EGOIC** This level has to do with mind consciousness. It is the capacity to reflect on your experience, to order the chaos around you. It is the development of this consciousness that produced science, technology and industrial processes. In terms of the development of human consciousness as it relates to the civilizing process it is the highest mankind as a whole has reached. It is also ego-centered and tends to identify all of reality as rationality - thus shutting off the higher levels of consciousness as nonsense and the lower levels of consciousness as intrusions, irritants and hindrances - and thus ignored as much as possible. It transcends the previous levels - uroboric, body and membership. Much of the world's 80% who are poor are just entering this level, if they are aware of it at all.

**INTUITIONAL/PSYCHOTIC** This level has to do with using the right brain - the wild, the creative. It is an awareness that comes at life indirectly rather than directly. It taps the wellsprings of irrationality. Today it is absent in most planning processes which are very rational, goal-oriented and linear. Intuition is exercised by great leaders or great monarchs or anyone else who dares to make the bold moves of history. It produces surprises and

people versus another group or between these times and previous times, the future is the past and the past is futuristic. In individual people we say he or she transcends their own people; they are citizens of the universe. They have a great aura about them and great charisma.

Also see a chart of the levels attached at the end. It is another attempt to get Wilber's analysis (and myself) out of the abstract into the everyday of our experiences.

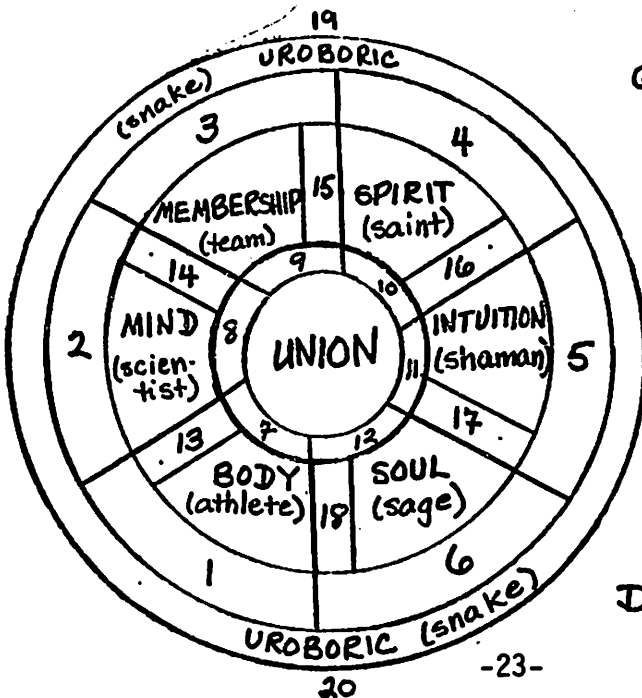
Wilber says people in our day are trapped in the Mental/Egoic level as though it were the only one that is genuinely human. There is truth in that. Certainly it is true of we urban, scientific, industrial skills-oriented people. Doubly certain is it true of academics and intellectuals, like Wilber and myself. But we must remember we are only 15 or 20% of the world's population - maybe you could say only 4 or 5% 80% of the world is struggling to survive. In terms of consciousness it looks like it would be very beneficial to them if they could also enter the mind level, the capacity to order life about them.

Our staff out of the villages of the developing world are struggling with literacy (their national language and English), their capacity to reflect on situations or even to be able to think fast enough to keep up with their more literate colleagues. They are much stronger on membership consciousness (sense of family) than we are, being sensitive to individual spirit issues such as equity, and being one with their body.

Wilber says there are two kinds of changes in consciousness: one is within a level (he calls that translation), another is between levels (he calls that transformation). Meditation has to do with both of these changes, I think - deepening your awareness of the level you are basically unfamiliar with and

I decided it was like an orange, sweet lime or grapefruit. The peeling is "just there," the level of nature or the uroboric. The hollow part in the middle is the center of being, the core of unity consciousness; it touches all the other 7 levels. The six levels in between are like six wedges - all touching nature consciousness or the unconscious, all next to Oneness and touching each other. In fact some gurus claim each "level" is a pathway to Oneness.

Wilber says the 8 levels (or the 17) are hierarchical, like the floors on an 8 story building. You move up from nature to body to membership, etc. But he is abstract as hell. He is gnostic. I am out to degnosticize Wilber and through him the whole consciousness revolution and thus get access to the vast storehouse of human experience with meditation - also, by the by, myself. I am also doing Yoga one hour a day. Finally only spirit can know spirit. Mind only points to or knows about spirit. And body experiences spirit.



THE  
GRAPEFRUIT

THE  
WHEEL  
OF LIFE

THREE-  
DIMENSIONAL

for 2 or 3 hours - stop the world - then read the poem like a mantra (or have it played aloud on a tape recorder). You leap to new awareness. The Great Resolve (an action a decision) out of this new level is the key to maintaining that level. Repetition is also key. No magic. If it doesn't happen, it doesn't. Only synergy - life working together with life.

Example: Gap#1: Uroboric to Body - Imagine yourself in the level of the Uroboric. Slumber. The Unconscious. The irrational - prior to unconsciousness. In the twilight between awareness or drowsiness and deep sleep. Now read Kabir 3:

Oh friend, I love you, think this over  
carefully! If you are in love,  
then why are you asleep?

If you have found him,  
give yourself to him, take him.

Why do you lose track of him again and again?

If you are about to fall into heavy sleep  
anyway,  
why waste time smoothing the bed  
and arranging the pillows?

Kabir will tell you the truth: this is what love  
is like  
suppose you had to cut your head off  
and give it to someone else,  
what difference would that make?

Ponder as you read:

1. Who is this friend you meet there?
2. Are you in love? How so? With what or whom?
3. What move of consciousness does it require to "take him"? Is he the friend?
4. Why does this one continually elude you?

the creativity needed to launch a more human sociality - one that cares for everyone and enables us each to care directly for those around us.

Meditation is not some magic or hocus pocus we do as a trick on ourselves that will suddenly in a flash change our lives. We may in fact be doing a number on ourselves, but nothing is automatic. It may take 20 years to learn how. Sitting and watching your breath may or may not do anything for you. It may only put you in the position in which higher consciousness may happen to you. But whatever you do to see the human situation from the widest, most humanly sensitive perspective possible - this is what issues in fruitful human interaction. And that which you did, whatever it was, was meditation.

You may wonder why some people have more power to care for situations than others or than you do. You may wonder why none of your creative ideas and models are ever listened to. Meditation enables relevance; it empowers. There are many things involved in this dynamic I am sure, but one of them is getting perspective, a way of seeing the situation including, of course, the decision to do something about it. Creative, practical ways of living are at the very center of the challenge before all of us these days. Do you ever wake up after some major failure in your life and say, "If only I had known, ..." Meditation increases the possibility of knowing rather than not knowing about what is going on in your life and life about you. The deep life images buried in your subconscious are allowed to bubble up to the surface of your consciousness. Out of these creativity comes.

Why does the terrorist have to kill to make his point or get his or her way? Why is the technology applied to make the rich richer? Why do people who work hard and do no harm to anyone suffer and remain out of reach of basic human needs - food, shelter, health, literacy, mobility, data? People who have

Also we suspect that a new mode for meditation is being created today just as new modes are being created these for every other human mode. Hopefully, we can learn something from the historical storehouse - it is pretty hard to invent where you are going if you don't know where you've been or even where you are now.

Ken Wilber has done an amazing job of recapturing what people throughout history and around the world have know about these levels of consciousness. At one point he identified 17 levels! But I find that is unmanageable for the imagination, so I have stayed with a basic 8. I don't understand all of them. I am sure I don't grasp all of any one of them. We have a lot to learn about what these levels are, much less how you move from one to the other (which is what meditation is all about). But here is most of what I do understand.

#### LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

**NATURE/UROBORIC** This level has to do with the awareness of mere existence - without much consciousness except being. At this level you are a part of nature - one with the earth, one with the chair you sit on, the table or your cup of coffee. You are one with the air you breathe. You are part of all of it, like in slumber. It is your subconscious state of being. The uroboros is the ancient symbol of the snake swallowing its own tail, sheer power hibernating, vast untapped potential.

**BODY/TYPHONIC** This level has to do with the awareness that you are a separate body, a separate entity from the earth, other bodies. It is like when a baby bites its blanket and then bites its own toe. The first bite doesn't hurt, but the second does. The baby is coming to know that she or he is a body. Socially it is expressed in sexuality, eating food, enjoying creature comforts or avoiding human pain. It is basic human existence as an animal among other

motivates the people involved to use more of their potential than they know. It transcends the previous four levels. Most of us have only sniffed this level at times; a few are very good at it. Walking psychotics are lost in it.

**SUBTLE/ARCHETYPAL** This level has to do with a person's soul - the deeps of what makes that person the person they are. It has to do with human archetypes or their profoundest cultural identity - being black people, white people, brown, tan, yellow or red. It is a deep life image that asserts dignity and selfhood. Out of these images oppression is thrown off. They are the fullest inventions of humanness that have yet been created. It affects all that a person is or does or says, the way you think. It transcends all previous levels.

**CAUSAL/SPIRITUAL** This level of consciousness has to do with depth perceptiveness or seeing through the surface of things to the actual deeps of the situation. It also has to do with acting on what you see, the use of your will to care for the situation. It has to do with personal power and the profoundest levels of care one human being can show toward another human being or going outside yourself or out of your way to care for someone else. It is manifest in spirit people who are able to move other people and alter situations - we call them saints. It transcends the previous levels.

**ABSORPTION/UNION** This level is the ultimate level of unity consciousness. Like in a full circle, once again the human being is one with everything and with the whole universe. But it is not the same as urobolic oneness or being potential existence as a part of the rest of existence. It is higher consciousness. It is experienced relative to civilizations' development by a few people or at rare moments in a person's life. It transcends all previous levels. Thus there are no divisions between your self and other people, or between one group of

changing to a higher level of consciousness. We are more interested, perhaps, in transformation, and how meditation enables that. It is not that we know nothing of these levels. All of them are in all of us. It is more like unfolding or expanding what you already are aware of, however small that awareness is. You find a small spark of awareness of a level, or a peephole into say, intuition consciousness. Then through meditation you fan that spark into a flame or widen the peephole into a doorway.

I have been playing around with the notion of gaps of consciousness. Between each level there is a gap. Meditation enables you to bridge a gap or to work your way from one level to the next.

Recently, I was in Maliwada. I used the time to re-read Kabir's poetry. I knew somehow Kabir had to do with meditation, but I was not sure how. As I read all 44 poems straight through, I had only read 3 or 4 when I suddenly became aware of the way each poem was moving me into different levels of consciousness (or at least the subjective feeling of various levels). I was also reading Wilber in the mornings when I was bright and fresh enough to wade through all of his abstractions. I kept remembering in our work on the Other World we said a state of being (or level of consciousness? - I presume they are the same, or closely related) is a Great Think, a Great Feel and a Great Resolve. That kept me out of the totally abstract or becoming entirely subjective about the whole exercise.

I then began to ask myself what level each of Kabir's poems is associated with. What I discovered was that every poem had at least 2 levels and some seemed to have all 8. Then, it dawned on me: maybe what poetry is all about is carrying us from one level to another. It bridges gaps imaginally and humanly. The same is true of rituals, it occurred to me. Then I plotted all 44 poems on the gaps. Along the way I decided to draw an imaginal picture of consciousness.

This image helped me to name the gaps. I identified 20 gaps - 19 and 20 being at the top and bottom poles where the core and the peeling meet (facing you and behind it, not spacially locateable on the two-dimensional diagram itself). They are the two gaps between oneness with nature and unity consciousness - depending on whether you are going from nature to unity or unity to nature.

Here are some examples of Kabir's poems and the gaps they bridge:

Gap #1: Between Uroboric and Body consciousness  
- Kabir poem 3

Gap #2: Between Uroboric and Mind consciousness  
- Kabir poem 36

Gap #3: Between Uroboric and Member consciousness - Kabir poem 8

Gap #4: Between Uroboric and Spirit consciousness - Kabir poem 10

Gap #5: Between Uroboric and Intuition consciousness - Kabir poem 17

Gap #6: Between Uroboric and Soul consciousness  
- Kabir poem 25

Gap #19/20: Between Uroboric and Unity consciousness - Kabir poem 18

Gap #12: Between Soul and Unity consciousness  
Kabir poem 13

You will also notice I have re-ordered Wilber's sequence. The gnostic always believes in logical progressions. I doubt that any life is actually that rational. Maybe Wilber's life is that way, I don't know. I re-ordered it to see what would happen. Try your own.

Somehow get yourself into nature consciousness (sit in a forest or lay back in an easy chair). Art form the poem you select using all your conscious awareness possible. Maybe read it aloud to yourself through a cassette tape. You enter a new level of consciousness. Or maybe you do sitting meditation