

# Levels of Transformation in Polarity Therapy

## Part One

In Volume I of Dr Stone's Energy he insists that:

"It is essential that man be understood before we attempt to treat him... Humanity is at the top of creation..." He exhorts us to bring "the WHOLE NATURE OF MAN'S BEING into the focus of therapy". In this article I would like to explore the ways in which Polarity Therapy sheds light on the whole nature of man's being and as such, serves as a means of transformation. In order to do this I would like to take Ken Wilber's work on the Spectrum of Consciousness and therapeutic techniques as a model against which to study Dr Stone's contribution.

Students of Polarity Therapy remark on the enormity of the body of work presented by Dr Stone, not surprisingly perhaps because it contains a whole cosmic perspective, the scope of which is barely touched in many philosophies. To grasp even a small part of it is often "to bring about a transformation of fundamental values." I hope you will understand that the possibilities for understanding our nature in the terms set forth in this paper are immense but as yet dimly seen. I merely hope to excite your imagination and interest and welcome criticism and comment delightedly. Ken Wilber's researches, as you will see, provide a cognitive schema whereby we can look at the therapy aspect of Polarity Therapy.

His work is a synthesis of religion, philosophy, physics and psychology. His starting off point is very similar to that of Dr Stone in that he sees consciousness as a Unity of energy that "steps down" into time and space through polarities creating a spectrum of wave lengths. These wave lengths move from the sublime awareness of our identity with the source through the blinkered state of self/shadow to the realms of unconsciousness as an embryo.

Dr Stone chose as his area of practice - bodywork, perhaps because of the power of touch, but it is not an isolated hand that touches the client but a person. By developing our ability to be aware and use our concentration within the framework of touch we may grow more skilful in our intention and intervention.

From reports of those receiving Polarity treatments and especially those studying it, it is evident that enormous steps in realisation take place on emotional, mental (& spiritual) levels, but particularly concentrated around what Ken Wilber calls the "Centaur level". This is the area of integration and awareness of the self as a body/mind in flowing contact.

The most exciting thing to me about studying and reading Polarity Therapy is Dr Stone's depth and breadth of vision.

His flow of inspiration moves continuously from the Almighty to the small and niggly. He caters to my interest from physical pain and irritation (put potato peel on it!) — to the sublime need to merge with the One. Ken Wilber, very different from Dr Stone, but in some ways equally inspired has analysed into edible chunks the many possibilities of transformation presented throughout Dr Stone's Vol.I, III & V and the Mystic Bible.

I will be referring to The Spectrum of Consciousness and the Atman Project both published by Quest Books and No Boundary published by Shambala Books, all by Ken Wilber.

My thesis is that Ken Wilber's work on levels of the spectrum of consciousness can:-

1. Illuminate Dr Stone's main metaphysical tenet that to understand our nature we must see it as a process of involution into matter and evolution out of it. Ken Wilber reinforces this essentially transpersonal process with a wide range of researches from East and West.
2. Clarify the work of the Polarity Therapist by showing how the nature of the dualities we identify with keeps us from successive levels of fulfilment.

The connection between these two major themes is that we create our involution from Unity into matter by identifying with successive aspects of duality progressively losing our awareness of unified consciousness until we are well and truly separated from our own source. We create our evolution back to Unity by resolving successive layers of polarity to unite with our source.

We will use diagrams of the process of involution and evolution to study them in a general way and to give an image of the processes. In Part I we will look at involution and in Part II evolution from persona/shadow to Unity consciousness in relationship to Polarity Therapy.

## **INVOLUTION & EVOLUTION**

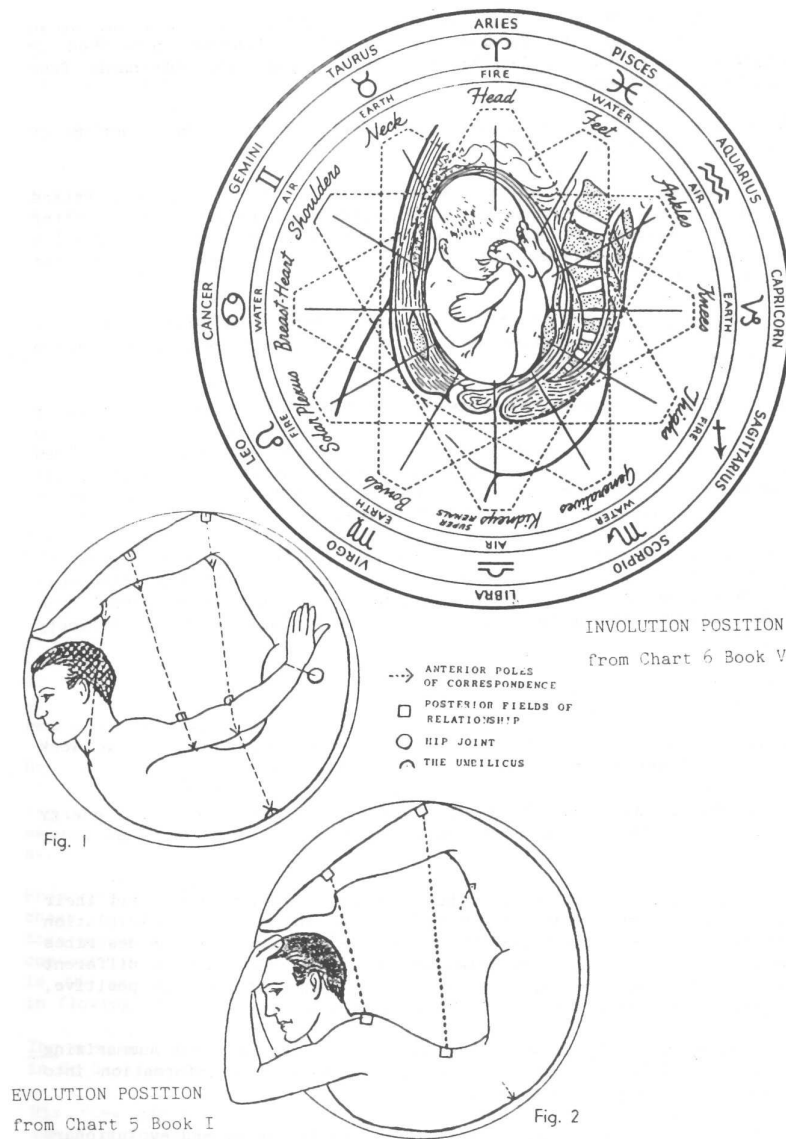
"Being one with the Universe, one with God - that is what we work for most whether we know it or not" - Fritz Kunkel.

In the Mystic Bible p 67 Dr Stone gives a 'brief description of energy involution in the building of the miniature universe, the human body, which houses the Soul'.

Dr Stone's genius is to describe "the Stages in Creation and their application in the microcosm of Man". i.e. the history of involution into matter. Using the Bible, Vedas and the Kabbalah Dr Stone describes the way in which cosmic energies become forces focused in different areas of our body. e.g. How the three gunas become the positive, neutral and negative centres of energy within us.

This description is no mean achievement in gathering and summarizing obscure and difficult esoteric texts. To make this information into a practical therapy is a miracle!

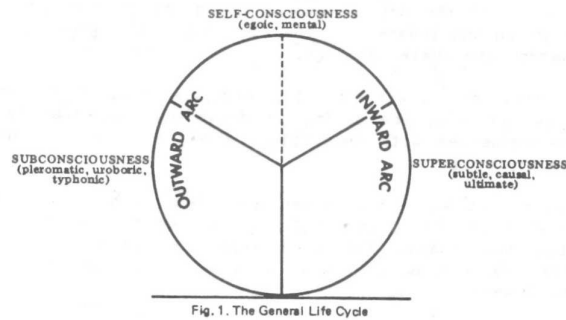
Dr Stone applies the grand themes of the involutionary and evolutionary forces to the human body. They become the centripetal and centrifugal forces which operate throughout nature, (creating and dissolving the universe in the grand dissolutions and pralayas). On a step-down level it becomes our movement out into the world and the inward direction towards the self, motor and sensory. Giving and receiving. The corresponding forces in the nervous system- the sympathetic and the parasympathetic.



He shows the involutionary and evolutionary positions of the body and their harmonics. The involution into matter is the foetal position and the basis of polarity relationships which enable us to direct energy to an integrated sense of the forces within us. The evolutionary position curtails this “personal motor expression of the individual” and opens the sensory body fields for response to Universal currents.

In the Mystic Bible p56 he tells us how we gradually sacrificed our higher order consciousness in order to experience the charge of sensation by moving down to another level, thus losing the greater awareness of that higher state. “It is important” he says in Vol.1 p27 “to know of and understand this process of the involution of the soul into matter, because all the finer principles and vehicles and lines of force are still with us, buried within this form. That is the reason we have so much conflict within ourselves and are constantly searching for our lost estate, seeking our higher essences and trying to discover ourselves”.

In the diagram below from The Atman Project, (which is subtitled A Transpersonal View of Human Development) you will see how the two processes of involution and evolution can be viewed as the same pathway “buried within this human form”.



As Ken Wilber puts it “in order for evolution, which is the unfolding of higher structures to occur at all, those higher structures must in some sense, be present from the start: they must be enfolded as potential in the lower modes. The story of involution is simply the story of how the higher modes came to be lost in the lower —how they came to be enwrapped and enfolded in the lower states.”(6)

In the process of involution we move from super consciousness to self-consciousness to becoming sub—conscious. In our experience in the womb we lose awareness of our source and our consciousness of ourselves is undifferentiated from matter (pleromatic). We don’t lose the traces of our exalted history entirely it merely becomes subconscious. The result of the process involution is that the self is embedded in the materia prima, which is both the primal chaos of physical matter and the maternal matrix of prakriti from whence all creation was fashioned”.

The self and the material cosmos are undifferentiated and the task of the first stages of life, the Outward Arc in the drawing is to move from this sub consciousness to self—consciousness.

Evolution follows the process from sub consciousness to self—consciousness to super consciousness. We begin to differentiate ourselves from matter, from our mother’s breast, from our mother, from the father, from their projections, from their identities etc, etc until we are conscious of ourselves. This diagram is very revealing in that it shows how we have to achieve a sense of our egohood before we can begin to transcend it! Then our identity can begin to merge once again, this time with the help of the super conscious, or trans-personal forces within us of light and sound that emanate from our source.

“The highest and the lowest, the infinite and the finite, spirit mind and matter - all are enfolded as undifferentiated and unconscious potential. Evolution is simply the unfolding of that enfolded potential Dr Stone’s diagrams 1 & 2 shows the unfolded and the enfolded energies. The conflict within ourselves Dr Stone talks of, is due to the lines of evolutionary forces being still with us whilst in a state of manifestation or involution. Why should this be so?

The conflict in the outward arc — the beginning of evolution is the story of the Hero - “the story of the terrible battle to break free of the sleep in the subconscious... the story of the ego, of its emergence from unconsciousness — the conflicts, ‘the growths, the terrors, the rewards, the anxieties.” (-)

We can feel the truth of this struggle against the downward pull of unconsciousness, the desire to drown our awareness in distraction, drugging ourselves with television, food, etc, as if indeed we cannot bear reality.

But this is not all — Ken Wilber describes the essence of the conflict. His argument is that psychological development aims at ultimate reality (he calls this Atman). The word Atman in Sanskrit is made up from At- move, Va — blow and An - to breath'— it is the essence of the individual self or soul.

“From the outset, the soul intuitively this Atman—nature, and seeks from the outset, to actualize it as a reality and not just enfolded potential That drive to actualize Atman is part of the Atman project. But it is only a part, because — even though each stage of psychological growth is a step closer to God - each stage is still only a stage. That is, each stage is a search for God under conditions which fall short of God.

The soul must seek Unity through the constraints of the present stage, which is not yet Unity. And that is the other side of the Atman project: each individual wants Atman, but wants it under conditions that prevent it .... And that is why human desire is insatiable, why all joys yearn for infinity — all a person wants is Atman, all he finds are symbolic substitutes for it. This attempt to regain Atman consciousness in ways or under conditions that prevent it and force symbolic substitutes — this is the Atman project”.

We want our cake and we want to eat it. We are pulled inside to evolve at the same time our attention and energy is held by attachments to what we know, see, feel of this plane of awareness. Present satisfactions hold us back from inner achievement.

Dr Stone says in the Mystic Bible, (page 45) “The mind is no more at home in this world than is the soul, but it has become so enslaved by the senses that it is our own worst enemy until it turns about face and accompanies the soul to higher regions”.

(page 59) “As involution or descent into matter took place at the time of creation, so must also be the evolution and ascent of our daily consciousness out of matter. If the consciousness of man Adam fell into a deep sleep in this descent, then that consciousness must have a great awakening or rebirth in order to again ascend into the higher regions on its upward journey”.

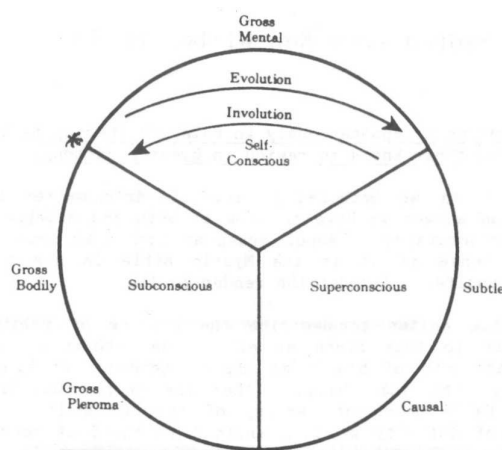


Fig. 5. Evolution and Involution

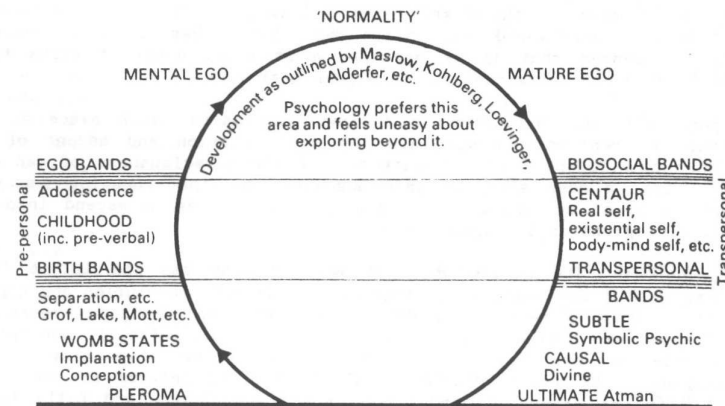
(page 203) “The desire which brought us down has its latent force deep within the soul, which precipitates it into involution and experience. Only by testing our desires in the energy fields of resistance of mind, emotions and matter can we be convinced mentally: and through

experience, emotionally; and through suffering physically. That completes the gamut of our mental process and prowess in action and in life, as experience and proof of our own desire and folly in our cleverness.”

Through understanding “the whole path of the soul in its involution and its evolution out of the bonds of matter and suffering” we can “untie the self-imposed locks of mental energies that cause perversion” Dr Stone Vol.I.

Locks of “mental energies” can take place on any part of the cycle and result in not being free to move on. There is sometimes a need to return, through regressive work, to where our energies took a wrong turn - created a self-imposed lock — that gradually manifests and prevents us from achieving our next stage of growth. We may need to return to the birth band, childhood or adolescence before we can mature sufficiently to risk disidentification with our ego and move on into transpersonal areas.

In the diagram by John Rowan you can see he labels researchers who deal with these early “splits”. Freud, Janov, Lake, Grof etc use various techniques to retrieve, through awareness, some of the damage that we do before achieving the first stage of egohood.



Map adapted from Ken Wilber by John Rowan.(8)

This return can occur spontaneously in Polarity Therapy as the elemental energies unwind their knots to rewind in greater harmony.

We may wonder why we bothered to involute into matter in the first place — for an answer we have to look at myth and allegory for mostly our present understanding cannot grasp at such high truths. Dr Stone makes great sense of it in the Mystic Bible in his recounting of the story of Lucifer. I refer the reader to it.

It is a little easier to describe the process of rebirth than the initial desire to take birth at all. The Tibetan culture contains very clear accounts of how “Some basic tendency of grasping begins to develop in the luminosity... then the energy builds up blindly and finally falls down into energy of the luminosity.” “Contracting in the face of infinity we turn instead to forms of seeking, desire, karma and grasping, trying to search out a state of equilibrium”.

“Whereas before the soul, identified with the Source was central to the Universe, it now opts for a separate self. (This echoes Dr Stone’s description of our creation) The soul still wants to present itself as being the Source, as being cosmocentric and he does this by recreating a subjective world whose unique motor principle this time he is”. Evans—Wentz quoted in AP.



So we create our own imitation of the motor principle from the Divine motor principle, becoming planets around the sun, and believing our· selves to be the centre of the universe.

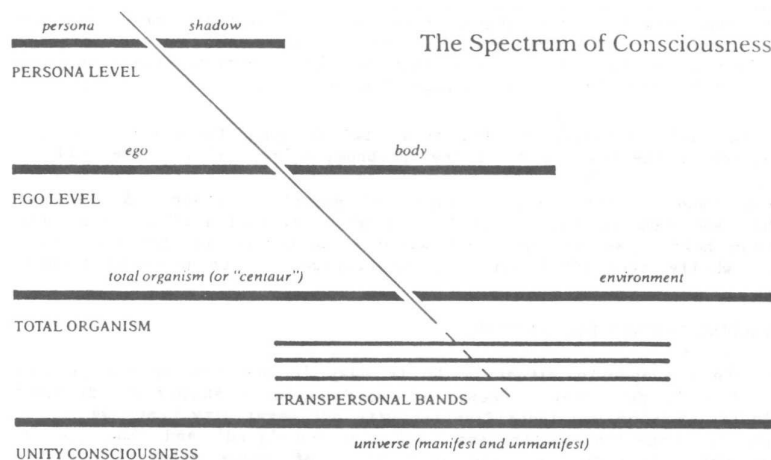
Our egos are necessary in order to have a sense of ourselves and negotiate these layers of reality but what happens is that “Man seeks to deify himself in the temporal sphere because he is ignorant of his real divine essence. Amnesic, he suffers from illusorily feeling himself abandoned by God (while he is in reality God himself), and he fusses about in the temporal sphere in search of affirmations to support his divinity which he cannot find there”.

We fuss about needing approval, affirmation of our positive and negative selves, or failing that, just to know that we are, do exist, have identity — all this will never be enough. We will achieve at most, temporary satisfaction and then need further confirmation of newly emerging persona. And so we go on until we begin the journey inward to discover our transcendent selves.

Yet this evolutionary journey cannot be travelled until we have as it were fully devolved, or completed our involutionary process. Many of us, struggle to ‘take off’ and escape into spiritual fantasy when we are really needing to ground and establish our earthly solidity. We cannot go up or in before we have come fully down or out. “Ripeness is all”. These evolutionary and involutionary cycles are taking place within us in our elemental makeup continuously, pulsating at different rhythms, contracting and expanding, echoing our planetary inheritance, our karma.

These processes of mind which cause confusion of our energies could be said to come into balance when the soul begins to assert its influence on the mind to redirect the senses back homeward.

Self-actualization lies not in identification with matter but from knowing our experience in matter in transcendence of it. This is a long haul from sub—consciousness, to self—consciousness to superconsciousness.



## The Spectrum of Consciousness

Dr Stone says in Vol I,

“Opposites have their origin in a common centre of ‘unity’ .... “In order to create anything in this immensity of Allness and Otherness a limitation must be imposed, to outline and circumscribe any creation” and thus a finite creation or manifestation.

This is a basic polarity principle of dualism. Ken Wilber shows it simply as a line as opposed to a broken line beyond which is the unmanifest as well as the manifest universe. He calls this the first level of consciousness.

Descriptions of the amazing ‘first cause’, abound in mythology in terms of male/female, Sound/light etc .... Dr Stone in the Mystic Bible and Ken Wilber, in the Spectrum of Consciousness bring this ‘beyond Mind’ awareness into thoughts and ideas which make me feel as if I was there! Which, of course, we all were, and are still, being microcosms of the macrocosm. Only to bring this to awareness!

This initial separation from our Source reverberates throughout the step—down process of involution. All energy is one, or as Dr Stone puts it, everything comes from Unity, and so, in one sense we remain One. But “through the process of dualistic thought, we introduce illusory dualities or divisions... These divisions are not real... yet man behaves in every way as if they were real; and being thus duped, man clings to his first and primordial dualism, that of subject vs. object, self vs. not—self, or simply organism and environment... and thus we generate the second major level of consciousness, the Existential Level: man identified with his organism”.

“Like an ascending spiral, man’s fragmentation through duality continues so that most individuals don’t even feel identified with all of their organism - we say not “I am a body” but rather “I have a body” and this “I” that “has” a body we call our self, our ego. At this point, man’s identity shifts from his organism as a whole to his ego, and we have generated the third major level of consciousness, in the Ego Level. Continuing this dualistic spiral man can even attempt to disown facets of his ego that he finds undersirable, refusing to admit into his consciousness the unwanted aspects of himself.

Again man’s identity shifts, this time to some facets of his ego, generating the next level of the spectrum, a level we call the Shadow”.

This image of the Spectrum begins at point\* on diagram 5. All of this spectrum is but a part of the whole evolution of consciousness shown here. We are at least aware of ourselves as individuals and not wholly identified with, or in confluence with parental figures etc.

## ***EVOLVING THROUGH THE SPECTRUM***

In the therapeutic situation it is easy to see how at the persona level our ‘presentable’ sense of self casts a shadow of disowned negativity — or our identification with our negativity means we cannot own our potential worthiness! Anyway our ‘good’ and ‘bad’ selves are not communicating. An integration of these polarities within us lead us to begin to have a balanced ego whereby we can function in the world with some sense of realism about our responsibilities and possibilities.

The separation here, that then becomes most pressing is the division between body and mind, influenced heavily in the West by Cartesian thought - “I think, therefore I am”. The body or the mind is relegated as an inferior. Keats yearned for a —“life of sensations rather than thoughts” and many more would have the thought and not the sensation! This is where listening to our bodies and slowing our thoughts down can bring harmony and where Polarity Therapy is a jewel of philosophy and action. (We will explore this more fully in Part II).

Integration of body/mind leads to a stage of knowing oneself as “a total organism” - this is where we can achieve a great sense of well being and begin to tune into our environment in a very intuitive way, understanding things beyond our normal grasp. In knowing ourselves to be created from and partaking of the same energies as our environment we begin to go beyond the personal, becoming transpersonal.



In these transpersonal bands the sense of separate self begins to dissolve and a sense of being at one with the Universe begins to take place more frequently — until we eventually no longer need inhabit any of the lower dualisms as a permanent state but merely to function in the world. This is all very crudely and imperfectly put, I hope you will forgive me for the brevity necessary right now. There are, of course many descriptions of stages and levels beyond this point but it is not our concern as Polarity Therapists to know them. Each religion has its own descriptions and it is a matter of personal proclivities. Until this point I feel that the model Ken Wilber gives is a useful one in determining the level we are at in working with ourselves and our clients.

## Unity

Our ultimate striving is towards Unity with Truth, God, Atman however we put it, but these levels of consciousness are stepped—down stages of this unity which our “enfolded lines of force within us” are pushing us to achieve on our way. Consciousness is pluridimensional and each one of us is struggling to unite the polarity of different aspects of ourselves at different levels of awareness.

It is clear then that the reconciliation of opposites of one level, e.g. Persona and shadow, leads to an integration which allows movement to the next. Most of experience is taking us rapidly from one moment to the next into successive layers. We can sometimes experience for instance a rapid descent from a meditative state to a shadow projection in the form of a negative emotion towards someone. This is painful and shows us we still have work to do on these other levels. Something in us “seeks higher and higher orders of unities and we thus move through the spectrum, dissolving boundaries set up by individual ego”.

Dr Stone wrote ‘Unity or balance is the ultimate aim of all opposites. They oppose each other on the surface and unite in the centre’.

So — to summarise- persona and shadow oppose on the surface and unite in the total organism; organism and environment oppose on the surface and unite in the transpersonal and eventually in Unity Consciousness. We have gone as Unity, become manifest, fallen to organism and environment, separated to ego and body, divided ego into persona and shadow. Therapy is the re—integration of these progressive limitations we have put on the self, whether it is work by ourselves or in relationships or with a vivid description of a therapist or teacher — this to me is a vivid model of the healing or wholing process.

This is echoed in Dr Stone:

“Polarity is the law of opposites in their finer attraction from centre to centre. Unity is the merging of these currents into one Essence” p14 Vol.I. “Peace and freedom are possible only in Unity and in an Essence of the same quality”.

## THE ELEMENTS

What are these essences of the same quality? In the statement above he is talking about the soul quality within finding freedom only in its own source. The elements are qualities which derive from the original duality of manifest and unmanifest and the subsequent 3 fold division of energy into the positive, neutral and negative aspects known as the three gunas. The three gunas become the five elements. (For a full account see Book III Dr Stone).

This attraction of the manifestation to its source carries on the theme of the elements. In a beautiful article by Mrs F Wood (in Spiritual Link 21) entitled The Elements’ Love for their Source she paraphrases Maulana Rumi (Rumi):-

“Each mental prototype of an element attracts its physical counterpart in us. The concept of earth in the mind speaks to the spirit. Come to me like the dust. You are part of me, more suited to be one with me. It is better that you should escape that body full of moisture.’ The earthly element answers, ‘Yes, but I am fettered despite being weary of separation from you’.

The mental concept of water is also calling to the body’s moisture to come back to it from exile. In the same way the concept of hotness is calling to the body’s fire to come aback to its origin. This is why the body is full of diseases: the bodily elements are trying to escape from their unnatural union in the body, like five birds with their legs tied together. Death, sickness and disease loosen their legs. They shatter the body so that the elements may abandon each other. When its legs are released every bird-element flies away to its home”.

We can imagine the elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether as coloured threads interlaced through the successive levels of the Spectrum, moving into successive stages of integration. The above diagram shows a brilliant correlation of the relationships of the elements within each level of consciousness by Franklyn Sills which will be more fully expounded in the next part of this article.

Dr Stone often repeats that the elements represent a “neglected aspect of man’s hidden Life Currents and definite dependence and correlation with Nature” Vol. I. p 14. Dr Stone threads throughout his writings immense clues as the quality and kind of this correlation with Nature. Indeed we can take the elements as symbols of transformation from one level to another.

“The path of evolution” says Jungian psychologist Neumann, “leading mankind from unconsciousness to consciousness, is the path traced by transformations of libido (neutral psychic energy),. The mechanism that transforms energy is the symbol as Jung has so straightforwardly demonstrated,”. . .

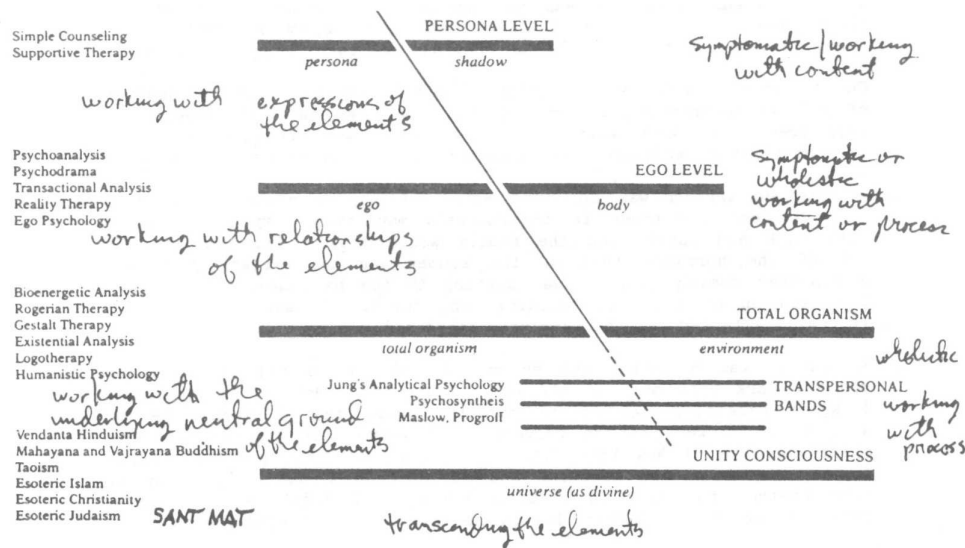
So in Polarity Therapy our ready to hand symbols are those of the elements. Here we are following in the tradition of the alchemists who used an elaborate schema to depict the transformation of the the base metal of the crude self to the Gold of self-realisation using combinations and recombinations of elements as an essential focus.

As one student of Polarity Therapy put it “the understanding of self in terms of elemental makeup”.. has given him “a greater understanding of my materialisation here on earth”.

We will work in greater depth with Franklyn’s commentary and see how Polarity Therapy has within it the whole scope of therapies contained described on the diagram from Simple Counseling to Humanistic Psychology — this serves as both an inspiration and perpetual challenge to those who practice!

I would like to finish with a quote from Friedenberg (1973) cited by John Rowan in his book **THE REALITY GAME**:

“The purpose of therapeutic intervention is to support and re-establish a sense of self and personal authenticity. Not mastery of the objective environment; not effective functioning within social institutions not freedom from the suffering caused ‘by anxiety - though any or all of these may be concomitant outcomes of successful therapy - but personal awareness, depth of real feeling, and, above all the conviction that one can use one’s full powers, that one has the courage to be and use all one’s essence in the praxis of being”.



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## Levels of Transformation in Polarity Therapy

### Part 2

Carol:

When I showed you Ken Wilber's diagram on the levels of transformation you wrote your comments about the elements in a flash without any elaboration. I wonder if you could do that now?

Franklyn:

Well, it's just another way of looking at those levels of working. What Ken Wilber is looking at are four general phases or levels: the persona level, the ego level, the total organism level and then what he calls Unity Consciousness. In other traditions this may be called the Tao, Nirvana or Brahman.

I wanted to look at his model of the Spectrum of Consciousness in terms of Polarity Therapy, working with the elements in relationship to the various levels of the Spectrum; to look at where we were actually putting our energy, where we are actually working.

It is artificial of course because we are actually working with the whole all the time. We go in and out playing a dance with your own consciousness in relationship to the other person's consciousness. Looking at what he calls the persona level, where he says that simple counselling and supportive therapy are appropriate – I feel that is where we are working in Polarity Therapy on a symptomatic level. We are working with the expressions of the elements, how the elements are being expressed in the world, what the manifestations are.

You are working with the manifestations and juggling them around so that a person can actually cope with them but you are not doing anything about working with the whole realm causing those manifestations.

Carol:

Could you give an example to illustrate more clearly what you mean.

Franklyn:

A person comes with a stomach problem, there are family problems which seem to be all contributing to it. If you are just looking at the manifestations you would try to alleviate the stomach problems and some way that she can cope with what's happening at home rather than going under that and seeing what is causing the imbalances. So you work symptomatically to get energy moving through the particular patterns that relate to the fire element and the stomach, maybe some of the imbalances around that. You may get some herbs that will acid in the stomach, and look at the person's diet.

You may give them relaxation techniques to take the pressure off so they can cope better in their relationships...etc., but in a sense you are juggling. You are giving them the support to be where they need to be at that time in their manifestations.

Carol:

Would you agree with Ken Wilber in saying that the symptom, e.g.

the stomach problem is what he terms the 'shadow' and it's in befriending the symptom/shadow that you begin to integrate the ego?

Franklyn:

Yes, but I think that it is at a deeper level than I am discussing. Also, I'm not so sure if it is as clear cut as that. Is a symptom a manifestation of shadow, or is it a thing in itself? or is it more of a pulsation, one to the other. I'm not clear what he means with this concept, because I'm not that familiar with it.

Carol:

Perhaps I can quote 'Generally, we can think of the Shadow as all of our ego—potentials with which we have lost contact, that we have forgotten, that we have disowned. Thus the

Shadow can contain not only our 'bad', aggressive, perverse, wicked, 'evil' and demonic aspects that we have tried to disown, but also some 'good', energetic, god—like, angelic and noble aspects that we have forgotten belong to us .... Therapy on the Ego Level therefore entails a re-membling and re-owning of our forgotten tendencies, a re—identification with our projected facets, a re-uniting with our shadows'. (Ken Wilber 'Spectrum of Consciousness'.)

So aches and pains 'happen to us' in order to remind us of parts of ourselves that we haven't recognised. If we fight a symptom it will become worse. If we take responsibility for producing the symptom ourselves, befriend it, then we can begin to integrate.

Franklyn:

So is he saying that working at the persona level is working at that deep level with the manifestation?

Carol:

Yes, I think he starts at quite a deep level. I don't think simple counselling actually belong here at all because...it's not simple.

Franklyn:

Or even supportive therapy. We are giving people support when we are working with these expressions: without going into any depth, working with symptoms in isolation, problem solving.

Carol:

You could use Dr Stone symptomatically in a sense.

Franklyn:

You can use anything symptomatically. With a colon problem for instance you could do the treatment and then the element unbalances because you're not working with the relationships. So that at the start you can work with the expression of that element and a symptomatic working with the content of it.

Carol:

What would you say would be an expression of an element for in-stance?

Franklyn:

Let's say that someone is holding a lot of anger in, fire, and an expression of that is that they suddenly burst out with anger, as it builds up and builds up they burst out and their digestive system becomes imbalanced. We'll say, in simple terms, that one expression is the bursting out of anger, the other is the digestive problem. You can deal with the digestive problem and let the person beat a pillow to get the anger out. That is working with the expressions which is fine, but see that you realise what you are doing, and you are working on the other levels also. It maybe very very important that the person beats a pillow, but you have to go under that.

Carol:

O.K. Let's go under. The idea at the persona level is that by using symptoms as clues that we can identify ourselves with our Shadow, becoming conscious of what we previously were unconscious in ourselves — play our opposites, confront our opposites. The symptom then will spontaneously depart. 'And this for the simple reason that the psyche is a spontaneously

self—organizing system' which, finally given the correct information i.e. that it is doing the symptom to itself, will automatically stop.

Franklyn:

So his 'Shadow' is basically a Jungian concept. It is a funny distinction between personal level and ego level because I think it is all bound up in ego really. It is just what level you are actually working with ego.

Carol:

Yes, it is a matter of terminology. When he describes the ascent to the ego level of the integrated consciousness of persona and shadow, he's talking about an ego in balance as it were which naturally from a sattvic state is able to allow further integration with other aspects of the self, i.e. the body. Ego in the sense of self—centredness will remain with us throughout the Spectrum - on this map anyway.

Franklyn

And the persona level is the ....

Carol:

...the ego out of balance, divided. Only identifying with the positive aspects of the persona or the negative aspects the shadow. Our problem is we switch in cycles from one to the other never integrating the shadow and persona to become whole, even as an ego. Those cycles can be large or small.

Franklyn:

So he is saying that if you are only dealing with patching up the divided ego you are working on the persona level which is the same thing as working with the manifestations and not really at a deeper level.

Carol:

I think the work with symptoms that you are describing is actually before the work on integrating shadow and persona. And then from there you begin to integrate, you work towards the Ego level.

Franklyn:

At the next level then you would be looking at the symptoms but in terms of the relationship to the whole imbalance. In other words, you work either with content (symptom, problem) or with process, as you descend you're working much more with process. You may use the content, because the content is guiding you to the process which will lead back to content. So in Polarity terms you would be starting to deal with the inter—relationships of the imbalance.

Let's say, in going back to the colon problem, rather than getting energy flowing through the colon you start to look at what the energy imbalances are around air, water, earth and fire that inter-relate to it. You then begin to flow through that particular person's unique imbalances as a whole which have created the symptom/manifestation.

Carol:

So it might be something like fire drying out water?



Franklyn:

Or more likely, fire unbalancing air, in relationship to the colon. It might be that there is so much fire locked up that there isn't any energy to help water impulse and ground and that may be affecting earth. That depends on that particular person's elemental makeup.

Carol:

Right. I imagine you would do this really by just slowing the person down.

Franklyn:

Yes. It is really important to teach a person to slow down and look at their process, to pause, patient pausing.

Carol:

That's really good - 'patient pausing'.

Franklyn:

A 'double-entendre' there. Many people are against the use of the word 'patient'. They would rather use client, but client is a really dry, lifeless term. Patient, in its original meaning means to have patience, to be there waiting, watching, waiting. That's not such a bad word, it's just been corrupted. It means now that you actually have someone do something to you. I find the demarcation of the ego and body at the Ego Level an artificial distinction because it is all one.

Carol:

Yes, if we can reach that level of consciousness. The axe Ken Wilber has to grind is that we are split and we do demarcate ourselves artificially and that healing lies in seeing at each level that these polarities can be unified within us; that they are given to us by society, by our conditioning, by our immaturity.

'It is through playing our opposites, through giving the Shadow equal time, that we eventually extend our identity and thus our responsibility...we suggest in our simplistic fashion, that despite their many real differences in form, style and content...that certain aspects of Gestalt therapy, psychoanalysis, Transactional Analysis, psychodrama etc. would all have us confront the shadow, eventually re-own it and thus see what we would not see before - in the old enemy a friend.'

So in confronting the illusion of separateness and multiplicity we can gradually emerge as One.

A major split in Western civilisation is the demarcation of mind and body, so it is the body therapies like polarity therapy and bio-energetics that begin to integrate and identify both as energy. When you are working on a person's thighs maybe and they are feeling anger they begin to realise that the body is the vehicle for the emotions, not just the mind. This, to me is where Polarity Therapy is actually a very powerful tool of integration. Most of us do separate ego and body. We don't see or feel where we are feeling. We think it's all thinking.

Franklyn:

Most people, who in the beginning have done no work on themselves really have a hard time distinguishing between thoughts and feelings. They are not clear about that, so when you ask them something about what they are feeling, they'll give you an intellectual concept. I ask them 'let's take that down a bit; is that what you are really feeling?' They don't quite know what their feeling is, we have to teach them how to feel.

Carol:

So at the 'Ego Level' the work has to be to help the client be in their body, to recognise what the body has to say.

Franklyn:

In your bodywork you are working on the inter—relationships of imbalances of the elements and you are helping the patient learn about them by being their body.

Carol:

And watching where they are blocking.

Franklyn:

And watching how they are blocking, what they are blocking. You pick up information as you work and so are they, hopefully. It depends — a lot of people come and they just want the symptoms taken away. It takes a while for them to realise that there are deeper reasons, imbalances that relate to those manifestations. Symptoms aren't even important, except as guides. They are like red warning lights in a car. You see the light go on and tear it out and take away the indications of the imbalance. Of course people are going to break down! So, yes, befriend the symptom because it will tell you what is going on.

Carol:

Do you think, Franklyn, that it is possible for you to do the bodywork and bring more consciousness without the patient necessarily intending that also?

Franklyn:

It is possible. I think it's harder! It depends on the person. If they are aware they'll be in there and they'll learn. You can use anything to escape from reality, and if the person's using - Polarity sessions in that way to escape their problems it's going to be difficult. You have to be clear in the beginning and say —

'O.K. This is going to be a matter of you also doing some work on yourself, becoming more aware of how you got into this mess, how these problems have a deeper root'. Lifestyle, thought patterns or emotional holding. Every element has three aspects and they all interrelate:— thought, emotion and body and every aspect has to be looked at.

The beautiful thing is that Polarity Therapy really does understand those imbalances at a formative level. These imbalances become processes. Whether it is emotional distress or physical distress, they take shape in some form. Working with the body energetically you can open the pattern up, you can create a breathing space for a person. They may not have learnt from their situation, but sometimes just by creating a space and really opening the cycle up, you can create more of those changes and insights.

I have had that happen many times. I don't do a lot of counselling really, because balancing the elements will open things up. I do talk to the person about things that are going on and things just come up.

I had a wonderful experience a couple of weeks ago with a patient who doesn't know much about the elements on this-kind of intellectual level, it's not her training. For her whole life she's had minor knee problems and hates to have her knees touched — she gets freaked out if someone just puts their hand on her knees. She felt that was normal that 'no-one likes to have their knees touched'. Also her navel was another area; we worked around fire. It came

to be much clearer after a few sessions that she needed to ground and earth. One session I was working very specifically on finding sore spots in her neck and just lightly holding the knee and experiencing the flow of energy. I had taught her an awareness practice and how to be in her body. Every time she went out and was away there was no energy flow, there was no connection. I told her when she wasn't there, 'your're away'. She came back and the energy started flowing again. This really astounded her that I knew when she was 'away' just by feeling her energy. Now I had her do it and start to feel that when she isn't there there's no connection and the blockage comes back and when she's really there with awareness the blockage opens and the energy flows. How transformative just awareness is! By actually becoming very physical with her, showing her that it's not magic when you feel energy and how she could change things for herself just by being aware. It really did change things for her. There was a real shift from negative to positive, a real opening.

Carol:

This is body/mind integration.

Franklyn:

Yes, a person can experience that they are one system. That was working on a deep level of imbalance in the energy system. Here I worked on the inter-relationships of the elements fairly holistically. I was not looking at just her knee problem, but we worked through where the focus of the problem was.

Carol:

So you are working with awareness.

Franklyn:

You have to work with awareness at every level, but it depends where the focus of the awareness is.

Carol:

The difference between this level and the persona level in the way you are working seems to be with time. At the persona level you are working with an overall problem which exists before the session and you are going to cure it for afterwards but here you are really bringing the person very present in time.

Franklyn: .

It is a matter of being in the present, rather than the past, because pain is always of the past anyway. You experience past pain really. You never experience present pain. That is why bringing full awareness to a painful place takes the pain away. Well, not quite, you are underneath it, you transform it to something else.

Another example of the power of just creating space by alleviating symptoms happened a little while ago.

Just when I was finishing my practice in London and I wasn't taking on any new patients I had a telephone call from a lady 'My back has been like this for ten years', she pleaded with me 'I've seen everyone in the world. I've seen orthopaedic specialists who just want to operate, and they just want to operate when there's no clear problem, it's just sacro-iliac pain'. They didn't want to talk to her about it! She's been to physiotherapists, osteopaths, homoeopaths, acupuncturists, she's been through the whole gauntlet and Polarity Therapy was this weird things she's heard about. It was the last thing!

So - we focussed in on her back pain, two months for such a chronic problem was very short and I didn't know whether we would be able to alleviate the pain and we certainly didn't really have time to go into it in a holistic way. But, within five sessions she was pain free for the first time in ten years. I taught her some of the polarity exercises to keep the area open and in balance, the pyramid and the squat and some variations, basically gentle things. We just dealt with the manifestations but it created an incredible space in her life. Her whole attitude has changed and other things have changed just by creating that space, by taking that load off her. So she has trickled down to a deeper level and I think that she'll go on from there.

So in a way I think Ken Wilber's scheme is a bit arbitrary in relation to where he's placed the therapies.

Carol:

Yes, if you read the book he goes much more into specific aspects of various therapies which warrant their inclusion at the different levels.

Franklyn:

But it's not really relevant because it's really about the relationship you have with the therapist. If you have a good Freudian therapist who is a sensitive person that may be the realm he's working on but he can go to the other levels. The quality of the presence and contact between the two people cuts through all these layers. Simple counselling could take you through a whole realm. If you are making contact with a person, you are making contact with a core level, even if you are just talking. All these things are just techniques.

I do agree with him that when you are talking about 'Unity Consciousness' you are talking about a spiritual practice and not about psychotherapy.

Carol:

It is an interesting word therapy...the Greek word means 'paying homage to the gods' which puts it in a different light, like patience/patients.

Franklyn:

Yes. So his model is very similar to the way the energy patterns work from contractive levels to more expansive levels like the layers of an onion, each one encompassing the other.

At the ether centre the whole mind/body complex is available and at the brow centre everything is all-encompassing, as you go further into manifestation the pattern is more contracted and fragmented.

That image would not apply to the model in. all ways of course because all five elements work at every level.

So at the level which he calls 'Total Organism' is it the whole in relationship to the environment?

Carol:

Well, this is where Dr Stone seems to say a lot more than anybody else because he is talking about how the elements are what we are made of in common with the environment, he talks about the nature of that unity, he has a language for it that is rare.

Franklyn:

I see that as working with the underlying neutral ground of the elements. In other words, the oneness of the elements in relation to the whole. The Chinese would say you are working

with the Tao in the world, that you are in touch with the underlying ground which connects us together. The Buddhists say that you are working with mindfulness, that you are a receptor, that you are taking everything in. He puts Bioenergetics, Reich and Gestalt in the same...?

Carol:

I think Bioenergetics and Reich are there because of the orgone energy concept, but I'm not sure about Rogerian Therapy?

Franklyn:

That is wonderful for basic counselling work because you really have to work at understanding your role. Why isn't Gestalt therapy classified with humanistic psychology? There is no separate discipline of humanistic psychology really as they draw on Gestalt, Bioenergetics etc.

When you are working with the elements you are working right through all those levels of the Spectrum, if you are truly » following the periods process. As you go into the transpersonal band then you are working with the underlying neutral ground of the elements, you are breaking down the ego structure. A real problem is that even on the Total Organism level you still have ego there on a subtle level, it can be just the urge to be here.

So in Polarity Therapy terms, the first layer is working with the expression of the elements; the next layer down is working with the inter—relationship of the elements; the next layer is actually working with their neutral ground. And it can all be done in simple counselling — two people make a connection and their ego layers dissolve between.

Carol:

Roger's concept of 'unconditional regard' is a good way of describing neutrality.

Franklyn:

It is very subtle. It depends on the focus of the person. Even coming from there you could still want that person to get better. It's easy to fool yourself into thinking that you are egoless, with unconditional love when you still want charge of the situation!

Carol:

This is where we really have to work isn't it, looking at our own process.

Franklyn:

That's it! Where you're really working with transcending the elements is the last band, Unity Consciousness. It's about transcending manifestation. Here he lists Vedanta, Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism, esoteric Islam, esoteric Christianity and you've put Sant Mat. He really should have written esoteric Taoism because there are many forms which are very ritualistic.

Carol:

I was wondering how important birth work is because it seems to be a very deep place to discover what underlies our total attitude to our experience and an opportunity to make that conscious and go beneath it to a more neutral position?

Franklyn:

Yes that can occur from birth work —but not necessarily and it doesn't have to be from there. What you are talking about is a ground of emergence of content. You can arrive at that by sitting with a patient, watching thoughts come up and take form. There can be a great realisation that this thought had no more reality than a cloud. It was just an impulse that took

shape, took clinging attachment on, and became a very solid form, became urgent, became an emotion and then into starting to hold in the body ....

Carol:

So, in terms of timing, you are moving even more present. Time is slower, if you like (or faster) ....

Franklyn:

Yes, and there are times when you are transcending time. It's not a question of past, present, or future, by being more and more in the present you then open the process up and time isn't a factor any more.

Carol:

More and more concentrated.

Franklyn:

Yes, although you have to be careful of that because as you become more concentrated you can just go into bliss states, where you can become very trapped. Sometimes you have to back off from that and just be there with a certain light concentration, that doesn't surpass awareness.

It is very subtle, it's almost like ripples you are dealing with, whether you get caught up in the ripple or not. If you bring your attention into your body while you are being worked on you can experience the elements shifting and the basic imbalances opening. With awareness you can really be there for that formative shift at the level of emergence.

Carol:

It seems to me that it is only in Polarity Therapy that the therapists are aware of themselves in such a way that they can stabilise the awareness of the patient on emotional, physical and mental levels... it seems that other therapies, in my experience so far, tend to isolate the attention into different areas, so that there isn't this possibility of a whole awakening?

Franklyn:

Every therapy has its bias and will focus on a different piece ....

Carol:

And every therapist ....

Franklyn:

And every therapist within that therapy. Yes. This is where you transcend the technique; it really depends on the presence and the relationship of the two people or the group, or whatever.

I would like to describe the ways we work in Polarity Therapy.

1. You are working with the expressions of the elements and content.
2. You are working with the process of the manifestation and the inter-relationship of the elements.
3. You are working with the neutral ground and actually watching process occur at the ground of emergence.
4. Working transcending the elements underneath the whole process in a timeless space.



Carol:

So it is up to the polarity therapist to develop their meditation so that they can be there ....

Franklyn:

I think as far as the therapist is concerned there are three things:-

1. A commitment to working on yourself.
2. To learn to be present.
3. To learn to be present with the other person.

Some people can be present for themselves and have a very hard time being present for someone else. The more ground you make in being present for yourself the more you can extend that.

I prefer the term transcendence to Unity Consciousness because that can be a trap, being unified with the manifestation and not transcending that. Transcendence is a good word because you are not 'doing that in a negative way. It's not copping out since you can only transcend by really being here. By really seeing the pain and the suffering that is involved and loosening your attachments.

Carol:

I think that has to be so. To that is the best that therapy has to offer - the loosening of attachments.

Franklyn:

Yes that is what it is about. The Tibetan medical system is beautiful because that is what they deal with. They see the roots of all illness as ignorance, attachment and aversion and that is what the patient has to deal with if they want to get better.

The basic problem is desire. not desire in a coarse way. It's a very subtle urge, an urge to be here. grasping. Attachment and aversion are the two sides of the coin of desire: one is the desire to push away, one is the desire to take in and not seeing that process is ignorance. Once you can gain insight into that process you aren't ignorant anymore, you gain insight and let go of the process. We give people pills. do acupuncture etc., but the persons themselves have to deal with the roots of their disease.

Carol:

Thank you Franklyn.