

# OUR HUMAN SPIRITUAL JOURNEY: THE PRIMITIVE EGO THEORY OF HUMAN SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT©

## **From Primitive Ego Narcissism To An Enlightened Middlepath Evolutionary Spirituality**

The middle path is simply an internal journey into emptiness, not knowing, silence, simplicity, living in the moment, and accepting reality for what it is.

Middle path is a journey that each of us must take for ourselves; no one can do it for us. It requires the painful letting go of our cherished ego beliefs, certainties, and opinions of simplistic thinking; the emptying and quieting of our black and white childhood ego's that "*know*" so much.

To become a person who does no harm in *this moment* I must learn to walk the middle path; a journey of spiritual growth and transformation; to a place of emptiness and humility. May I develop the wisdom of not knowing.

To change and grow, I must be willing in *this moment* to shed my beliefs, certainties, and opinions just as a snake sheds its skin to grow. May I develop the courage to not-know.

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This article on spiritual growth and human development is based on  
**THE PRIMITIVE EGO THEORY OF HUMAN SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT©**

developed by the author  
at the

**STONYHILL INSTITUTE**

[WWW.STONYHILL.COM](http://WWW.STONYHILL.COM)

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# OUR HUMAN SPIRITUAL JOURNEY: THE PRIMITIVE EGO THEORY OF HUMAN SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT® - **From Primitive Ego Narcissism To An Enlightened Middlepath Evolutionary Spirituality**

## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper briefly explores The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development® (PETHSSD®); the human psyche's developmental journey from the pathological narcissism of our unconscious primitive ego to the enlightened consciousness of a middlepath evolutionary spirituality.<sup>1</sup>*

*Until a sufficient critical number of humans make the commitment to intentionally evolve and transform themselves through growth in their self-awareness, from the narcissistic primitive ego of their inner-child into the matured consciousness of a co-creative observing ego, humanity will continue to manifest judgmental splitting, the violent tribal mentality we are currently seeing globally, and other primitive survival oriented behaviors that are creating the current high levels of violence and suffering we see in the world today.*

*Despite what the primitive ego often assumes, humans are not the final or end result of the evolutionary creative process. We are merely the first self-aware consciousness to emerge on this particular planet; the local product of a 14.5 billion year evolutionary journey from the primal energy and elementary particles of the big bang. Where the creative evolutionary process will take us in the future is beyond our ability to conceptualize.*

*This paper describes the primitive ego of our inner-child and the basic evolutionary awakening of our observing ego as it matures toward happiness, meaning, and a more enlightened consciousness. It looks briefly at the evolutionary process of human social and spiritual development in the context of human culture, religion, and the larger, cosmic context of a compassionate middlepath global consciousness that manifest an enlightened post-modern spirituality.*

*The summary and conclusion of the paper explores the importance of each of us learning to see our selves as an integral and responsible part of an on-going cosmic 14.5 billion year old creative evolutionary process. When we live in the limited world of our narcissistic primitive ego and its obsessive self-focus on materialism, control, and possessions, our ability to escape the grip of depression and find an authentic sense of meaning, purpose, and happiness in life is virtually impossible.*

*The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development® discussed in this paper is an important post-modern developmental theory and conceptual model for authentic spiritual*

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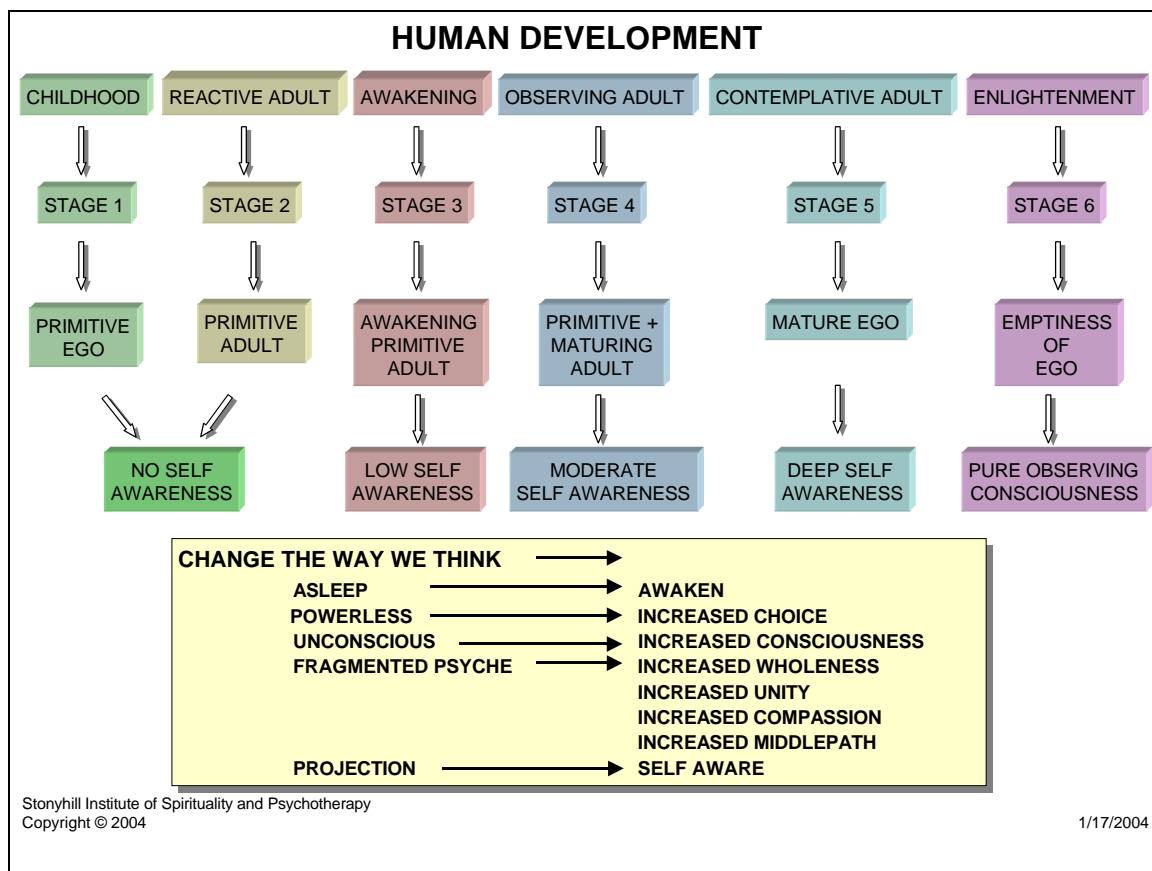
<sup>1</sup> Middlepath refers to the ability to embrace the world in a wholistic context in which a person has developed the ability to avoid splitting the world into judgmental either-or, black and white categories of good and bad, or right and wrong. Middlepath is the ability to see the truth on both sides of any issue; to embrace the paradox that there is truth in all things. Middlepath is discussed in other articles located on the Stonyhill website at <http://www.stonyhill.com>.

*growth and the creation of a compassionate global spirituality; a model for intentional growth in self-awareness and self-consciousness that supports the future evolution of both our individual and species consciousness.*

# PART ONE: THE PRIMITIVE EGO OF OUR INNER-CHILD

## Brief Introduction To The Primitive Ego Theory Of Human Social and Spiritual Development<sup>©</sup>

Our Primitive Ego employs wide variety of psychological defenses to protect itself. These defenses include various childhood survival skills, disassociation, suppression, avoidance, procrastination, denial, phobias, neurosis, character disorders, repression, projection, and projective identification.



The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development<sup>©2</sup> (or PETHSSD<sup>©</sup>) Diagram

<sup>2</sup> The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development<sup>©</sup> was developed by the author at Stonyhill Institute from professional training and insights learned from 24 years of private practice as a Pastoral Psychotherapist. Other articles on the Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development<sup>©</sup> can be found on the articles page at [www.stonyhill.com](http://www.stonyhill.com). For a more in depth article on PETHD and the primitive ego the reader is encouraged to read the first few sections of the article on Awakening posted on the web site.

The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development<sup>3</sup> (or PETHSSD<sup>®</sup>) is a post-modern theory of human social and spiritual development; a relational developmental theory, not a psychodynamic psychological theory. PETHSSD<sup>®</sup> assumes that *without authentic spiritual growth, our human species will be unable to create a sustainable compassionate, non-violent global culture*. Only when we make the commitment to intentionally grow in self-awareness will we achieve the level of self-awareness required to create sustainable, healthy and compassionate relationships with others. PETHSSD<sup>®</sup> describes in detail the evolution of human consciousness from the primitive ego of our inner-child to the enlightenment of a middlepath evolutionary spirituality.

A basic premise of PETHSSD<sup>®</sup> is that authentic spiritual growth and growth in self-awareness are synonymous. You can't have one without the other.

Briefly, the developmental stages in PETHSSD<sup>®</sup> are:

**Stage One** is childhood. Stage one covers human development from birth to approximately eight years of age. At about 8 years of age, the experiences and learning's of childhood morph into our unconscious and become our felt-sense of "self"; the primitive ego of our unconscious inner-child.

The reactive adult of **Stage 2** is essentially the primitive ego of our inner-child masquerading as an adult in an adult body. Essentially, we are still functioning unconsciously out of the primitive ego of our inner-child and reacting unconsciously to emotional and environment stimuli.

**Stage 3** in the PETHSSD<sup>®</sup> is the conscious awakening of self-awareness and self-consciousness; the moment we become consciously aware that we are capable of intentionally growing in self-awareness. Another way to describe awakening is that we become aware of the speck in our own eye. The focus of our conscious attention increasingly shifts from the outer world to our inner world. *Awakening is the birth of intentionality*.

Another way to understand awakening is through the religious concept of baptism. Adult baptism is the intentional commitment we make to align our life with a higher purpose such as God, the Ground of All Being, the Creator, or the Consciousness that created the form we call the Big Bang. Regardless of how we prefer to define God, the concept called awakening in PETHSSD<sup>®</sup> describes the moment we consciously or intentionally choose to spiritually awaken and align our lives with a higher purpose; to live life in a larger, less narcissistic self-focused context. Awakening is the moment that we intentionally make the commitment to become spirit centered rather than self-centered; to make enlightenment through growth in self-awareness a major spiritual and developmental goal for our lives.

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<sup>3</sup> The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development<sup>®</sup> was developed by the author at Stonyhill Institute from professional training and insights learned from 24 years of private practice as a Pastoral Psychotherapist. Other articles on the Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development<sup>®</sup> can be found on the articles page at [www.stonyhill.com](http://www.stonyhill.com). For a more in depth article on PETHD and the primitive ego the reader is encouraged to read the first few sections of the article on Awakening posted on the web site.

The original meaning of baptism in our mainline religions was simply the commitment an individual make to intentionally align one's life with God; to live life in a larger, less narcissistic context. Unfortunately, modern institutional religion commonly uses baptism as an opportunity to initiate a person into membership in their particular religion or set of religious beliefs. In PETHSSD® awakening is understood in the original context of a spiritual awakening, not a religious awakening.

**Stage 4** is the beginning of *intentional* growth in our observing ego. In this stage, we learn to more consciously direct the focus of our attention so as to manifest increased control over both our internal thinking process and our emotional responses to stimuli from our outer environment. In stage 4, our observing ego increasingly develops intentional choice over what we manifest. What we manifest in the world becomes more consistent with our psycho-spiritual attainment and what we know to be truth.<sup>4</sup>

Each new realization of truth that leads to the clearing of old primitive ego beliefs and self-identity each establish a new level of self-awareness that in turn leads to higher realizations of truth and reality; higher levels of consciousness. As we grow in stage 4, we become less driven by our primitive ego's primitive survival consciousness and instincts, and more responsible for the enlightenment of our entire human species.

Evolution does a good job of moving us forward and learning new insights and truths, but it does a very poor job of clearing our consciousness of old, unhelpful beliefs from our childhood.<sup>5</sup> This growth in self-awareness and the clearing of outmoded childhood beliefs is the work of stage 4.

In **Stage Five**, our consciousness begins to develop a deep contemplative self-awareness. Our need to know and be right is increasingly replaced by our need to simply "be with" and quietly "pay attention" to both inner and outer stimuli. A stage five consciousness means that we are beginning to manifest a significantly evolved middlepath spirituality. We no longer need to "split" reality into concepts of either / or.

**Stage Six** is full enlightenment. There have been many different descriptions and schools of enlightenment over the last several thousand years. Most have been primarily concerned with individual enlightenment.

The only enlightenment that makes sense to this author in a post-modern 21<sup>st</sup> century global consciousness, is a middlepath evolutionary spirituality; a fully conscious sense of self-awareness as a spiritual being co-creatively responsible with the Initiating Consciousness of the Universe for the creation of all new form. *There is no form without an initiating consciousness.* Enlightenment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century means simply living our lives in the fully-conscious awareness that in this local part of the universe, on the planet Earth, we are the Co-creative, reflexively conscious result of a roughly 14.5 billion year creative evolutionary process. An evolutionary process that clearly appears to be moving creation toward increased complexity of all living organisms, increased levels of consciousness in living organisms, and an increased communal cooperation between living organisms.

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<sup>4</sup> Simple truth, as apposed to "THE" truth of conservative primitive ego religious beliefs.

<sup>5</sup> From Enlightened Psychology, Dr. Jeffery Eisen, WIE Unbound, July, 2007

## **Definition Of Inner-Child**

The term inner-child is a psychological concept that is used to refer to all of the memories and experiences of one's early childhood. At about seven to eight years of age the brain has developed and matured to the point where all of our childhood experiences crystallize or coalesce into a felt sense of "me"; a sense of personhood or sense of self that is unique from any one else.

One of my children articulated this concept very clearly when he was between seven and eight years old. We were driving home from school one afternoon when he said rather excitedly, "You know Dad, I had a really amazing thought today".

When I asked him what it was he responded, " I'm a me!!"

I said "You mean there is no other person just like you in the whole world?"

"Yea, exactly!" he said very excitedly, "I'm me!!"

When this Stage 1 shift in our developing ego takes place, all the memories, and experiences of our childhood essentially slide into our unconscious and become our "inner-child". It is common for children to use the word "me" or "mine" when they are younger to express possessiveness, but after the Stage 1 felt sense of "self" emerges, "me" takes on a deeper meaning that reflects the beginning of true self-consciousness. The *potential* for full self-awareness or full self-consciousness will not develop until we are well into our adolescence or young adulthood, but at Stage 1, our felt sense of "self" and the primitive ego of our inner-child are now firmly established in our unconscious mind.

We refer to the ego of our inner-child as being primitive in the PETHSSD<sup>®</sup>, but only in the sense that it is the ego of a very young child. Our primitive ego is rarely helpful when we unconsciously use it to control our day-to-day adult life because no child has the insight or life experience to effectively navigate in the adult world. However, the word "primitive" in "primitive ego" is not used in any pejorative sense. It implies only that the ego of our inner-child is young and not yet fully developed.

## **The Inner-Child Is Similar To The Operating System On A Computer**

A useful way to understand our "inner-child" and its "primitive ego" is to compare it to the operating system on a computer. We may see the operating system when our computer first turns on, but after that brief glimpse the operating system is essentially invisible. Despite its invisibility, it controls everything that happens on our computer. Without an operating system, our computer would not be able to function. Our brain is simply a sophisticate computer.

Our unconscious inner-child and its primitive ego is for all intents and purposes our operating system. Until we have achieved a significant level of self-awareness, we remain consciously unaware of our inner-child's presence or existence. Never the less, it controls the functioning of our brain. Everything we experienced and learned in childhood is contained in our inner-child's memory.

For example, our inner-child has a good sense of who we can trust, what and who is dangerous, how to protect ourselves, how to get our needs met, how to toilet, how to take a bath, how to get dressed, what brings pleasure, how to avoid criticism, how to protect our sense of self, and many thousands of other experiences, insights, and learning's from childhood.

Most of our automatic unconscious knee jerk responses that make up our “personality” are simply the “survival skills” our inner-child becoming visible. For example, if someone criticizes us, our primitive ego will often get angry with them and push them away. If someone challenges our self-identity or our felt-sense of who we are, our primitive ego will instinctively respond with an unconscious oppositional “knee-jerk response. It is not uncommon for our “inner-child’s” primitive ego to respond to such “personal attacks” with anger, counter-criticism, or some other aggressive behavior.

The primitive ego of our inner-child which forms the core of our adult ego, especially in a Stage 2 level of development, is always on-guard using the survival skills it learned in childhood to protect us in adulthood from anything it considers harmful.

Unfortunately some common survival skills of our primitive ego are especially dangerous as we struggle to develop a modern global culture.

## **The Primitive Ego Survival Skills Of Splitting, Tribalism, and Blame**

### **1) The Primitive Ego’s Survival Skill of Splitting: The Creation of Tribalism**

One of the more dangerous unconscious survival skills that our primitive ego uses is called splitting. As children we learned to keep the world simple and understandable by “splitting” everything into “either-or” categories called good and bad, or right and wrong. Unfortunately, we unconsciously continue splitting the world even in adulthood.

“Splitting” is often called black and white thinking. Unfortunately, this common survival skill tends to create a sense of “otherness” and harmful judgmentalism when we “split” the world into categories of us vs. them. Otherness categories of “they or them” are always experienced emotionally as the enemy. Someone potentially dangerous. This splitting of the world into “them” and “us” is the root cause of tribalism. Tribalism is the foundation of nationalism, of self-righteous competing religions, of patriarchal sexism, of all forms of institutionalism, of “Caucasian” racism, and other judgmental ethnic and homophobic labeling--- to name only a few.

Splitting is endemic in our human culture. Our primitive ego splits virtually every part of our world into either/or categories. Even football games and other competitive sports are a form of tribalism that results from primitive ego splitting.

Judgmentalism comes from the survival skill of splitting because our primitive ego *always* believes that it knows “*the truth*” and as such, always feels that it is right. Those who agree with our primitive ego are emotionally experienced as friends. Those who disagree with our primitive ego beliefs are experienced as the enemy. Enemies are those dangerous “others” that cannot be trusted. Our primitive ego insists that safety requires that we maintain control by establishing a vertical “power-over” relationship with them; a primitive survival of the fittest kind of relationship.

Not only does our primitive ego believe that our beliefs are “truth”, it is also unable to see the fragmentation of our own psyche. Because it has virtually no self-awareness, the fragmented or split off shadow material of our primitive ego gets unconsciously projected onto others. Through the process of blaming, others are unconsciously invited to carry the negative or shadow energy of the dis-owned fragmented parts of *our* unconscious. For example, if we dis-own our own

aggressive tendencies because we are not comfortable with them, we will tend to unconsciously project our aggression onto others. In this way, “they” or “others” become the “aggressive” enemy to be feared and guarded against; not us!

*The tribal “otherness” that comes from the common survival skill of splitting is the root cause of virtually all of the world’s violence and conflict. We are the good guys, they are the enemy.*

The birth of our more conscious observing adult ego and the ability for an intentional and sustained self-awareness essentially begins at the moment of true awakening. Until awakening is achieved, our primitive ego will continue to create tribal based violence and conflict through the survival skill of splitting.

The successful creation of a compassionate global culture will depend entirely on a sufficient threshold number of individuals achieving true awaking. *Until this critical mass of awakened individuals is reached, the level of violence and terrorism we are experiencing globally will continue to increase.*

## **2) The Primitive Ego Believes That Everything Important Comes From The “Outer” World, Not The “Inner” World**

Our primitive ego believes that all things, including good and bad, pleasure and pain, come to us from the outside world. We feel powerless in the belief that our desires are withheld or taken from us by others. We feel powerless to stop them.

This, of course, was actually true in early childhood when we *were* powerless and dependent on others for our very survival. Unfortunately, this primitive ego belief can continue to make us feel helpless and powerless even in adulthood. We often feel like we are victims. We resent it when others are too successful. If others are successful and happy it is because our primitive ego believes that in some way they took from us what was really ours. For example, our primitive ego may get angry and resentful when we hear that CEO’s and sport heroes are making millions of dollars. “They should not be paid that much money. We don’t get paid that much, so they shouldn’t either. It’s not right or fair”.

The unconscious reason we buy things, and spend great effort in life acquiring possessions when we feel depressed or unhappy is because our primitive ego is convinced that happiness and pleasure come from the outer world, not the inner world. Happiness is a new car. Our primitive ego would never think of looking inward for happiness.

Feeling powerless and victimized as adults comes as a result of our primitive ego resisting to accept full responsibility for both the choices and the consequences of those choices that we have made, or not made, in our lives. The reality is each of us are fully responsible for the life that we have created, not others or fate. Our primitive ego prefers to project the blame for the life situations and emotions that “we” experience onto others.

This is not to say that there are times and situations where bad things may happen to us. The universe is neutral and impersonal, so sometimes it seems like fate does indeed dictate what

will happen in our lives. But regardless of what life brings us, we are still responsible for the choices we make. Even if the only choice is our attitude.<sup>6</sup>

For example, our primitive ego is convinced that others literally “*make*” us feel how we feel. So we blame others for our feelings despite the reality that no one can make us feel anything that is not already inside of us. Blame essentially means that we are powerless until *others* change the behavior that we do not like, or they give us what we want. When they say no or ignore us, we get angry because we know we are effectively powerless until they decide to agree with us and change their behavior. When we are certain that they are not going to change we declare war on them.

We often learn very early in life that being aggressively in control and establishing a survival of the fittest “vertical power-over” others in our personal relationships helped us feel safer and better about ourselves. It helped us get our needs met. In early childhood that usually meant opening our mouths and screaming; angrily demanding that we be given what we wanted, when we wanted it; which of course was always right now! Our primitive ego has very little patience.

Virtually all of our defensive tribal behaviors, our arrogance, our judgmentalism, our lack of happiness, and the conflict and violence we bring into the world have their roots in the primitive ego beliefs of our inner-child. Especially the belief that everything comes to us from the outer world, and others “*make*” us feel. When fear, which creates the “vertical power” survival of the fittest behavior of our primitive ego, combines with our primitive ego’s tendency toward splitting and tribalism as we saw in the first example above, the inevitable result is conflict and violence in the world.

If we want to live a different life, then we must accept full responsibility to create that life. If we want to create a different world, then we must accept full responsibility to create that world.

The reality of course is that what we create in the outer world, consciously and unconsciously, is simply a reflection of our inner world. If we want to live in a more peaceful and enlightened world, then we must accept the responsibility for co-creatively creating that world by first changing ourselves.

The first step toward that kind of change is the commitment to intentionally become more self-aware through the conscious evolution of our own observing ego. Only our more conscious and self-aware adult observing ego has the ability for self-empowerment; the ability to embrace the reality of what is and accept full responsibility for the life we are currently living.

### **The Reactive Adult Of Stage Two**

It is important to understand that our inner-child’s primitive ego is not bad. It just is not helpful when it unconsciously attempts to control our adult life outside of our awareness. It is an extremely rare eight year old that has the life experience and insight required to successfully navigate and survive in an adult world.

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<sup>6</sup> Read the inspiring story about Corry ten Bloom’s( April 15, 1892 – April 15, 1983) life in the German prison camps to get a better understanding of this concept. [The Hiding Place](#), 1974. The only thing she had control over for several years was her attitude, but it saved her life and many others.

Yet this is the reality of what most adults are attempting to do at the present evolutionary level of consciousness and self-awareness in the human species. Emotionally we are literally Stage 2 eight-year-old children living in adult bodies. In other words, virtually all adults alive today essentially function with the primitive ego consciousness of their eight-year-old inner-child. This is especially true when we are stressed or our primitive ego feels threatened. *We emotionally insist on taking everything that happens to us personally.*<sup>7</sup>

We appear to be adult. We talk about compassion and unconditional love. We aspire to cooperate with others. We “intellectually” understand the concepts of mutuality, diversity, and inclusiveness. Most of us are “intellectually” aware of, and repulsed by, the dangers of racism, sexism, ethnic profiling, homophobia, religious self-righteousness, or the many other judgmental categories that assume other human beings to be sub-human simply because they happen to be different from us.

Nevertheless, when we are stressed or challenged, or in any way feel threatened, we unconsciously begin to function out of our primitive ego. We love others until they make us angry. We accept people from other tribes or ethnic groups until people from their tribe threaten us. 911 is a good example of what happens when a few people from a foreign “tribe” are violent toward us. When 911 happened, we emotionally began to label anyone from the Middle East as one of “them” and we became uncomfortable with them living in our neighborhoods, or getting on our planes with us. Most of us would be uncomfortable to admit feeling that way, but it is a rare person that is not a bit awkward in those situations.

Because of 911, we justify putting Middle Eastern people in illegal prisons and removing their legal rights because they are the “enemy”. We stand for liberty, freedom, and justice, so we try to justify our actions by affirming that no American citizens have lost their civil liberties; only the enemy.

When illegal “aliens” from Mexico want to come to the United States to acquire some of the affluence, for their family and children, that we enjoy every day, we begin talking about building fences to keep them out of “our” country.

Concepts like compassion, equality, freedom, opportunity, unconditional love, inclusiveness, diversity, and justice give way to the fear that “they” will take away what is “ours”. It’s our “right” to keep what we have. Because our primitive ego believes that it is a survival of the fittest world, we feel frightened and compelled to protect ourselves from “them”. They should go earn it just like we think we did. The reality of course is that we were born to privilege. It was provided to us by those who came before us.

Sometimes we are aware at some deeper level of consciousness that we are not behaving as the compassionate person we would like to be. We are not living up to the ethics and values that we claim to profess. We feel uncomfortable with our behaviors and attitudes. Despite these emotions and behaviors, it does not mean that we are bad people. We are simply unaware that our actions and emotions are being unconsciously controlled by the frightened primitive ego of our inner-child. We are unaware that we are simply Stage 2 “adults” responding

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<sup>7</sup> The Four Agreements By Don Miguel Ruiz, A Toltec Wisdom Book, Amber-Allen Publishing, San Rafael, California, 1997

to environmental stimuli with unconscious emotionally driven knee-jerk behaviors manifesting from the primitive ego of our inner-child. Until we become aware of our primitive ego, we essentially have a very limited ability to make choices.

### **Off Line Choices: The Difference Between Animal Consciousness And Human Reflexive Consciousness**

A helpful way to understand the concept of “off line”<sup>8</sup> choice, the ability to think about what we are thinking about, is to first understand animal consciousness. Animals have biological and survival awareness of their environment. They know how to get food, shelter, and water. They can sense danger and respond appropriately, either by fight or flight. What they do not have however is the ability to be self-conscious or self-aware. They cannot ponder or think about what they are thinking about. Biologically, they are always “on-line”, reactively aware of their immediate environment in the here and now.

When we unconsciously react to threatening emotional and environmental stimuli, our primitive ego consciousness, like that of the lower animals, is essentially limited to “on-line” survival oriented behaviors. Like the consciousness of other animals, our primitive ego is always “on-line” and vigilantly aware of it’s immediate environment; biologically focused on the here and now. It is unconsciously or instinctively ready to react positively to pleasurable stimuli, or defensively to threatening stimuli.

To state this concept simply, we can say that like animals, our primitive ego has very little ability to make behavioral choices based on self-conscious, self-aware “off-line” thinking. For example, we may off-line consciously “want” to be a person who manifests unconditional love, but when we are threatened, hurt or angry we find our primitive ego unconsciously manifesting on-line aggressive, hurtful behavior.

Only the fully self-conscious, self-aware adult observing ego can function “off-line” and think *about* its emotions, its values, its principles, its thoughts, its future, or its past. Our conscious observing ego’s ability to process “off-line” and choose our behaviors based on conscious attention to our “off-line” beliefs, thoughts, principles, and values are what separate us as self-conscious humans from animals.

In other words, only a self-aware, self-conscious observing ego that consciously *wants* to love unconditionally actually has the ability to *consciously choose* to remain unconditionally loving regardless of its on-line feelings and emotions. It does not mean that the observing ego does not feel emotions; it simply means that it chooses to manifest behaviors based on its off-line principles and values. This ability to choose our behaviors based on our off-line values instead of our on-line emotions requires a high level of enlightened self-awareness; a fully conscious enlightened middlepath spirituality.

The primitive ego cannot be transcended, it must be transformed, matured and evolved into a higher consciousness. As one writer humorously said when talking about growth in human consciousness, “Lord help those around us when we try to change who we are through force of will”. We change when the old ways, the old world-views no longer make any sense; when the

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<sup>4</sup> WIE Unbound, 2007, Interview with Zoltan Torey

pain of where we are becomes greater than the fear of the unknown that comes with any change.

### **Summary: The Primitive Ego, Evolution, and Wholeness**

We can summarize our introduction to the primitive ego of our inner-child with one word; narcissism. Anything created by our unconscious primitive ego will be driven by a self-centered narcissism. Our modern 21<sup>st</sup> century Western culture is a good example.

American philosopher Ken Wilber refers to the post-modern narcissism of our western baby boomer generation as “boomeritis”; a social narcissism characterized by relativism, a lack of discipline, and a lack of hierarchy.<sup>9</sup> He is essentially defining a social culture based on the extreme individualism of our collective primitive egos; a culture that defines everything as relative; where no thing, or category, is more important or has more intrinsic value than any other thing or category.

In other words, Wilber defines “boomeritis” as a narcissistic culture in which there is a lack of discipline in critical thinking; where there is no hierarchy of values or principles in the establishment of one’s beliefs. The beliefs or “truths” of all individuals are automatically assumed to have equal validity and it is considered culturally rude or arrogant to critically examine or attempt to publicly challenge another person’s beliefs.

The primitive ego bases “absolute truth” primarily on its own emotional defended narcissistic beliefs. For example, it narcissistically believes that its religious beliefs represent ultimate truth. Despite the fact that most of our beliefs are not particularly conscious, nor do we often know where they originally came from, our primitive ego does *not* want to experience criticism or have its them challenged. The beliefs are “ours” and our primitive ego will passionately defend them; sometimes even unto death.

As we will see below, our narcissistic primitive ego creates the concept of tribes to feel safe, and it creatively invents beliefs and ultimate or absolute “truths” in an attempt to reduce the fear of the unknown.

The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development<sup>©</sup> is based on the premise that our observing adult ego’s *growth in self-consciousness and self-awareness represents our spiritual journey toward authentic spiritual growth, wholeness, and enlightenment; a spiritual journey that increases our ability as co-creators to intentionally and sustainably manifest the forms we call compassion and unconditional love.*<sup>10</sup>

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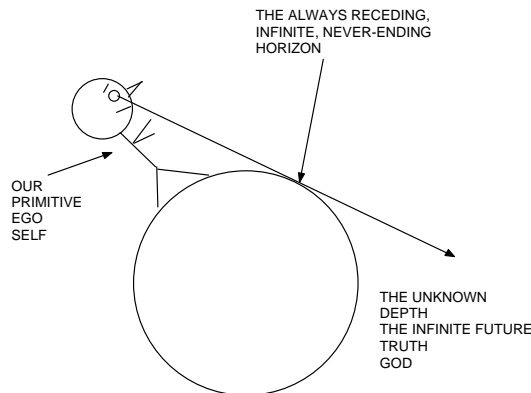
<sup>9</sup> Boomeritis, by Ken Wilber. See Wikipedia.

<sup>10</sup> Several articles on the web page at [www.stonyhill.com](http://www.stonyhill.com) also discuss the concept of primitive ego. The recently published article on Awakening takes an in-depth look at the primitive ego and the Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development.©

## PART TWO: PRIMITIVE EGO AND THE NEVER-ENDING HORIZON: CREATING ABSOLUTE TRUTH

### Looking Over The Horizon: And What Do We See?

The answer to this question is always mystery; “the unknown”. No matter how far we journey forward, the always receding, infinite, never-ending horizon always impedes our ability to see into the future. We can guess and surmise what the future might bring, but it is not possible to have *absolute* knowledge of what the future holds in store for us. Beyond the ever receding horizon is a place of unknown truths that are forever shrouded in darkness; hidden from the light of our consciousness. It is a place of infinite depth where the unfathomable mystery of God, the frightening mystery of death, all unrevealed truths, the infinite depths of the unknown, and the shrouded future of time itself all dwell.



The primitive ego however is driven by anxiety to feel safe; to “know”; to have the “*right*” answers. As we discussed above, the primitive ego of our inner-child learned to keep the world simple by splitting which only allows the two categories; either/or, right or wrong. *So when it encounters the unknown, our primitive ego creates absolute truth to cope with the fear and anxiety of not-knowing.*

### Tribalism: The Creation Of Absolute Truth In Global Cultures

We see this tendency of our collective primitive egos to create absolute truth in our global cultures; our global tribes. The collective primitive egos of each “tribe” or culture collectively agree that their values and their version of how life is supposed to be lived is the correct world-view. They blindly accept their culture’s world-view as absolute truth despite the fact that they may simply have unconsciously adopted their culture’s behaviors and beliefs from previous generations; in a kind of cultural osmosis.

The tribes culture, behaviors, and beliefs are automatically assumed to represent the absolute truth of reality; the right way to live. The right way to do things. Other cultures are different or alien, therefore assumed to be wrong. “Ours” is right way, “theirs” is not. Tribalism, the primitive

ego's unconscious need to split the world into us vs. them, and its need to possess or define "absolute truth" are the root causes of most of the world's current conflict and violence. The creative evolutionary process is based on radical diversity and a complex inter-cooperation between life forms; not on one life form being right and the rest being eliminated simply because they are "not like us" and therefore unconsciously assumed to be "wrong".

Tribalism is not bad or wrong. There was a time when tribal thinking was necessary for the survival of the human species. But the tribal assumption of absolute truth and the unconscious projection of a tribal culture's shadow energy is very dangerous and destructive to the establishment of a compassionate, cooperative global culture. We must evolve our primitive ego consciousness into the more enlightened consciousness of an adult observing ego. This transformation must begin with a personal commitment in each of us to reduce our tribal identities and begin to awaken and intentionally grow in self-awareness.

### **Evangelical Fundamentalism: The Creation Of Absolute Truth In Religion**

Since the birth of reflexive self-consciousness in the human species, death and the mystery of what happens to us after death has been a mystery lurking just beyond the horizon. The primitive ego's of our early ancestors were compelled to cope with the terrible anxiety of not knowing what comes after death.

To simply be born, and then spend a lifetime coping with the many dangers that surrounded them as they struggled to survive, then only to eventually die anyways, had to have been a depressing admission that their lives lacked meaning and purpose. Adding to their anxiety was the fact that most of the natural environmental events they experienced were also a mystery.

It was logical that they would have attributed most of these mysterious natural events to an unknown entity that they referred to as a god. Keeping the gods happy was a way to cope with the anxiety of not knowing. This early concern to appease the gods eventually became institutionalized within the tribe as religion; the responsibility of the shaman or medicine men. In primitive tribes, a female often held this position of power.

To manage their anxiety of the unknown, our early primitive ego ancestors were compelled to "know" with certainty what the gods thought, what the gods liked and didn't like, where the gods lived, and how to keep them happy through the practice of animal and human sacrifice. We see the creation of absolute truth very early in human religion. The primitive egos of our early ancestors created absolute truth definitions of their gods and then protected those definitions by calling them holy.

Because it was important to keep the gods happy, and because no primitive ego ever likes having its beliefs criticized or questioned, our early ancestors would have behaved very angrily and aggressively when others dared to question or challenge their now religiously institutionalized understanding of God and the absolute truths contained in their religious beliefs. Anyone who questioned the absolute truths of their religion would have been assumed to be lacking in faith and judgmentally labeled as an unbeliever; one of "them"; an enemy to be avoided or destroyed.

The creation of absolute truth was really quite simple for those early primitive egos. They only had to invent or create a belief and then, through splitting, assume it to be right, and good; "the

truth". The belief did not have to be logical; its only function was that it had to effectively eliminate the anxiety of the un-known. Logic was secondary. Over time, through the creation of these absolute religious truths, the problem of death and the assurance of eternal life in heaven and various assumptions on how to keep the Gods happy, the survival of the individual through survival of the tribe and its various beliefs were eventually assured.

Of course splitting always creates its opposite. For every white, there is a black. For every good, there is a bad. For every right there is a wrong. In a "split" world we cannot have hot without cold, or up without down. Because every white, good, and right category requires a matching black, bad, wrong category, the primitive egos of our early ancestors had to create the absolute truth called Satan, evil, hell, sin, and eternal damnation. The spiritually dangerous opposites of safety.

Through the creation of religion and its absolute truths, life for our early ancestors became simple, predictable, safe, and manageable. Religious rituals, liturgies, and the reciting of creeds were effective ways of transmitting the tribal beliefs to the next generation. Some of the anxiety of the unknowns plaguing them had finally been eliminated. The primitive egos of our early ancestors would have found great comfort and sense of safety in their black and white absolute truth understandings of their gods.

*The reality of course is that God and what happens to us after death is always mystery, just beyond the horizon; in the place of the un-known. God or the sacred can be experienced, we can hold faith beliefs, but those things that dwell just beyond the horizon can never be "known" or explained as "truth"; a basic reality that many conservative members of 21<sup>st</sup> century mainline religions do not appear to understand. The confuse faith with "ultimate truth".*

### **Intelligent Design: The Creation Of Absolute Truth In The Creative Evolutionary Process**

Once our primitive ego has adopted a belief and converted the belief to absolute truth to avoid the anxiety of future "not-knowing", all future learning must conform as much as possible to this initial fundamental belief. In other words, new input cannot significantly challenge or attempt to change the initial basic belief.

For example, for most of us, the meaning of our life, the purpose of our life, and the issues of death and eternal life in heaven have already been dealt with by the primitive religious beliefs of ancient cultures that passed into history 2000-4000 years ago. New religious or spiritual beliefs that in any way question or challenge our established primitive religious beliefs will tend to be ignored or totally rejected by our primitive ego. In order to allow new input or new ideas, our primitive ego must be willing to sit with the anxiety of not knowing that always comes with change. Change is a very difficult task to ask of the primitive ego.

Unfortunately, this means that in order to avoid the anxiety of not knowing, our primitive ego will essentially need to reject or ignore the wisdom of over 200 years of modern biblical scholarship. The literal interpretation of biblical metaphors such as the Garden of Eden, the human fall from grace, the atonement, the very need for God's help in dealing with our "sinfulness", the concepts of heaven and eternal life, and the bodily resurrection of Jesus, represent only a handful of the scriptural beliefs are significantly challenged by the vast majority of modern biblical scholars.

Darwin's theory of evolution continues to be mired in a struggle for supremacy with conservative religious beliefs for obvious reasons. Conservative Christians believe that we are a "fallen" species. Eve disobeyed God when she ate the forbidden apple in the Garden of Eden. Then to make matters worse, she talked Adam into taking a bite too. Because of that sin of disobedience, they both were thrown out of the Garden of Eden. They were no longer the perfect creatures that God had created. They were now an imperfect fallen species.

Without God's help, there was no way that "man" could be redeemed.<sup>11</sup> In other words, Jesus, the Son of God, had to be crucified or sacrificed by God. There was no other acceptable way that God could come up with as redemptive payment for the sins of all humans. Thus, as Christians affirm, "Jesus died for our sins"; the Christian concept of atonement.<sup>12</sup>

Conservative Christians had to reject Darwin's theory of evolution. They had no choice.

Accepting Darwin's theory of evolution would mean accepting the belief that humans were not created perfect in the Garden of Eden, and thus we could not have fallen from God's grace into sin. According to Darwin, we are simply an unfinished, evolving species. Acceptance of Darwin's theory would mean that the entire Christian theology upon which the concept of atonement (Jesus dying for our sins) is based, would immediately become meaningless. The Garden of Eden would have to be read a metaphor, not literal history.

The primitive ego of conservative Christians *cannot* believe in Darwin's theory because it would radically challenge their already existing belief in the Garden of Eden and humanities need for atonement through the crucifixion of Jesus on the cross.

The primitive ego of Christians in general *cannot* believe in the theology of atonement and the theory of evolution simultaneously; they are diametrically opposing beliefs. Their primitive ego's choose to error on the side of safety and eternal life in heaven. The new information has to be rejected or ignored. This of course is very difficult to do in a modern, 21<sup>st</sup> century culture. It was inevitable that eventually the concept of Intelligent Design would need to be created.

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<sup>11</sup> Women were created from Adam's rib so they were already in a class of humans below men. After the fall from grace because of Eve's seductive behavior which got Adam thrown out of the Garden too, women would spend the next 2000 years as the 2<sup>nd</sup> class property of men. They are still struggling for equality socially. They are still considered the property of men in several religions, and as second class humans in the Roman Catholic religion and other conservative protestant religions, they cannot be ordained. The literal interpretation of the Garden of Eden metaphor has caused untold pain and violence for women for thousands of years.

<sup>12</sup> Bishop Matthew Spong and other modern theologians are repulsed by this "blood sacrifice" theology based on a literal interpretation of The Garden of Eden metaphor. They believe that it makes God a sadistic, abusive father, and Jesus a willing masochistic victim. Modern theologians prefer to interpret the Garden of Eden story as metaphor that illustrates how when we have had our consciousness raised, we cannot go back to ignorance. In other words, Adam and Eve had learned about sin and disobedience, their consciousness had been raised, so they had to continue their journey out into the world. They could not return to the Garden, not because God barred them from returning, they could not return because they could not un-learn or disregard their new self-consciousness; their new self-awareness. Once our human mind knows about pink elephants, we can no longer "*not*" think about pink elephants.

Intelligent design works with existing Christian theological beliefs and does not require the primitive ego of conservative Christians to change any of their basic religious beliefs. Intelligent Design assumes that God is still intentionally and directly in control of human evolution, that we still know what God wants and doesn't want, that humans are still sinful, the atonement was needed, and that we each still need to keep God happy so we can get into heaven. Intelligent Design essentially assumes that God intentionally put us here on this earth by intentionally controlling the evolution of the human species, rather than our being born of the earth through a random creative evolutionary process<sup>13</sup>.

Through acceptance of Intelligent Design, the primitive ego of all Christians can rest comfortable in the theological "knowledge" that the human species was intentionally evolved or created here on earth by God. We were created in God's image, and the earth is simply one of our rightful possessions; a gift from God to be used much as we would use any other possession. Essentially, acceptance of Intelligent Design means that no already existing Christian beliefs or theology are being challenged or need to change

### Summary

The collective cultural primitive ego of the human species believes that we, the human species, have already reached the ultimate goal of evolution. It is unable to comprehend itself in the context of an on-going 14.5 billion year creative evolutionary process. This essentially unconscious, unstated belief accurately reflects the arrogant narcissism of our collective primitive ego. Our primitive ego is convinced we were created in God's image.

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

This of course blinds us to the reality that we were birthed by mother earth; that we are "of" the earth; the product of 14.5 billion years of evolution. We were not "placed here" to use the earth as one of our "possessions". If our collective primitive ego's continue to narcissistically use the earth and deplete the very resources that the earth used to create us, and uses now to sustain us, our future as a species is very much in doubt.

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<sup>13</sup> i.e. the biological randomness of Darwin's theory of evolution

*We are the product of 4.5 billion years of fortuitous, slow biological evolution. There is no reason to think that the evolutionary process has stopped. Man is a transitional animal. He is not the climax of creation.....we are set irrevocably, I believe, on a path that will take us to the stars---unless in some monstrous capitulation to stupidity and greed we destroy ourselves first.”*  
*Carl Sagan<sup>14</sup>*

When we awaken and intentionally work to achieve a deeper self-awareness, the split off shadow material of our unconscious inner-child's primitive ego is re-integrated into our more unified, less fragmented, increasingly conscious adult observing ego. We will find ourselves more intentionally protecting the earth that birthed us as we co-creatively work “*with*”, rather than “*against*”, the creative evolutionary process.

We are stardust contemplating the stars.

We are co-creators evolving new form.

We are the Consciousness of the Creator becoming conscious of Itself.

*But we still cannot see beyond the never ending horizon into the mystery of the unknown.*

*The creation of “absolute truths” may help our primitive ego avoid the anxiety of not knowing, but ignoring truth, and intentionally rejecting or distorting reality simply to protect our primitive ego from the anxiety of not knowing is still ignorance; even when we call it holy.*

Like wisdom, truth, beauty, and enlightenment itself, God is not definable, only experienced. When another tries to tell you they possess absolute truth and can define any of these qualities, know that you are listening to the ramblings of a primitive ego. Then quietly move back into the silence, it will be more useful for you.

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<sup>14</sup> From The Potential of Evolution, by John Stewart, WIE, Issue 35, Jan-Mar 2007

## **PART THREE: AWAKENING AND GROWTH OF OUR ADULT OBSERVING EGO**

### **The Nurturing Influence of Parents And Significant Care Givers in Early Childhood**

The formation of our primitive ego is primarily shaped by childhood experiences. The more nurturing, empathy, care, unconditional love, and compassion we receive in childhood the more integrated we will be by the time the primitive ego our inner-child slips into our unconscious in late childhood.<sup>15</sup>

Those who are fortunate enough to have experienced a functional, nurturing childhood will find it easier to achieve self-awareness. Our inner-child psyche will move into adolescence and adulthood relatively whole and unfragmented. That means we will have less unconscious shadow material to project onto others. The task of awakening and becoming aware of our primitive ego will be relatively easy. Growth in self-awareness will come relatively easily. Our adult observing ego will mature relatively quickly.

Conversely, the more a person is treated as an object instead of respected as a little “person” in childhood, the more a child has experienced emotional and psychological violence, trauma, and difficulties with bonding and attachment in early childhood, the more the psyche of our inner-child will tend to be fragmented and unintegrated. Our journey into self-awareness and wholeness will be more difficult and challenging. The projection of repressed or unconscious split off parts of our psyche will be more common. Rather than feeling empowered to take responsibility for our own lives, we will tend to feel powerless and blame others for our feelings and our life circumstances.

### **Awakening Is A Conscious Choice.**

Regardless of our childhood experiences, *everyone* has the potential and responsibility to intentionally transform their primitive ego. No one grows up in a perfect home. Categories of perfection are an illusion; the product of our primitive ego’s tendency toward splitting.

That means *everyone* has to do the difficult work of healing the wounds of childhood and learning to integrate the fragmented, split-off shadow energies of their unconscious by increasing their self-awareness, awakening their observing adult ego, and then intentionally maturing and evolving their observing ego. This is a lifelong process of growth toward enlightenment.

The transformation of our primitive ego and the lifelong evolution of our adult observing ego through the intentional growth of our self-consciousness or self-awareness, is the co-creative responsibility of every person. The key to success is intentionality. Until we become intentional in our journey toward self-awareness and wholeness, we will remain trapped developmentally in a Stage 2 consciousness.

The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development® was developed at Stonyhill to encourage and support a more intentional growth in human consciousness. I do not believe that a compassionate global culture will successfully emerge until a critical mass of the world’s

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<sup>15</sup> When we reach approximately 7 to 8 years of age

population evolves emotionally through intentional self-awareness, and sustainably functions at a Stage 4 level of consciousness. Until this point of critical mass is reached, the collective primitive ego of the world's population will continue introduce chaotic and disruptive levels of conflict and violence that will ultimately undermine any attempts to establish a stable and compassionate global culture.

### **Awakening: Intentional Growth of Our Observing Adult Ego**

Awakening happens when we make a *conscious* commitment to *intentionally* increase the consciousness of our observing ego. An intentional commitment to grow in self-awareness so as to consciously evolve and align our individual consciousness with the creative Consciousness of the universe.

When this intentional choice is made, we begin the journey toward becoming a fully *conscious* co-creator of new form in the universe. When we awaken, we begin to consciously create the world we want to live in and the life we want to live. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, "We must *be*" the change we want to see in the world".

When we have made the commitment to awaken, it means that we are willing to begin taking full responsibility for both the life we have created up to this point in our lives, and the life we wish to create in the future. We learn to take full responsibility for our own behaviors. We learn to take ownership of our own feelings instead of projecting our shadow energy onto others and blaming them for our condition and our emotions. We begin the task of intentionally growing in self-awareness by integrating the unconscious and split off parts of our primitive ego.

The development of wholeness becomes an intentional and conscious life commitment.

### **The Paradox of Awakening**

Awakening and beginning the intentional growth of our observing ego is both very simple and very difficult. It is simple in that it is nothing more than the development of two simply skills. The first is making the commitment to take full ownership and responsibility for all of our own feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. The second is learning to pay attention to everything we are manifesting into the world around us and asking ourselves the two simple questions "Where is this energy coming from inside me" and "Is this the kind of energy I want to be manifesting into the world?"

At the same time, awakening can be very difficult. Our primitive ego does not like to be questioned. It likes living in the comfort and safety of our unconscious. So when we begin to pay attention internally to how we are thinking, feeling, and behaving, our primitive ego will attempt to distract us. When we attempt to pay attention to the internal and external stimuli in our lives, our primitive ego will very quickly pull us back into the unconscious knee jerk responses that we have been manifesting all of our lives.

Our primitive ego delights in living in the memories of the past and in the illusions of the future. It has great difficulty living in the reality of the present moment. In other words, the choice to begin intentionally paying attention to what we are manifesting in the moment is very simple, but sustaining that attention can be difficult and challenging. A force of will cannot accomplish it. But it happens without effort when we become conscious that the old ways simply no longer make sense to us.

Awakening is achieved the moment we intentionally begin developing the skill of consciously directing the focus of our attention. The secret to awakening is simply learning to offer the gift of gentle kindness to ourselves. We are often much too hard on ourselves. We forget that change cannot be accomplished by force of will.

We need to gently remind ourselves that growth in self-awareness and increased consciousness is a *life long learning* process.. It is recognizing that we are undertaking a very difficult task and then being gentle and kind to both our inner-child and our maturing adult ego. Our inner-child is simply attempting to use the survival skills we developed in childhood to protect us, and our adult observing ego is struggling to develop the new skill of living with full attention in each moment. A skill that requires a life time to achieve. A skill that comes only with patience and repetition.

When we become aware that we are unconsciously manifesting our primitive ego defenses and that our attention has drifted away from the present, we simply acknowledge that our attention has drifted and then gently come back to the moment.

Over time, the ability of our observing ego to consciously control the focus of our attention will begin to strengthen. As this happens, our primitive ego will slowly begin to let our adult observing ego have increasing control over our lives. Our inner child will begin to develop trust in the observing ego's ability to keep us safe. I encouraged clients to talk out loud in very loving language to their inner-child. To gently thank the inner-child for trying to protect us and remind that part of us that it's now our adult observing ego's job to protect us.

If we have truly made our growth in self-awareness a lifetime goal, and if we are kind to our inner-child consciousness in the growth process, we will eventually revolve to a Stage 5 consciousness. The ability to "not know" that comes with emptiness of ego, the ability to walk the non-judgmental middlepath, the ability to sustainably offer gentle kindness to the world, the ability to be fully present to each moment of our lives will become our nature.

It is the life long spiritual practice of repeatedly and gently returning our conscious attention back to the present moment that will eventually lead us toward enlightenment; the middlepath ability to sustainably manifest compassion and unconditional love.

## **PART FOUR: THE HUMAN EVOLUTIONARY JOURNEY TOWARD A MIDDLEPATH SPIRITUALITY**

### **Middlepath**

The term middlepath which is used in the Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development<sup>©</sup> is essentially the Buddhist “middle way” practice of ego emptiness and the skill of not knowing, integrated with modern psychological knowledge and insights. The middle way was a concept developed by the Buddha prior to his own enlightenment. <sup>16</sup>

What is often confused in the practice of Buddhist meditation is the belief that all “ego” is bad; something to be eliminated. Because of this misunderstanding, many people who practice meditation believe that they have to totally destroy or “empty” their ego of all thoughts and emotions. This is not necessary, nor is it even possible to achieve. Without an ego, we would be unable to function in life. It *is* important however to understand that the ego is essentially illusion. This is especially true for the primitive ego of our inner-child.

Meditation practice helps a person come to understand that the never-ending stream of thoughts and emotions created by our ego is essentially our ego-mind endlessly ruminating about the past and worrying about the future. Middlepath “emptiness of ego” simply means, that through the practice of meditation and intentional self-awareness, we develop the ability to intentionally direct the focus of our attention onto the thoughts and emotions of our ego, but we no longer have an emotional or psychological attachment to those thoughts or emotions. We recognize they are products or illusions of the mind that rarely represent reality itself. Reality exists only in the present moment. When we simply sit quietly with what is.

Through the practice of meditation, we come to understand that our life long obsessive attachment to the output of our ego is no longer necessary or important. The previous addictive bondage to the creative illusions of our ego weakens. Through meditation practice and growth in self-awareness, our adult observing ego consciousness learns to live in the reality of the present moment; the ability to “see around” our ego and simply “be with” the reality of “what is” in each moment.

### **From Awakening to The Adult Observing Ego Of Stage 4**

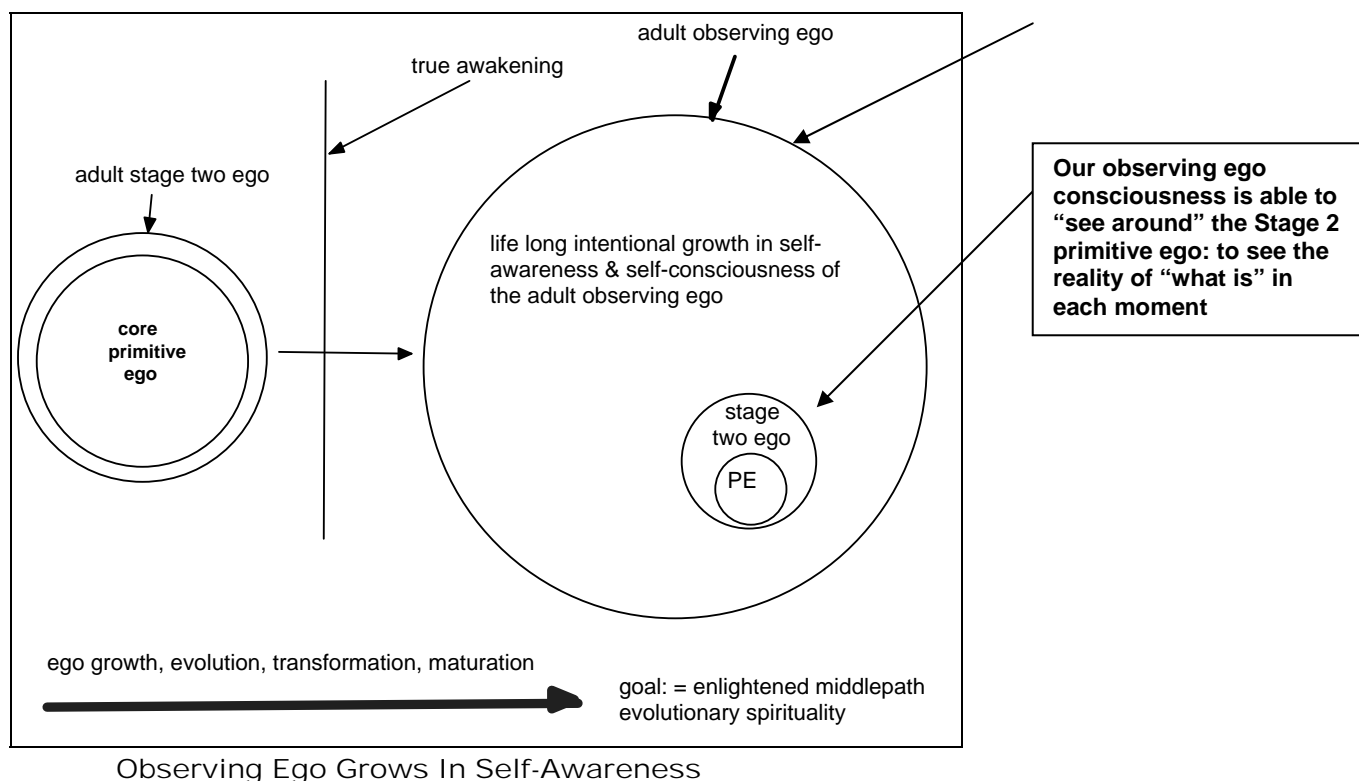
Referring to the Observing Ego Grows In Self-Awareness diagram below, the Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development<sup>©</sup> breaks ego development into three distinct developmental categories or stages. Stage 1 is the original primitive ego of our inner-child. The second is the “adult” ego of Stage 2. In Stage 2 we have a slightly more matured ego but we are still essentially functioning emotionally and cognitively out of the unconscious primitive ego of our inner-child. The observing ego of stage four begins to intentionally grow in self-awareness after the true awakening of stage three has taken place and is increasingly able to “see around” the primitive ego’s of Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Over time, as our observing ego continues to grow in self-awareness, the shadow material of our primitive ego becomes more visible and the projections of our primitive ego no longer contain the emotional energy they once had. As our observing ego grows and strengthens, we are increasingly able to make conscious choices as to what we are actually manifesting in the world.

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<sup>16</sup> The Buddhist “middle way” has also been described as the practice of non-extremism or dualism. For a more detailed description of “middle way” go to Buddhism on the Wikipedia

<p><b>Our observing ego in stage 4 consciousness</b></p>
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### After Awakening Our Observing Ego Grows In Strength

Important developmental changes take place in our observing ego in Stage 4. We become increasingly aware of our primitive ego. Because our primitive ego lives and grows in the darkness of our unconscious, it is unable to survive the light of our observing ego's attention. The light of our attention causes the amount of shadow material in our unconscious to diminish, and the strength of our primitive ego's emotional energy to eventually weaken.

As we strengthen our observing ego's ability to more intentionally direct the focus of our attention toward the manifestations of our primitive ego, our primitive ego's tendency to split the world into black and white, all or nothing categories of either / or also begins to diminish. Because primitive ego splitting creates "otherness" and "otherness" creates conflict and violence, we are increasingly able to manifest the enlightened non-violence of a true middlepath spirituality. Our previously rigid black and white beliefs move into a place of "not-knowing"; a place of ego emptiness.

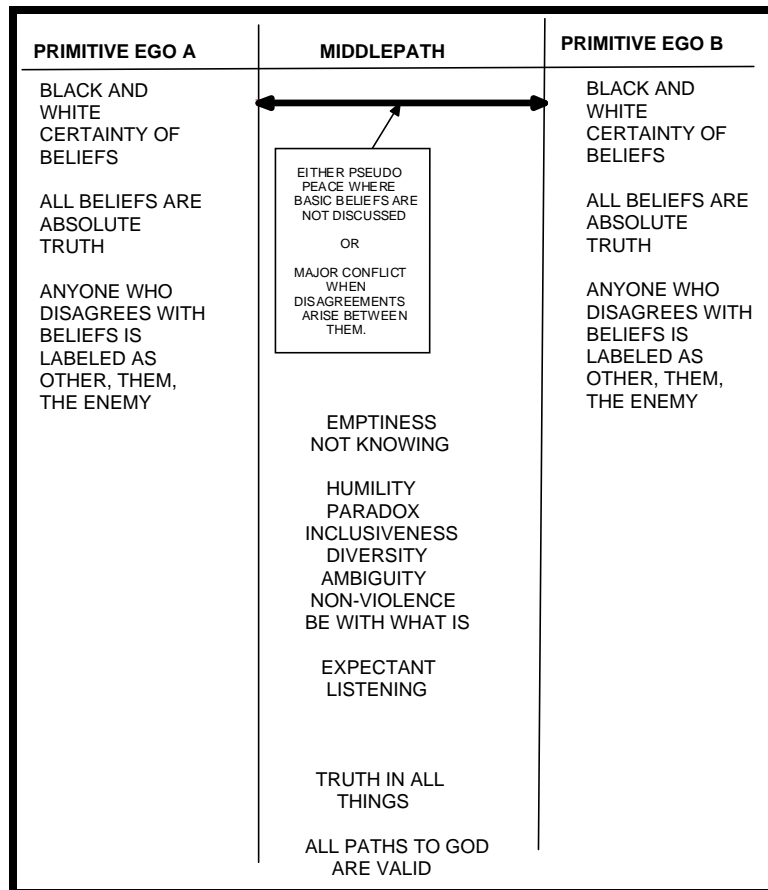
As these changes take place, the control of our lives slowly shifts from our unconsciousness primitive ego to that of our more conscious adult observing ego and we begin to manifest a significantly more enlightened energy into the world. We are learning to see the beam in our own eye.

### Compassion Comes From Understanding The Beam In Our Own Eye

This fundamental reality has historically been an essential basic teaching of all of the world's great spiritual teachers. As we psychologically move toward the center of the middlepath, we are spiritually moving toward enlightenment. An important core concept of the Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development is the belief that *"authentic spiritual growth is not possible until our*

consciousness grows in self-awareness, and the primitive ego survival skill of splitting has been transformed and evolved into a middlepath spirituality by our matured adult observing ego". Only our observing ego can discover middlepath. It is not a work that our primitive ego is capable of doing.

It is unfortunate that the mainline religions that were founded on the teachings of these great spiritual teachers did not understand the importance of this basic spiritual reality. *Rigid, black and white religious beliefs are the antithesis of authentic spiritual growth.* Religious beliefs that represent "the Truth" may create a religiously conservative "unity of thought" that preserves the viability of the institutional churches, but they destroy the possibility of an authentic spiritual growth in the process. They create a judgmental sense of "otherness" that inevitably leads to the conflict and violence of tribal thinking.



PRIMITIVE EGO VS MIDDLEPATH SPIRITUALITY DIAGRAM

Through the integration of modern developmental psychology and the spiritual teachings of the world's great spiritual teachers, the concept of a "middlepath spirituality", as developed in The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development©, is a very powerful spiritual practice toward the achievement of authentic spiritual growth and the growth of a compassionate global culture.

The grace we will bring into the world will come directly from our struggles to grow spiritually and live our life journey on the middlepath. As we learn to love ourselves through growth in self-awareness, our love for others will increase. As we become comfortable with the silence, we will

learn to listen and treat others with respect and understanding, even when we do not agree with them.

The universe will use our efforts to grow in consciousness and it will do with our growth whatever it needs to do with it. That is not our concern. Our concern is simply the continued growth of our consciousness; to become fully conscious Co-creators with the Conscious ongoing creative process of the universe.

As we evolve our individual consciousness and journey the middlepath, the light of our essential self will shine in the world and bring compassion and light to the darkness. When enough of us evolve our consciousness and journey the middlepath as an enlightened global species, we will become a beacon of compassion and light for the entire universe.

## **PART FIVE: THE EVOLUTION OF REFLEXIVE CONSCIOUSNESS**

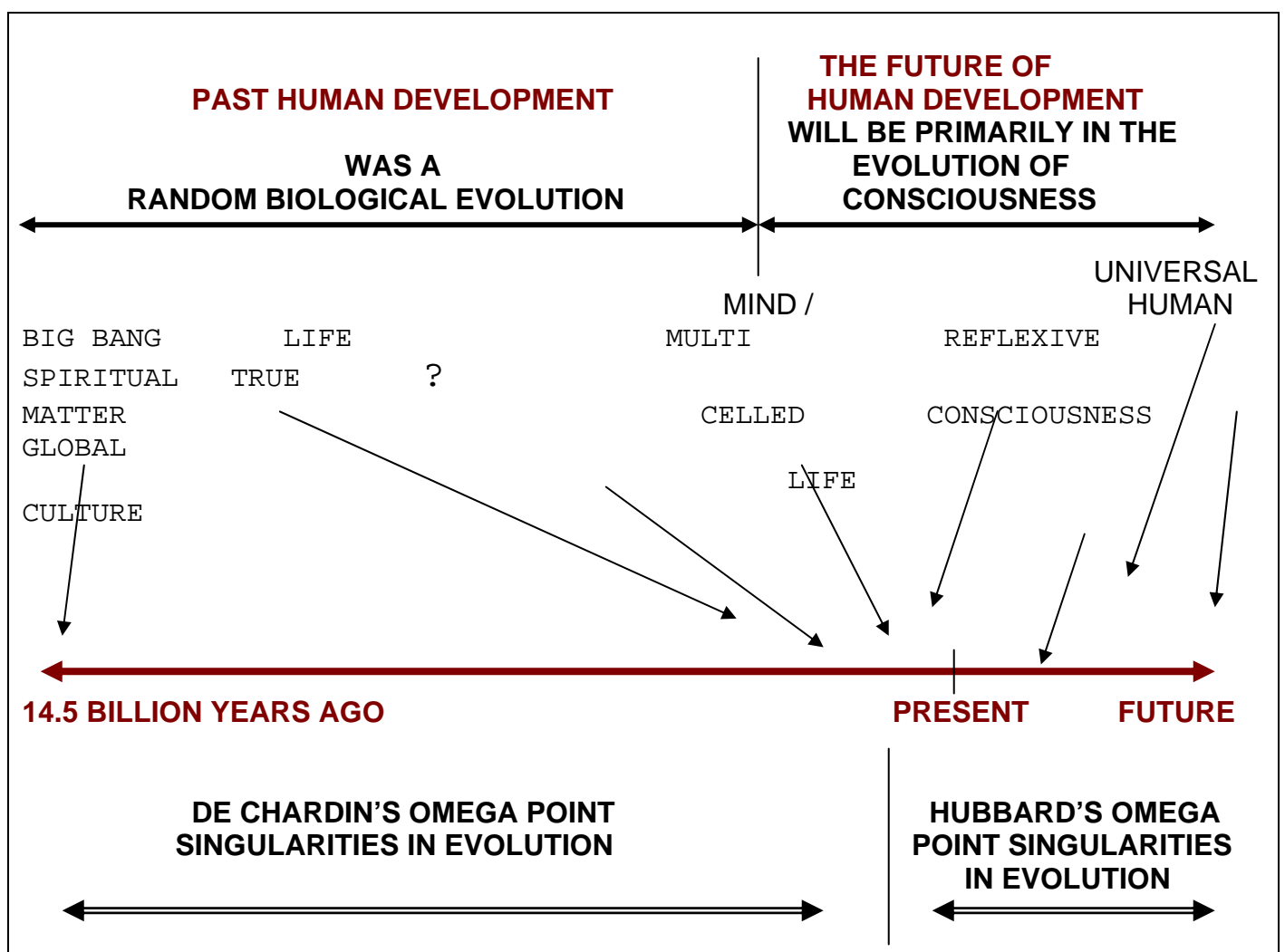
### **The Goal Of Human Development: The Evolution of Human Consciousness**

Darwin was the first to discover and explore the ongoing creative process called evolution. As discussed earlier in this paper, Darwin's Theory of Evolution radically challenged the belief

systems of the Christian Church. If we are simply, as Darwin's theory showed, a very young species that is in the process of evolving, then the Christian belief that we were created perfect and then fell from grace into sin was incorrect.

That of course meant that the Christian concept of the Atonement and Christ dying on the cross for our sins is a bankrupt theology. It's no wonder that theologically conservative Christians continue to fight so vehemently against Darwin's theory and it's challenging threat to their religious beliefs.

The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development® (PETHD) offers a radically different way to understand our spiritual journey. Instead of adopting a pre-modern primitive belief that we are a fallen species, PETHD builds on Darwin's theory that we are indeed a very young evolving species, and that we are currently struggling as a species to transform our inner-child's primitive ego consciousness into that of an enlightened consciousness.



**EVOLUTIONARY TIMELINE**

Like Barbara Marx Hubbard, de Chardin, and other 21<sup>st</sup> century biologists and futurists, PETHD is based on the supposition that as a reflexively self-conscious species, we are no longer tied to a slow, random biological evolutionary process. It would appear that the future evolution of the

human species will take place primarily in the evolution of our consciousness. It is also evident that evolution itself is not a random process. It appears to be a purposefully creative process that moves inexorably toward both the creation of life, an ever increasing complexity in those living systems, and consciousness itself. Matter and highly complex life forms with the ability of reflexive consciousness have evolved in 14.5 billion years from what was initially only the pure elemental energy of the big bang.

As illustrated in the Evolutionary Timeline diagram below, this 14.5 billion year creative evolutionary process has resulted in several important singularities or radical changes in reality itself.<sup>17</sup> Using the raw energy and elemental particles of the Big Bang the evolutionary process has created the negative entropic process called life, radically complex multi-celled organisms, consciousness, reflexive consciousness, and now is spiritually evolving human reflexive consciousness toward the next singularity or Omega point that Hubbard calls universal human or Homo-Universalis.

‘With the birth of reflexive consciousness the human species crossed the evolutionary divide between creature and co-creator and we are now on the brink of becoming an enlightened universal intelligence; a new universal species’.<sup>18</sup>

Like the human evolution from simple consciousness to reflexive consciousness 35,000 to 50,000 years ago, or a caterpillar evolving into a butterfly, Hubbard believes we will retain much of what we were before the coming transformation, but we will be an evolved radically new creation; a new singularity in the evolution of human consciousness.

The creation of The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development® is an important step in understanding and supporting humanity’s evolution in consciousness toward that of a spirit centered species rather than a self-centered species; a co-creative species of enlightened observing egos rather than a pro-creative species trapped in the primitive egos of their inner-child.

The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development® basically encourages each of us to make a personal commitment to grow in self-awareness and intentionally transform the narcissistic primitive ego of our inner-child into that of a compassionate enlightened consciousness.

The goal of all human development is the evolution of our human consciousness; an intentional commitment to align ourselves as a species with a higher purpose in life. To live our lives in a Co-creative partnership with the creative Consciousness of the universe itself.

## **PART SIX: CO-CREATION AND EVOLUTIONARY SPIRITUALITY**

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<sup>17</sup> De Chardin refers to these singularities as Omega points.

<sup>18</sup> Conscious Evolution: Awakening The Power Of Our Social Potential, Barbara Marx Hubbard, New World Library, Novato, California, 1998

## Meaning And Purpose to Human Existence: Universal Consciousness Vs. Quantum Probability

Most philosophers and scientists seem to agree that there are only two reasonable explanations for the Big Bang; the cosmic event that preceded the creation of our universe. One suggests the existence of some form of Creating Consciousness; the other assumes that we are simply the result of some unknown scientific or quantum probability.

There may be conflicting agreement among theologians as to God's role in this creative process. There may be little agreement among scientists over the many theories that have been offered to explain the creation of our universe. There is virtually no disagreement however that our universe, whether by quantum accident or conscious intent, appears to have been exquisitely designed to create both life and reflexive consciousness.

If any of the physical constants of ten or so basic equations had been different at the atomic level by even minute amounts, our universe would not have formed or lasted long enough for life and consciousness to evolve.<sup>19</sup> The intriguing question of course is why? Why is the universe so elegantly and finely tuned to be life and consciousness friendly?

*Why is the universe so close to the dividing line between collapsing again and expanding indefinitely? In order to be as close as we are now, the rate of expansion early on had to be chosen fantastically accurately. If the rate of expansion one second after the big bang had been less by one part in 10 to the 10<sup>th</sup> power, the universe would have collapsed after a few million years. If it had been greater by one part in 10 to the 10<sup>th</sup> power, the universe would have been essentially empty after a few million years. In neither case would it have lasted long enough for life to develop.* Stephen Hawking

There may be many possible scientific and philosophical explanations for the creation of the form we call our Universe, but a Universal Consciousness is the explanation that seems to best address the fundamental question of why "anything" exists rather than nothing, and to offer reasonable answers to the existential questions of meaning and purpose for the creation of human consciousness.

For example, it does not make sense that the ultimate meaning and purpose for our self-reflective human species should be limited to, or based on, the current literal interpretations of pre-modern, primitive religious mythologies. There has to be more intrinsic purpose and meaning inherent in the evolutionary creation of human life and reflexive self-consciousness than simply being helpless, obedient children whose primary life goal is dedicated to getting into a place called heaven after we die.

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<sup>19</sup> The laws of physics and the constants that are embedded in these laws all seem exquisitely "fine tuned" to allow, or to enable, the existence of stars and planets and the emergence of life and mind. If the laws of physics had much differed, if the values of their constants had much changed, or if the initial conditions of the universe had much varied, what we know to exist would not exist since all things of size and substance would not have formed. Why This Universe?: Toward a Taxonomy of possible Explanations, By Robert Lawrence Kuhn

The concept of heaven, and the ultimate existence of “heaven” which we tend to blindly accept without question in our culture, is nothing more than an unproven primitive, theological, faith based religious “belief”; not an absolute fact.

Our primitive ego may assume that its many beliefs are all “ultimate truths” that accurately define “ultimate reality”, but our self-aware observing ego knows that the black and white beliefs of our inner-child’s primitive ego are not always accurate reflections of reality.

The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development© effectively addresses the creation of reflexive consciousness, the true awakening of our human consciousness, and the important question of spiritual meaning and purpose for our human species. The theory clearly illustrates that achieving answers to the ultimate meaning and purpose of our life is not simply a “part” of the human developmental process; it is the ultimate and vital goal of reflexive consciousness itself.

### **A Co-Creative Partnership With The Creative Evolutionary Process Itself: The Co-Creation of Form**

The idea or concept that some kind of reflexive Consciousness appears to precede the creation of any new form is both logical and observable. We first *think about* building a new skyscraper, and then we build it. The form called skyscraper is created, but only after the idea of skyscraper was created in the mind of a reflexive consciousness.

As a reflexively conscious species, we are always creating form. It is philosophically interesting that even when our reflexive consciousness is creating “nothing”, the form called “nothing” is in itself a creation of our self-reflective consciousness. In other words, our reflexive consciousness cannot “*not*” be creating form.

Our reflexively conscious minds are like a river; ever changing, becoming, evolving, and creating. Even sitting in quiet contemplative meditation doing nothing, we are creating a form called peace and non-violence. We are creating the non-violent form we call gentleness or peacefulness.

When we criticize someone or say something hurtful, we are creating the form called pain or suffering. When we compliment someone or say something kind, we have created the form called compassion. In each example, reflexive consciousness preceded the creation of the form.

If we assume that all form is preceded by reflexive consciousness, then in cosmic terms, had there had been no prior reflexive consciousness, the form we call our universe could not have been created. An Initiating Consciousness or Cosmic Consciousness appears to have both pre-existed before the Big Bang, and to have consciously thought about creating a universe.

There are many “theological” and “scientific” theories as to how this happened. Some say the Initiating Consciousness or God, poured Itself into creation at the moment of the Big Bang, and began the never-ending, ongoing creative process we call evolution. Others suggest that the ongoing creative evolutionary process itself is the Initiating Consciousness creating life and reflexive consciousness so as to again become conscious of Itself.

Before the evolution of our self-reflective consciousness, the evolution of the human species appears to have taken place through a relatively slow, essentially random process. Following the birth of our reflexive consciousness, the evolution of the human species was destined to take place primarily through the evolution of our consciousness; a process for which we as a species are now responsible.

### **Obedient Children Vs Responsible Co-creative Young Adults**

Many theories and concepts have been offered to explain how and why our Universe exists. What is of importance in the Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development<sup>©</sup> is the idea that *reflexive consciousness precedes the creation of all form.*<sup>20</sup> With the birth of a self-reflective consciousness, we became fully responsible Co-Creators with the Initiating Consciousness that created the universe.

God, the Initiating Consciousness, got things going, but we are now responsible for the forms that we are creating here on this planet; at least in this corner of our galaxy. We are no longer dependent children expected to be obedient to a stern, punishing, parental will. We have left childhood behind and are entering a more responsible young adulthood of our species.

Through free will, the forms we choose to create are now “*our*” responsibility. In other words, as a reflexively conscious Co-creative species, *we are now responsible for “all” of the form we create.* God does not go around “fixing” and “undoing” our mistakes. We create our own lives, our own reality, our own destiny. We live with the consequences of the choices we make: both conscious and unconscious.

The Universe has evolved from raw primal energy of the big bang into a living, conscious universe. The future of this on-going creative evolutionary process is of course hidden in the mystery beyond the ever-receding horizon. What “*is*” known however, is that whatever form the Initiating Consciousness creates through the on-going creative evolutionary process from here on, at least here on this planet, will essentially be created through us.

### **Entropy and the Second Law of Thermodynamics: Our Primitive Ego Does Not Like Change**

The creative evolutionary process means that all created form is in an ongoing state of change; becoming, evolving, transforming. But all form is compelled to entropically obey the second law of thermodynamics which states that higher levels of energy and organization move to lower states of energy and chaos. When life evolved in the universe the second law of thermodynamics was reversed. Life forms became local examples of “reverse entropy”. Where all other forms entropically move from higher levels of energy and organization to lower levels, living systems move to increasingly “*higher*” levels of organization and complexity.

This means that “*all living things*” are either in a state of growth and evolving, or they are succumbing to the laws of entropy and dying. The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development<sup>©</sup> reminds us that our primitive ego does not like change! Our primitive ego would have us make our world smaller and more isolated. For the Primitive Ego, smaller and isolated

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<sup>20</sup> Simple animal or primitive consciousness can create simple or primitive form, but the purposeful creative evolutionary process that leads to forms of ever increasing complexity requires a reflexive consciousness; the ability to be conscious of one’s own consciousness.

means greater control of our environment, and that translates into a sense of increased safety. Safety is an important goal for our primitive ego, but unfortunately, it also means that entropically, our primitive ego is essentially a living system in the process of dying.

The concept of entropy also applies to systems and organizations; including institutional religions and their theological beliefs. Virtually all of the world's mainline religions are homeostatic and rigid. They do not like growth and change. Created by our collective primitive ego to existentially provide security and a sense of safety, our mainline religions are succumbing to entropy and the second law of thermodynamics; they too are essentially dying.

There is much human wisdom contained in our various religious scriptures, but it's time for us to acknowledge that we have radically outgrown the no longer relevant religious beliefs of primitive cultures long dead. Regardless of how we might feel, the belief that we are helpless children standing before an abusive, punitive, judging God is a very dangerous religious conditioning that we need to relegate to the past. Until we do, we will be unable to assume a more mature and adult responsibility for the forms that we are creating.

When these pre-modern myths and concepts were written into our religious scriptures, we did not have atomic weapons, we were not exploring space, and we were not yet a scientifically advanced species. We can no longer deny the fact that we are indeed a powerful reflexively conscious co-creative species.

We can no longer claim to be helpless children. We can no longer assume that God will tinker with creation and take care of us as long as we are obedient. We can no longer continue to blame others and deny full responsibility for the consequences of the choices we make and the forms we create. The meaning and purpose of our lives can no longer be narcissistically limited and self-focused. *The primary goal of our species can no longer be limited to a self-focused religious insurance policy that insures our primitive ego an eternal life in heaven after death.* If that's the ultimate meaning of life for our species, we are the pitiful victims of a very cruel joke.

When we claim to be created in God's image, we are affirming a much greater truth and vision for our species. We are affirming that who we are at the level of our soul, our essential self, our authentic self, is indeed a conscious Co-creator with God. We are a reflexively conscious species that cannot "not" create form!.

It is time for the human species to accept the fact that we are indeed unconsciously trapped in the narcissistic primitive ego of our inner-child. We can no longer continue as a species to see life through the self-focused narcissistic lens of our primitive ego. Unfortunately, we are so conditioned by religious beliefs to see ourselves as helpless children that affirming ourselves to be powerful Co-creators with God feel sacrilegious; some would say blasphemous

Our self-identity and the meaning and purpose of our lives must begin to embrace a more cosmic consciousness. We must learn to see ourselves as co-creative spiritual beings that are part of a significantly larger cosmic 14.5 billion year evolutionary process. We must learn to make the intentional commitment to identify as Co-creators with the Initiating Consciousness; the Ground of Being; the Creator. We must become comfortable with this reality very quickly if we wish to survive as a species.

This is not a “blasphemous goal” that will somehow offend God. If God did not want us to be Co-creative partners, God would not have “allowed” the evolution of our self-reflective consciousness and free will. The observing ego consciousness of our authentic or essential self would not have the urge to evolve, grow, awaken, and become spiritually enlightened. We would have remained unconsciously trapped in a primitive consciousness similar to that of other animals. Our self-reflective consciousness would never have evolved.

The homeostatic darkness of our inner-child’s unconscious primitive ego is a miracle of evolution compared to the consciousness of the lower animals. We have evolved, however, to the point where we no longer have the luxury of living the lives of dependent children. The time has come for us to grow up. No living system can remain static or deny change for very long. The simple reality is that we are a living system that must continue to grow, or we will die.

### **Religious Spirituality Vs. Evolutionary Spirituality: Self-Centered Primitive Ego Vs. Spirit Centered Observing Ego**

As an evolving reflexively conscious species, we have a choice. We can choose to unconsciously continue to manifest the individualism and isolation of our collective primitive egos, or we can awaken our consciousness and strengthen our observing ego through the intentional transformation of our primitive ego. In other words, we can continue on the narcissistic path that we are currently on, or we can awaken and become an enlightened co-creative species that works with the creative evolutionary process itself.

Despite what modern religion would have us believe, our primitive ego cannot be transcended, it can only be transformed through conscious growth in our self-awareness and the intentional awakening of our adult observing ego. Unlike our primitive ego, which is trapped in the past, unable to change and grow, our observing ego enthusiastically embraces growth and life. It delights in evolving and becoming. It loves change and the Co-creative process.

Using insights gained through The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development®, it is easy to see how our primitive ego would be very comfortable with the beliefs of a primitive homeostatic religion, and why our awakened observing ego consciousness would be unable to embrace the spirituality and beliefs of *any* religion that is institutionally unable to grow and evolve. Because of its very nature, an awakened adult observing ego is intuitively drawn toward spirituality that embraces change.

<b>RELIGIOUS SPIRITUALITY</b>	<b>EVOLUTIONARY SPIRITUALITY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>-Primitive Ego</b></li> <li>-Static</li> <li>- Unchanging</li> <li>- Homeostatic</li> <li>- Rigid beliefs</li> <li>-Stagnant and Dying</li> <li>-Isolation</li> <li>- Absolute truth</li> <li>-Power and control</li> <li>- Heaven</li> <li>-Unity of Belief</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>-Adult Observing Ego</b></li> <li>-Changing and Evolving</li> <li>- Becoming</li> <li>-Evolving and Growing</li> <li>- Flexible, Changing, Evolving</li> <li>-Thriving and Becoming</li> <li>-Community</li> <li>- Many truths and Diversity</li> <li>- Cooperation and Equality</li> <li>- Enlightenment and Compassion</li> <li>- Inclusiveness and All Paths Lead To God</li> </ul>

All authentic spiritual growth is growth in self-awareness or growth in self-consciousness. All growth in self-consciousness is growth toward enlightenment. In other words, *growth in self-awareness and the creative evolutionary process itself are both moving our species consciousness toward higher levels of awareness, complexity and enlightenment.*

A compassionate global community is the critical next step in human development and the conscious evolution of our species. Cooperation, diversity, inclusiveness, and a conscious Co-Creative partnership with evolutionary process means that we must learn to intentionally evolve and develop a more conscious middlepath evolutionary spirituality.

The evolution of our species consciousness cannot be done alone. We grow in consciousness in the context of community. Because the context for an individual is always narcissistically focused on “self”, the evolution of our species consciousness is not something that our isolating primitive ego is capable of accomplishing. We must evolve our consciousness in the context of a radically diverse community.

Religion has been, and continues to be, an important and much needed community context for the evolution of our species consciousness. To lose the accumulated wisdom of three or four thousand years of human culture would be tragic. However, it would be equally tragic for us to remain trapped in the current homeostatic, primitive religions created by our collective primitive egos. Religions that interpret the wisdom contained in their scriptural myths literally, religions that rigidly resist all form of change, and religions that are narcissistically oriented toward “ a child-like group obedience” so its tribal members can earn eternal life in heaven.

Because of the tribal consciousness religions foster, the current context of most mainline religions are not only woefully out of date and irrelevant, they are directly responsible for most of the dangerous violence and conflict we see in the world today. The creation of a diverse, inclusive, compassionate, and just 21<sup>st</sup> century global community is the ethical and moral context that is needed for the continued evolution of our species consciousness.

History has proven that major upward movement in our species consciousness can happen when only a few key individuals are capable of creating new mimes, and new innovative, novel ways of thinking. This happened in the introduction of the second axial age that encompassed the renaissance, the protestant reformation, and the enlightenment. Some say it was the thinking of only a few hundred people that eventually led to the introduction of the pivotal ideas that birthed the second axial age in which we are now immersed.

It staggers the mind to think of the profound positive impact and influence that our mainline religions could have on the evolution of our species consciousness if they could simply learn to embrace the last three hundred years of biblical scholarship and transform the conservative resistance to change that has been strangling the mainline churches for most of the last two thousand years.

Unfettered from the past, our mainline religions could quickly begin to assume a leadership role in providing the critically needed ethical and moral guidelines as the world moves toward a global culture. Issues of justice and equality must be addressed with insight and wisdom, not the

tribalism focus on “us” versus “them” thinking that pervades virtually all of the world’s current mainline religions; the concepts of “otherness” that only create judgmentalism and conflict.

Whether such leadership ultimately comes from reformation within the mainline religions, or whether it comes from the secular culture is yet to be seen. The most important thing is that it comes soon. We cannot afford to wait for “someone else” to lead the way. The responsibility to intentionally grow in self-awareness so we can awaken, evolve, and mature our observing ego is the responsibility and work of every reflexively conscious person.

It is important to note that Jesus, Buddha, Mohammad, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and others down through history are all shining examples of persons who had radically transformed their primitive egos and were capable of manifesting the inner light of their fully conscious, contemplative, enlightened observing egos. They each lived their lives in a larger context than those around them. They all represented person’s who embraced a radically middlepath spirituality and as such, each has profoundly changed the very consciousness of the human species.

### **Evolutionary Spirituality: A Middlepath Journey Into Enlightenment**

Our reflexive consciousness is evolution’s greatest gift to humanity. Individual growth in consciousness through growth in self-awareness is the most important work that any of us will ever perform in our lives. When the consciousness of even one person is increased, the consciousness of the entire universe is increased. As Co-creators we are part of what is holy and eternal. *We are Co-creative spiritual beings struggling to align ourselves with the on-going creative evolutionary process that is moving all of creation toward a middlepath enlightenment, greater cooperation, an increased complexity and diversity of life, and the evolution of consciousness itself.*

We are local consciousness Co-creating form with the Consciousness of the Creator of the universe. In that sense, we are literally part of eternal life. The forms we choose to create today will guide, influence, and direct the future course of evolution itself. How could we find a greater intentionality, purpose, and meaning for our lives? Living comfortably in heaven for all eternity simply because we were obedient children pales in comparison as a source of purpose and meaning.

The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development® was developed to offer a coherent map for the authentic transformation and spiritual growth of our individual species consciousness from the self-centered narcissism of our primitive ego toward the Co-creative, middlepath, spirit-centered, evolutionary enlightenment of our observing ego.

## **PART SEVEN: THE PRIMITIVE EGO THEORY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT®: A TOOL FOR AUTHENTIC SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND THE CREATION OF A COMPASSIONATE GLOBAL CULTURE**

**The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development® (PETHSSD®) : Living Life In A Larger Context**

Religion attempts to find ultimate meaning and purpose through a static unquestioning obedience to a set of primitive theological beliefs. The secular world attempts to find meaning and purpose through success, achievement, power, and financial wealth. Both are essentially creations of our collective primitive ego.

Religion was created to provide a sense of safety for our primitive ego, and the secular attempt to achieve success and power appeal to our primitive egos greed. Neither approach is effective or helpful if the goal is ultimate meaning and purpose for our lives. Meaning and purpose is a spiritual quest that only our observing adult ego is capable of attaining.

PETHSSD® is a postmodern theory of human development that offers a more practical and useful methodology to achieve meaning and purpose by dynamically aligning our Co-creative reflexive consciousness with what appears to be the underlying evolutionary direction and purpose of the universe: life, consciousness, and increased complexity in living systems.

The theory clearly illustrates how, through the birth of reflexive consciousness in the human species, the on-going evolutionary process has become a Co-creative experience of unity or oneness between each of us as a locally conscious “i am” and the Universal Initiating Consciousness “I AM”. *In evolutionary spirituality language, this sense of Co-creative unity is the God experience that creates ultimate meaning and purpose for the human species.*

As we grow in self-awareness and evolve our observing ego, we become an intentional, sustainable, Co-creator with the creative process itself. We are creating new form together. We are increasing the consciousness of the universe. We are creating cooperation, complexity, and enhancing life together. This experience of the divine intersecting the time and space called “me” is what makes sense to this author and why writing about it is so important. *Intentional growth in self-awareness is what makes all of us more fully human; more authentically human. Growth in self-awareness is the authentic spiritual growth that ultimately connects us with God.*

In religious language this concept was originally called baptism; making an intentional commitment to live life in a larger context. A context where all paths to God are valid. A context that holds that there is truth in all things. As Co-creators, we focus on the evolution and survival of all living things, not just the primitive ego self. *We make the infinite creative process visible.* As Co-creators, we are the human incarnation of the infinitely creative evolutionary Consciousness called God.

*“Human beings now play an active and critical role not only in the process of their own evolution but in the survival and evolution of all living beings. Awareness of this places upon human beings a responsibility for their participation in, and contribution to, the process of evolution. If human kind would accept and acknowledge this responsibility and become creatively engaged in the process of metabiological evolution consciously, as well*

*as unconsciously, a new reality would emerge, and a new age would be born. Jonas Salk<sup>21</sup>*

### **Summary: Moving Into The Future**

The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development© developed by the author during his twenty-five years as a psychotherapist in private practice, is a modern developmental theory based on the core concept that authentic spiritual growth and psychological growth in self-awareness are synonymous.<sup>22</sup>

The Primitive Ego Theory offers our 21<sup>st</sup> century consciousness an effective methodology for creating a post-modern spirituality; a spirituality that can lead us through the transformation of the fragmented primitive ego of our inner-child into the wholeness of an authentic adult observing ego consciousness.

As we evolve a more authentic spirituality, as we become a more authentic “self”, and as we heal the fragmentation of our inner child’s primitive ego, we begin to live our lives in the context of a higher evolutionary purpose; a consciousness that is capable of manifesting a more unconditional love and compassion. In other words, we are less driven by our personal primitive ego and we begin to intentionally relate more with the creative evolutionary impulse that is leading the universe toward greater levels of cooperation, complexity, and consciousness.

We all get glimpses and insights from time to time that we are not behaving as the person we would really like to be. At some level of consciousness, we are aware that we would be uncomfortable or embarrassed to have others see us manifesting such behavior or attitudes.

Because we are uncomfortable or embarrassed with the behaviors and attitudes we are actually manifesting, we are unable to *consciously and intentionally* pay attention and become more deeply self-aware of these behaviors. To avoid the discomfort and embarrassment, the primitive ego of our inner-child protects us through repression, avoidance, suppression, or disassociation, and quietly slides our observing ego consciousness back into our unconsciousness.

Only when we are willing to simply “sit with” these less comfortable or embarrassing behaviors and attitudes, and learn to pay close attention to them every time they appear, will we begin to strengthen our observing ego. Over time, our behaviors and attitudes will become more consistent with our evolving higher consciousness. A consciousness that is leading us toward enlightenment.

The authentic self is the seat of will, intention, integrity, and deep identity. The authentic self is who we really are at the level of soul. When our feelings and emotional behaviors are not consistent with our highest spiritual consciousness and beliefs, it is a clear indication that we are

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<sup>21</sup> Taken from the article entitled The Potential of Evolution, by John Stewart, WIE, Issue 35, Jan-Mar 2007

<sup>22</sup> The Stonyhill website at [www.stonyhill.com](http://www.stonyhill.com) offers many in depth articles on The Primitive Ego Theory of Human Development©, human emotional and psychological development, authentic spiritual growth, and the important impact of these concepts on the creation of a compassionate global culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

dealing with our unconscious primitive ego. It is an evolutionary invitation to grow to a higher level of consciousness.

It is only when we are willing to awaken and intentionally evolve our observing ego consciousness so as to manifest more of the things that we would like to manifest; love, tolerance, forgiveness, caring, and compassion, that we will become the authentic person we were created to be.

Our primitive ego is focused on individual “me” survival. Evolutionary spirituality or evolutionary enlightenment is focused on the survival of our species. Over time, as we intentionally strip away or clear old self-definitions of “me” that are no longer consistent with our higher realizations of truth, we will experience a growth in consciousness. We will evolve from a “me” focus to an “us” focus.

Anyone can learn to create compassion, grace, and beauty into the world; to live out of our authentic self; the part of us that *wants* to grow, that *wants* to evolve, that *deeply desires* to live more consciously and contribute to the evolution of the human species. But this ability comes only when we learn to intentionally “stay awake” and “fully conscious” moment to moment of what we are actually manifesting into the world; when we learn to quietly “sit with” the reality of how we are actually thinking and behaving.

When we intentionally achieve a more conscious desire to evolve our self-identity to the higher level of consciousness that is more consistent with our growing higher realizations of truth, this new self-identity becomes our new level of consciousness.<sup>23</sup> We do not forget our old primitive ego self-identities as we grow in self-awareness, they are always a part of us, we simply no longer identify with them as strongly as we would have in the past.

We cannot change who we are through force of will. We change only when the old ways no longer make sense to us. Over time, as we pay attention to, and learn to consciously “sit with” the reality of what we are manifesting, the old ways will come to make less and less sense to us. As this happens, the light and compassion of our local individual “i am”, our Co-creative consciousness that is unified through reflexive consciousness with the Initiating Consciousness of “I AM”, begins to shine through us and bring light to the darkness.

When this transformation in consciousness is achieved by a critical mass of individuals, the creation of a compassionate global culture will become a true possibility. We will no longer work to create a peaceful world since peace is not possible in a reality where change is embraced because *change almost always creates conflict*. The goal will become learning to compassionately manage the conflict that inevitably emerges as we change and evolve as a species.

We will learn to state our beliefs and thoughts without anger and aggression. We will learn to own them simply as our thoughts and beliefs, not absolute truths. We will learn to let the universe do what it needs to with our input. We will begin to talk about and work for what we

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<sup>23</sup> A concept articulated in Enlightened Psychology, Dr. Jeffery Eisen, WIE Unbound, July, 2007

believe and what we would like to see created in the world. We will talk less and less about what's wrong with the world and what "we think" needs to change.

We will learn to work cooperatively in community with others to create increasing complexity, to support all living things, to work with the creative evolutionary process that birthed us on this planet, and most importantly, we will learn to increase our own consciousness so as to increase the consciousness of the human species and the consciousness of the universe itself.

“When a species is young, it is rapacious, territorial, and competitive, and then it hits a limit to its own growth. Then, either it learns to negotiate and cooperate with its competitors and unify at a higher level, or it goes extinct. We have over industrialized, overpopulated, polluted, and used up our environment. We must evolve or die. We must learn to co-evolve with nature and co-create with spirit.” Biologist Elisabeth Sahtouris<sup>24</sup>

Authentic spirituality is not based on religious beliefs. It is based on the intentional growth in self-consciousness of reflexively conscious life forms. At this point in the evolution of human consciousness, evolutionary spirituality is the spirituality that best provides meaning and purpose for the human species. It is the spirituality of hope.

No one can see over the horizon to what lies in the future for us, but evolutionary spirituality best offers us the ability to influence and guide that future in ways that are aligned with the creative evolutionary process itself. It is a spirituality that intimately connects us with the spirit of the Initiating Consciousness of the Creator.

*Why are the laws of physics in our universe so exquisitely fashioned to be life and consciousness friendly? So fine-tuned to human existence?*

*How is it that we humans have such farsighted understanding after only a few thousand years of historical consciousness, only a few hundred years of effective science, and only a few decades of cosmological observations? A century ago, scientists assumed that our own galaxy, the Milky Way, was the entire universe. Today we grasp the monumental immensity of the cosmos.*<sup>25</sup>

The knowledge of human consciousness is exploding at exponential rates. Where are we headed? What is the next step in the evolution of our species? Will we survive this explosive growth in knowledge? All of our primitive ego beliefs and certainties come with great emotional energy. Will the emotional wisdom of our collective observing egos be able to keep pace with

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<sup>24</sup> Elisabeth Sahtouris is a Greek-American evolutionary biologist, futurist, business consultant, event organizer, and UN consultant on indigenous peoples. She is a popular lecturer, television and radio personality, author of *Earth Dance*, *Biology Revisioned* co-authored with Willis Harman, and *A Walk Through Time: From Stardust To Us*.

<sup>25</sup> *Why This Universe? Toward a Taxonomy of Possible Explanations*, Robert Lawrence Kuhn, 2007, [www.skeptic.com](http://www.skeptic.com)

our rapidly growing technical knowledge? Authentic spiritual growth and evolutionary spirituality begins with the intentional growth of our self-awareness.<sup>26</sup>

What might the evolution of humanity look like and what might we achieve if we could move beyond the rigid literal interpretations of our mythic pre-modern religions and the pathological self-absorption of our post-modern human culture. What amazing future lies hidden just over the horizon if we could effectively free ourselves from the bondage and narcissism of our collective inner-child primitive egos?

We are moving into a new species consciousness called evolutionary spirituality; a consciousness that address' the big questions that the human species must come to grips with as we learn to intentionally grow in self-consciousness. A spirituality that embraces life in a more cosmic context. A spirituality that evolves and grows in consciousness.

What might we accomplish as a reflexively conscious species as evolve in consciousness? What might the future of humanity hold for us as a species if we could raise our consciousness so as to work with the evolutionary impulse of the universe itself.

Is it possible that we could literally become God?

Because authentic spiritual growth comes only from growth in self-awareness, the Primitive Ego Theory of Human Social and Spiritual Development<sup>®</sup> (PETHSSD<sup>®</sup>) was developed to explore and provide the tools and some of the insights that will be needed as we wrestle as a reflexively conscious species with these important relational concepts and questions.

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<sup>26</sup> Why are we so concerned with the speck in our neighbor's eye and fail to see the beam in our own?  
Luke 6:41-42