

Possibilities that are **YOU!**

Volume 15: Seeking Wisdom

by Alex Bennet



Mountain Quest Institute

This is 15th in a series of 22 short books, what we call Conscious Look Books, that are conversational in nature, taking full advantage of the reader's lived experience to share what can sometimes be difficult concepts. We live in a world that is tearing itself apart, where people are out of control and wanting to control others, rebelling from years of real and perceived abuse and suppression of thought. Yet, this chaos offers us as a humanity the opportunity to make a giant leap forward. By opening ourselves to ourselves, we are able to fully explore who we are and who we can become. With that exploration comes a glimmer of hope as we begin to reclaim the power of each and every mind developed by the lived human experience!

These 22 concepts are part of the learning journey of which we are all a part, the Intelligent Social Change Journey (ISCJ). This is a developmental journey of the body, mind and heart, moving from the heaviness of cause-and-effect linear extrapolations, to the fluidity of co-evolving with our environment, to the lightness of breathing our thought and feelings into reality. Grounded in development of our mental faculties, these are phase changes, each building on and expanding previous learning in our movement toward intelligent activity.

These little books share 22 large concepts from the Profundity and Bifurcation of Change (which is written from an academic viewpoint). Each book is independent and includes seven ideas offered for the student of life to help us become the co-creators that we are. These books, available in soft cover from Amazon, support idea exploration, class discussion, other discussion groups or can be used as special occasion gifts.

Possibilities

that are **YOU!**

Volume 15: Seeking Wisdom

by
Alex Bennet



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Opening verse by poet Cindy Lee Scott
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In Search of Inner Wisdom by Hoi Kee Kwok

*Innate knowledge journeys sought
Widening awareness through hind visions,
Becoming wiser making decisions
With complete wholeness of thought.*

*When life's tough and demanding
And the world turns upside down and implodes,
Deeper intentional thinking explodes
Budding with understanding.*

-Cindy Lee Scott

Preface

This book is for YOU. Regardless of economic success or educational prowess, beyond cultural influences and habitual routines, YOU have been and continue to be a student of life. And since our time in this learning sphere is precious, the challenges and opportunities are both rapid and continuous, always offering new insights. YOU are a verb, not a noun. Forget what you were taught in grammar school!

Now, we live in a world of demanding challenges, where people and systems are rebounding from control, rebelling from eras of real and perceived suppression of thought. With the acceleration of mental development over the past century has come increased awareness of human capacity, with economic success in small bites for many and large bites for the few, and for some coming with an arrogance that says, “Look at me. I’m right, you’re wrong, and I’m not listening.”

Because of our Economy’s focus on the material, economic success begets economic success and the separation of wealth grows larger, flaming the difficulties of surviving in a CUCA world, that is, a world of accelerating change, rising uncertainty, increasing complexity, and the anxiety that comes with these phenomena.

Yet all of this **offers us, as a humanity the opportunity to make a giant leap forward.** By opening ourselves to ourselves, we are able to fully explore who we are. With that exploration comes glimmers of hope as we contemplate the power of each and every mind developed by the lived human experience!

As YOU move through your life of thoughts, feelings and actions—even when you have to repeat things over and over again as part of the experience—YOU are advancing toward the next level of consciousness.

Here's the bottom line. Everything that has been learned and continues to be learned is out there ... and as a student of life, YOU have access to it all. So often it is expressed in ways that don't make sense because of the language and media being used. It just isn't presented conversationally, and you don't have a chance to ask questions from your unique point of view.

So, these little books—which we refer to as Conscious Look Books—are specifically focused on sharing key concepts from *The Profundity and Bifurcation of Change* series and **looking at what those concepts mean to YOU.**

These books are conversational in nature, and further conversations are welcome. We invite your thoughts and questions, not guaranteeing answers because there is still so much to learn, but happy to

join in the conversation. Visit Mountain Quest Inn and Retreat Center www.mountainquestinn.com located in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia or email alex@mountainquestinstitute.com

As my partner David reminds us: *Run with the future!*

Our gratitude to all those who take this journey with us, and a special thanks to the colleagues, partners, friends, family and visitors who touch our hearts and Mountain Quest in so many ways.

With Love and Light, Alex and David

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Introduction

The highest part of mental thought is wisdom, yet it is *more* than mental thought. Representing *completeness and wholeness of thought*, wisdom is universally a lofty consideration, and too often we sense that it eludes us. The more we seek it, the more we understand that it comes through experiencing and learning, and brings with it the desire to learn more. It also comes with an ever-deepening connection to others.

Wisdom occurs when activity matches the choices that are made and structured concepts are intelligently acted upon, thus **directly connecting wisdom to intelligent action**. Action occurs in our perceived physical reality. Intelligent activity represents a state of interaction where intent, purpose, direction, values and expected outcomes are clearly understood and communicated among all parties, reflecting wisdom and achieving a higher truth. To help us understand this concept, I draw on the amazing insights that emerged in *The Urantia Book*: “Knowledge can be had by education, but wisdom, which is indispensable to true culture, can be secured only through experience and by men and women who are innately intelligent. Such a people are able to learn from experience; they may become truly wise.”¹

Thus, the structure of this Conscious Look Book emerges. A discussion of wisdom must include a discussion of intelligent activity, and builds upon an understanding of knowledge and the deepening connections with others that lead to a focus on the greater good.

We begin.



Idea 1: A rich diversity of definitions and descriptions of wisdom abound, all aiding in our understanding.

Focusing on work occurring around the beginning of this century, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Jeanne Nakamura, educators who collaborated to write about the role of emotions in the development of wisdom, described wisdom as referring to two distinct phenomena.² The first was the *content* of wisdom (information) and the second an individual's *capacity to think or act wisely*.

Focusing on the content of wisdom, V.P. Clayton and J.E. Birren, early explorers into wisdom psychology, said that individuals perceived wisdom differently when socio-demographic variables were changed, that is, as we now recognize about knowledge, *they considered wisdom as context-sensitive and situation dependent*.³ This is consistent with the position that wisdom is grounded in life's rich experiences.⁴ However, wisdom moves above and beyond specific circumstances as patterns develop. Wisdom "therefore is developed through the process of aging ... [and] seems to consist of the ability to move away from absolute truths, to be reflective to make sound judgments related to our daily existence, whatever our circumstances."⁵

A large number of writers have considered wisdom as a part of intelligence.⁶ Paul Baltes and Jacqui Smith go on to say that wisdom is “a highly developed body of factual and procedural knowledge and judgment dealing with what we call the ‘fundamental pragmatics of life’.”⁷

In contrast, from qualitative research with Buddhist monks, clinical psychologist Heidi Levitt said that the monks tended toward a spiritual definition and believed that all people were capable of wisdom, regardless of their intellect.⁸ From a similar persuasion, Chögyam Trumpa, a Buddhist meditation master who coined the term *crazy wisdom*, sees wisdom as a state of consciousness with the qualities of *spaciousness, friendliness, warmth, softness and joy*.⁹ Similarly, Marion Woodman and Elinor Dickson see wisdom as the state of consciousness that *allows the spiritual Self to be active*.¹⁰ That makes sense.

Wisdom also appears to have an affective (emotional) component.¹¹ The neurobiological roots of this were confirmed by Nancy Sherman who discovered that some brain-damaged patients who lacked wisdom also lacked the evaluative affects used to choose a course of action (make a decision).¹² Clearly, these researchers have all given a great deal of thought to the subject of wisdom, so I’ve included resources in the endnotes just in case you want to dig deeper into what they’ve learned.

Some core words associated with wisdom that appear throughout the literature include: *understanding, empathy, knowledge, knows self, living in balance, and systemic thinking*.¹³ Copthorne Macdonald—who is a social experimenter, inventor, engineer, ecologist, philosopher and independent scholar—describes this systemic thinking as “*acting with the well-being of the whole in mind*.”¹⁴ That’s the concept of the greater good. He certainly sounds like a guy who knows what he’s talking about!

Further, it has been pointed out that wisdom is at home in several levels of the hierarchy of complexity. As one researcher observes, the “understanding of a phenomenon at each level of the hierarchy can be enhanced by relating it to its neighboring levels.”¹⁵ Another researcher explains that the levels of a hierarchy are interrelated via feedback loops; and that increased understanding results from following these feedback loops from one level to another and back again.¹⁶

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INSIGHT: Wisdom focuses us toward the greater good. As Copthorne Macdonald describes, “acting with the well-being of the whole in mind.”

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Similarly, artist Joan Erikson says that a sense of the complexity of living is an attribute of wisdom. In a rather wordy, but interesting, description, Joan

says that a wise person embraces the “sense of the complexity of living, of relationships, of all negotiations. There is certainly no immediate, discernible, and absolute right and wrong, just as light and dark are separated by innumerable shadings ... [the] interweaving of time and space, light and dark, and the complexity of human nature suggests that ... this wholeness of perception to be given partially and realized, must of necessity be made up of a merging of the sensual, the logical, and the aesthetic perceptions of the individual.”¹⁷ Wow! I had to read that twice. I feel artsy. When I read something with all those interesting concepts, my imagination soars! I wonder if, somewhere deep inside, I was meant to be an artist this time around. Maybe there’s still time left to develop some talent in that direction? Hmmm.

As can be noted in this brief treatment, the concept of wisdom is clearly related to knowledge—in particular to tacit knowledge, and we’re going to explore that further in Idea 3—and has also been related to the phenomenon of consciousness. Wisdom looks like it is connected with systemic, hierarchical thinking, and the complexity of human nature has been brought into the discussion. Further, wisdom appears to deal with the cognitive and emotional, personal and social, as well as the moral and spiritual aspects of life. This is our starting point.

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INSIGHT: Wisdom appears to deal with the cognitive and emotional, personal and social, as well as the moral and spiritual aspects of life.

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I like the way John Dalla Costa summed it all up in *Working Wisdom*: “Wisdom is the combination of knowledge and experience, but it is more than just the sum of these parts. Wisdom involves the mind and the heart, logic and intuition, left brain and right brain, but it is more than either reason, or creativity, or both. Wisdom involves a sense of balance, an equilibrium derived from a strong, pervasive *moral* conviction ... the conviction and guidance provided by the obligations that flow from a profound sense of interdependence. In essence, wisdom grows through the learning of more knowledge, and the practiced experience of day-to-day life—both filtered through a code of moral conviction.”¹⁸

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 2: Wisdom is in service to Intelligent Activity

Intelligent activity is continuously being created by people as, from one thought to the next, there is *mental integrity, a consistency in the truth of thought*. Recall that intelligent activity is described as *a state of interaction where intent, purpose, direction, values and expected outcomes are clearly understood and communicated among all parties, reflecting wisdom and achieving a higher truth*.

We'll repeat this definition a few times in this book as we begin to understand the consciousness expansion that occurs as we move into wisdom. Note that intelligence *is not about who will benefit*; it is what you do in interacting with others so they can do the same with others, building consciousness and freedom in those with whom we interact.¹⁹

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INSIGHT: Intelligence is not about who will benefit; it is what you do in interacting with others so they can do the same with others.

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Developmental psychologist Howard Gardner, who is best known for his theory of multiple intelligences, identified seven different intelligences, then added two more, all of which impact intelligent

activity.²⁰ There are overlaps, but identifying and naming the differences helps to deepen our understanding. The first two are (1) *linguistic intelligence* (language) and (2) *logical-mathematical intelligence* (including science), both of which are the primary focus of IQ and SAT testing, certainly necessary but not sufficient to navigate the life planes. (3) *Spatial intelligence* deals with the placement of objects in space and the relationships of these objects. Expanding from an active imagination, it includes the ability to form three-dimensional mental models and use those models to navigate through the world. This directly relates to consciousness, which is not only an awareness of the “I”, but the relationship of the “I” to the “other”.

(4) *Musical intelligence* includes the capacity to discern pitch, rhythm, timbre and tone. Recent findings in neuroscience suggest that the human brain may be hardwired for music. Biologist Edward Wilson goes so far as to say "... all of us have a biologic guarantee of musicianship, the capacity to respond to and participate in the music of our environment."²¹ The sense of sound is primary, with thinking processes similar to logical-mathematical intelligence as well as an affective connection to the emotions. This intelligence is also related to the ability to identify patterns.

(5) *Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence* refers to embodied tacit knowledge, also known as somatic

knowledge. It is both kinesthetic and sensory. *Kinesthetic* is related to the movement of the body and, while important to every individual every single day of our lives, is a primary focus for athletes, artists, dancers, kids and assembly-line workers. It includes a sense of timing and rhythm, and good communication between the mind-body. A commonly used example is knowledge of riding a bicycle. *Sensory*, by definition and with a physical plane focus, is related to the five human senses of form through which information enters the body (sight, smell, hearing, touch and taste). An example is the smell of burning metal from your car brakes while driving or the smell of hay in a barn. These smells can convey knowledge of whether the car brakes need replacing (get them checked immediately), or whether the hay is mildewing (dangerous to feed horses, but fine for cows). These responses would be overt, bringing to conscious awareness the need to take effective action and enabling that action to occur.

(6) *Interpersonal intelligence* and (7) *intrapersonal intelligence* are both forms of personal intelligence, with the first directed outwards and the second directed inwards. "Interpersonal" infers the ability to interact cooperatively and collaboratively with others, with a sensitivity to their thinking and feeling (sympathy) that leads to understanding and, in its advanced forms, to empathy and compassion. It includes the honoring of diversity and the ability to

view the world through multiple lenses.

"Intrapersonal" is the realm of self-knowledge, both of the individual self and of the human condition, and using this knowledge to effectively plan and direct one's actions.

Two additional intelligences, which were added later to the model, are (8) *naturalist intelligence* and (9) *existential intelligence*.²² As an intelligence, "naturalist" infers the ability to discriminate among all living things. It includes a sensitivity to the connectivity of the natural world and the relationships and interactions that comprise our natural eco-system. "Existential" tackles the large questions around human existence: Where did we come from? How did we get here? Why do we die? What is the meaning of life? As can be seen, there are direct links between the development and balancing of these intelligences, *the development of self over a lifetime of experiences*, and the emergence of wisdom.

Psychologist Robert Sternberg says that intelligence without wisdom has not served the world well. He gives examples of cruel despots and greedy business tycoons who are quite intelligent and successful at the expense of others. This example points out that *intelligence alone does not infer wisdom*. Thus, Robert developed a balance theory. As he describes: "I view wisdom as the value-laden application of tacit knowledge not only

for one's own benefit (as can be the case with successful intelligence) but **also for the benefit of others**, in order to **attain a common good**. The wise person realizes that what matters is not just knowledge, or the intellectual skills one applies to this knowledge, but **how the knowledge is used** [emphasis added].”²³ Again, we see the connection of wisdom to the concept of the greater good. This insinuates the spiritual counterbalance necessary when developing the mental faculties, and is consistent with the usage of wisdom in our definition of intelligent activity.

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INSIGHT: Wisdom is the value-laden application of tacit knowledge not only for one’s own benefit, but also for the benefit of others in order to attain a common good.

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Intelligent activity is the focus of the physical, emotional and mental planes, and builds on the experiential learning occurring at these focus levels. The integration and balance of development of our mental faculties and deepening connections with others emerges as wisdom and manifests as intelligent activity.²⁴ In the next two ideas we explore the two intertwining paths necessary to move into wisdom: developing of the mental faculties and deepening our connections to others.

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 3: Knowledge is a part of the journey toward wisdom.

As Tom Stonier, a theoretical biologist, was developing a workable theory of information in the 90's, along the way he discovered new relationships between information and the physical Universe of matter and energy.²⁵ Tom proposed that “organization is the physical expression of a system containing information.”²⁶ By organization he means the existence of a non-random pattern of particles and energy fields, or more generally, the sub-units comprising any system. Thus, in the material world organization can be observed in space and time as a physical phenomenon. Stonier considers information (any organized or non-random pattern) to be a basic property of the Universe—as fundamental as matter and energy. We agree, and, along with Stonier, we *take information to be any non-random pattern or set of patterns.*

All knowledge is comprised of information. By selecting and putting information together, one may be able to create knowledge. Think of a picture puzzle in which each piece fits into the puzzle at a particular place. If all of the pieces are put in their rightful place, we come up with a picture that may be beautiful, and informative. So, it is with knowledge. When the right information is identified and put together in the best way (for the situation at hand),

we have created knowledge—the *capacity to take effective action*. Of course, every situation that we try to deal with, try to change and improve, will require its own picture, that is, its own combination of ideas, interpretations, relationships and actions. If these pieces of information are identified, connected and implemented, they may result in providing the effective action needed to create the desired picture, or, in other words, transform an undesirable situation into a desirable situation, an opportunity into a reality.

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INSIGHT: Every situation requires its own picture, that is, its own combination of ideas, interpretations, relationships and actions.

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During the same time frame Tom was exploring the relationship of information and energy, an intense interest in neuroscience research was unfolding as the creation and sophistication of brain measurement instrumentation became a reality. For the first time we could see what was happening *inside* the mind/brain as we process information and act on that information. In the mind/brain there is no clearly visible cause-and-effect relationship between information and knowledge; rather, knowledge is an emergent phenomenon. (NOTE: Mind/brain is used to represent the brain as the physical structure and the mind as the neuronal firings). Considering the

increasing focus on the workings of the mind/brain, it is not surprising that concurrently the body of research focused on wisdom was rapidly expanding.

The full definition we use of knowledge is *the capacity (potential or actual) to take effective action*. Every day of our lives we are embedded in fields of potential. We are continuously informed from without and within and uniquely sifting through, focusing, and connecting the stream of information that informs our knowledge and drives our actions. The only way that we can influence, and possibly change, our material world is by acting upon it. *We are both existential AND experiential in nature!* Sometimes we recognize our choices, and sometimes they are beyond our conscious awareness. The knowledge we can create is both triggered by external events and very much determined by our past experiences and current state of learning.

There are several concepts that will help us understand and talk about knowledge. First, the simple idea of knowledge (informing) and knowledge (proceeding). This builds on the distinction between “knowing that” and “knowing how.”²⁷ Knowledge (informing) is the information (or content) part of knowledge. While this information part of knowledge is still generically information (organized patterns), it is special because of its structure and relationship with other information in a specific situation and context. When

viewed separately it is information, even though it *may* lead to effective action; but it is considered knowledge when *used as part of the knowledge process leading to effective action*.

Knowledge (proceeding) represents the process and action part of knowledge. It is the process of selecting and associating or applying the relevant information, or knowledge (informing), from which specific actions can be identified and implemented, that is, actions that will result in some level of anticipated outcome.

Second, the idea of *explicit* and *tacit* knowledge. We used that word “tacit” earlier in this little book. Explicit refers to information that can be voiced; tacit refers to those connections among thoughts that cannot be voiced, that is, pulled up and expressed, but yet support a knowing of what decisions to make and actions to take. Michael Polanyi, a polymath²⁸ also known as Polányi Mihály, advocated that tacit knowledge consisted of *a range* of conceptual and sensory information and images that could be used to make sense of a situation or event.²⁹ Yes. We humans are the only ones who try to carefully separate things, but nothing in our existence acts in isolation!

We also think of knowledge in terms of levels—surface, shallow and deep—which represents a fluctuating continuum very much dependent on the context and situation at hand. The

characterization in terms of surface, shallow and deep works comfortably for me since both my partner David and I each spent 20 years in the U.S. Department of the Navy. *Surface knowledge* is predominantly, but not exclusively, information. It answers the questions of what, when, where and who, is primarily explicit, and represents visible choices that require minimum understanding. It can easily be stored in books and computers, and is the stuff of our everyday conversations. Unfortunately, it's also the stuff that is memorized and regurgitated in school tests with minimal understanding! Think of a platoon skimming across the surface of a calm lake. What you see is what there is.

Shallow knowledge is information that requires some understanding, meaning and sensemaking. This meaning can be created via logic, analysis, observation, reflection and—even to some extent—prediction based on patterns from the past. It also requires an understanding of context. This is the area of social knowledge, which provides the opportunity to ask questions and share expertise in the areas of focus. Think of a boat sitting down in the water such that there is the possibility of hidden structures and debris below and possible water currents that are unknown, unless you have someone familiar with the area in the boat.

Deep knowledge is the lived knowledge of the expert, and lies in creativity, intuition, forecasting,

experience, pattern recognition and the use of theories. It is hidden deep in the water, much like the iceberg example still in use today in organizations. The expert's unconscious has learned to detect patterns and evaluate their importance in anticipating the behavior of situations that are too complex for the conscious mind to understand. During the lengthy period of practice needed to develop deep knowledge, the expert has often developed an internal theory that guides decisions and actions.

The concept of deep knowledge begs the question: **Does deep knowledge denote a higher level of intelligent activity?** Not necessarily. It represents a deeper exploration of a specific domain or area of knowledge; it does NOT represent intelligent activity, which is *a perfect state of interaction where intent, purpose, direction, values and expected outcomes are clearly understood and communicated among all parties, reflecting wisdom and achieving a higher truth.*

In the early years of knowledge management, a number of authors argued that wisdom was the end of a continuum made up as such:

data→ information→ knowledge→ wisdom.

Actually, I have to admit I was a part of that argument! And perhaps it served us well as a learning point along the way. However, today we realize that while there certainly is a strong relationship, such a simple continuum could never be

the case. As Peter Russell, the Canadian political scientist and author of *The Global Brain*, explains, “Various people have pointed to the progression of data to information to knowledge ... Continuing the progression suggests that something derived from knowledge leads to the emergence of a new level, what we call wisdom. But what is it that knowledge gives us that takes us beyond knowledge? Through knowledge we learn how to **act in our own better interests**. Will this decision lead to greater well-being, or greater suffering? What is the kindest way to respond in this situation? ... Wisdom reflects the values and criteria that we apply to our knowledge. Its essence is discernment. Discernment of right from wrong. Helpful from harmful. Truth from delusion.”³⁰

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INSIGHT: “Wisdom reflects the values and criteria that we apply to our knowledge. Its essence is discernment. Discernment of right from wrong. Helpful from harmful. Truth from delusion.”

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And there it is. Knowledge is very much connected to the user, the taking of effective action, which is judged and valued by the expectation of the outcome as determined by the user! This is the same as forwarded by the philosophers of old, defining knowledge as *justified true belief*. A belief was

justified as true when the outcome of applying that belief was what was expected. So, **knowledge itself has no value in terms of good or bad** (morality), but high value in terms of decisions and actions from the user's point of view. This is not the case with wisdom.

Around the turn of the century, the U.S. Department of the Navy (DoN)³¹ placed knowledge at the beginning and wisdom near the end of their change model based on the seven levels of consciousness.³² The change model consists of the following progression to facilitate increased connectedness and heightened consciousness: (1) closed structured concepts, (2) focused by limited sharing, (3) awareness and connectedness through sharing, (4) creating concepts and sharing these concepts with others, (5) advancement of new knowledge shared with humanity at large, (6) creating wisdom, teaching, and leading, and (7) creating (and sharing) new thought in a fully aware and conscious process. In this model, prior to reaching wisdom at level 6, there is the insertion of value (framed in the context of the greater good). Value was absent in the discussion of knowledge in support of the earlier levels of the model since the positive or negative value of knowledge is situation-dependent and context sensitive.

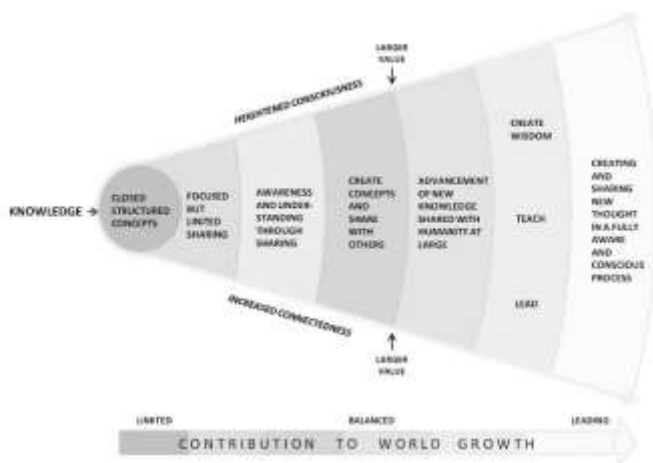


Figure 1. *The DoN change model.*

Wisdom grows with age. In a comparative study of two groups (one characterized as elderly and one characterized as creative), L. Orwoll and M. Perlmutter discovered that wisdom was associated with advanced self-development and self-transcendence.³³ Elkhonon Goldberg, a clinical professor of neurology, raises the question: If memory and mental focus decline with age, why is it that our wisdom and competence grow? After validating these two propositions, he answers the question by asserting that *tacit knowledge* does not suffer appreciable decline with age because it represents high-level patterns of procedural knowledge—knowledge of solving problems.³⁴ These are patterns that represent chunks or groups of

other patterns. If a mind has been active throughout life these high-level patterns represent competence, insight and deep (tacit) knowledge that may be considered wisdom. Thus, while memory, specific facts and attention, may decline with age, the knowledge of *how* to solve problems or what needs to be done in a specific situation does not appear to decline. Tacit knowledge and wisdom may remain strong and even continue to grow with age. What this also implies is that tacit knowledge—particularly as we age—is primarily process knowledge.

In the discussion of wisdom in Idea 1, recall that Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Jeanne Nakamura described wisdom as referring to two distinct phenomena: the *content* of wisdom and the *capacity* to think or act wisely. This parallels our understanding of knowledge as both knowledge (informing) and knowledge (proceeding), an information component and a process component. Knowledge and wisdom would then both deal with the *nature and structure of information*, with nature representing the quality or constitution of information, and structure representing the process of building new information, or learning. Wisdom represents **higher discernment** and the use of tacit knowledge, tapping into unconscious resources, *to provide patterns that flow above the situation-dependent and context-sensitive knowledge*—perhaps taking the form of intuition. The tacit

knowledge driving what is surfaced would be both knowledge (informing) and knowledge (proceeding), although, as noted by Goldberg, primarily knowledge (proceeding).³⁵

Knowledge is still an important *part* of wisdom. Stan Nussbaum, who is a staff missiologist, forwards that all knowledge, and by extension learning, is in the service of wisdom.³⁶ A. Nelson says that wisdom is the *knowledge of the essential nature of reality*.³⁷ This could refer to the universals explored through the idea of heuristics, which reflects a higher truth emerging from conceptual thought. Similar to what was expressed in the Navy model, Robert Sternberg, a strong advocate for alternative views, defines wisdom as “the application of tacit knowledge as mediated by values toward the goal of achieving a common good,”³⁸ thus suggesting that tacit knowledge is a prerequisite for developing wisdom and ***defining wisdom in a social rather than individual context***.

This is an important distinction, although in everyday language the term “wise” is often used in service to the individual. Note that over time, what is considered “wise” only from an individual perspective leads to separation, self-service, and learning limitations as the individual identifies with the knowledge they create. From the functional viewpoint of the mind/brain as an associative patternner, it would appear that information (as

patterns of energy) is ***intended to flow from person to person***, triggering experiential learning and expansion. This would indeed place learning (and the knowledge emerging from learning) in service to wisdom, and insinuate its connection to a greater social good.

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INSIGHT: It would appear that information (as patterns of energy) is intended to flow from person to person, triggering experiential learning and expansion.

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In summary, while not part of a linear continuum, the concept of wisdom is clearly related to knowledge—and, in particular, to tacit knowledge, a multi-dimensional resource—and can also be related to the phenomenon of consciousness. More importantly, wisdom is not in isolation; it indeed appears to deal with the cognitive and emotional, personal and social, as well as the moral and religious aspects of life, **very much based on the interconnectedness of people**. And there we have it. The something more of wisdom.

Recall John Dalla Costa's description of wisdom ends that, in essence, "wisdom grows through the learning of more knowledge, and the practiced experience of day-to-day life—both filtered through a code of moral conviction."³⁹



Figure 2. *Knowledge is clearly an important part of wisdom, particularly the development of tacit knowledge over time, which has very much to do with higher order patterns.*

THIS FILTERING THROUGH A CODE OF MORAL CONVICTION IS CRITICAL.

Knowledge acted upon without the actor taking responsibility for its use can be dangerous for both the actor and those who are affected by the action. In short, *knowledge has to be used wisely*. A spiritual counterbalance is necessary to move into wisdom,

that is, *taking responsibility for our knowledge*. This is consistent with Sternberg's conviction that: "The wise person realizes that what matters is not just knowledge, or the intellectual skills one applies to this knowledge, but how the knowledge is used."⁴⁰

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INSIGHT: Knowledge has to be used wisely.

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As one example, over the past century humanity has enjoyed an accelerated mental development. With this increased mental capability and the accumulation of knowledge has come an expansion of the ego, with a heavy bleed-over into arrogance. David Hawkins, the scientist who has spent a great deal of his life developing a system on levels of consciousness, says that there are innate difficulties that reason brings with it. As he describes, "But reason, so vulnerable to loss of perspective through self-absorption, has in the long run never provided man with any solid moral, or even intellectual, certainty. Again and again it has, to the contrary, led from the chaos of ignorance to an equally baffling cerebral maze."⁴¹ This, of course, is what has resulted in the arrogance ("I'm right, you're wrong, and I'm not listening") seen in individuals and organizations achieving high development of the mental faculties without a spiritual counterbalance. And, as physicist Niles MacFlouer points out,

“People who are egotistical, or selfish mentally, place emphasis on knowledge without wisdom.”⁴²

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INSIGHT: “People who are egotistical, or selfish mentally, place emphasis on knowledge without wisdom.”

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The journey toward wisdom, *which must be created*, begins with recognition that knowledge is imperfect and incomplete, which spurs a search for better knowledge based on whole, structured thought that is used to create virtue. There is a Conscious Look Book on *Living Virtues for Today*. Humans are also imperfect and incomplete, which spurs us onward in an ever-widening search for truth. As we expand our concepts and begin to see more connections, we expand our truth. Although along the way there may be detours, for just as physical poisons depress or destroy our bodies, “the mental poisons of fear, anger, envy, jealousy, suspicion, and intolerance”⁴³ likewise tremendously interfere with the emergence of wisdom and progress of the evolving consciousness.

Wisdom is deep pattern knowledge that can be applied in different situations and contexts. For those who grew up with biblical stories, there are many of these that convey the wisdom of King Solomon. One of them goes something like this.

Two women came before the King with one live infant and one dead infant, each claiming the live infant as their own. After observing their behavior and noting neither was willing to back down, King Solomon ordered the live baby to be cut in half, with a part given to each mother. One woman immediately fell to her knees and begged the King to give the infant to the other woman so that the child could live. This, of course, was the mother. King Solomon was able to take understanding from one domain of knowledge and apply it to another.

We can think of wisdom as building on deep knowledge and the recognition of patterns that extend across domains of knowledge. In this example, that is understanding the love and protective instincts of a mother, who would sacrifice herself for the welfare of the child. King Solomon had both the content (information and knowledge) and capacity to think and act wisely.

Just as the expert in a domain of knowledge can effectively extrapolate patterns from one situation to another, *a person who is wise can take learning lessons from one domain of knowledge and effectively apply them in another domain of knowledge for the greater good.* In simple language, **that "greater good" is the "something more" that emerged in our exploration of wisdom.**



Idea 4: Wisdom develops through deepening our connections to others.

The Intelligent Social Change Journey (ISCJ)⁴⁴ that we are all on is a developmental journey of the body, mind and heart, moving from the heaviness of cause-and-effect linear extrapolations, to the fluidity of co-evolving with our environment, to the lightness of breathing our thought and feelings into reality. Grounded in development of our mental faculties, these are phase changes, each building on and expanding previous learning in our movement toward intelligent activity.

We are on this journey together. This is very much a *social* journey. Change does not occur in isolation. The deeper our understanding in relationship to others, the easier it is to move into the future. There are three phases to this journey. The quality of sympathy is needed as we navigate the linear, cause-and-effect characteristics of Phase 1. The quality of empathy is needed to navigate the co-evolving liquidity of Phase 2. The quality of compassion is needed to navigate the connected breath of the Phase 3 creative leap.

In the progression of learning to navigate change represented by these three phases, we empower our selves, both individuating and

expanding. In the process, we become immersed in the human experience, a neuronal dance with the Universe, with each of us in the driver's seat selecting our partners and directing our dance steps. That was a really fast summary. Let's slow it down and explore those phases a bit deeper.

In Phase 1 of the Journey, *Learning from the Past*, we act on the physical and the physical changes; we “see” the changes with our sense of form, and therefore they are real. Causes have effects. Actions have consequences, both directly and indirectly, and sometimes delayed. Phase 1 reinforces the characteristics of how we interact with the simplest aspects of our world. The elements are predictable and repeatable and make us feel comfortable because we know what to expect and how to prepare for them. While these parts of the world do exist, our brain tends to automate the thinking around them and we do them with little conscious effort. The challenge with this is that they only remain predictable if all the causing influences remain constant ... and that just doesn't happen in the world of today! The linear cause-and-effect phase of the IS CJ (Phase 1) calls for sympathy. Supporting and caring for the people involved in the change helps to mitigate the force of resistance, improving the opportunity for successful outcomes.

As we expand toward Phase 2, we begin to recognize patterns; they emerge from experiences

that repeat over and over. Recognition of patterns enables us to “see” (in our mind’s eye) the relationship of events in terms of time and space, moving us out of an action and reaction mode into a position of co-evolving with our environment, and enabling us to better navigate a world full of diverse challenges and opportunities. It is at this stage that we move from understanding based on past cause-and-effect reactions to how things come together, to produce new things both in the moment at hand and at a future point in time.

Phase 2, *Learning in the Present*, takes us to the next level of thinking and feeling about how we interact with our world, including the interesting area of human social interactions. Although complex, the somewhat recognizable patterns enable us to explore and progress through uncertainty and the unknown, making life more interesting and enjoyable. In Phase 2 patterns grow into concepts, higher mental thought, and we begin the search for a higher level of truth. Sustainability in the co-evolving state of Phase 2 requires empathy, which provides a direct understanding of another individual, and a heightened awareness of the context of their lives, and their desires and needs in the moment at hand. While not yet achieving the creative leap of the intuitional (represented in Phase 3), we are clearly developing higher mental faculties and instinctive knowledge of the workings of the Universe, which

helps cultivate intuition and develop insights in service to our self and society.

The creative leap of Phase 3, *Co-Creating the Future*, requires the ability to tap into the larger intuitional field that energetically connects all people. This can only be accomplished when energy is focused outward in service to the larger whole, requiring a deeper connection to others. Compassion deepens that connection. Thus, each phase of the Intelligent Social Change Journey calls for an increasing depth of connection to others, moving from sympathy to empathy to compassion.

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INSIGHT: Each phase of the Intelligent Social Change Journey calls for an increasing depth of connection to others, moving from sympathy to empathy to compassion.

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As we recognize the Oneness of all things. The "us" becomes part of the "I"; and the "I" becomes part of the "us". It is from this place of deep connection with others, which offers the potential for unconditional love, that virtue and morality guide our thoughts and actions. The balance of mental development and deepening connections emerges as wisdom and manifests as intelligent activity.

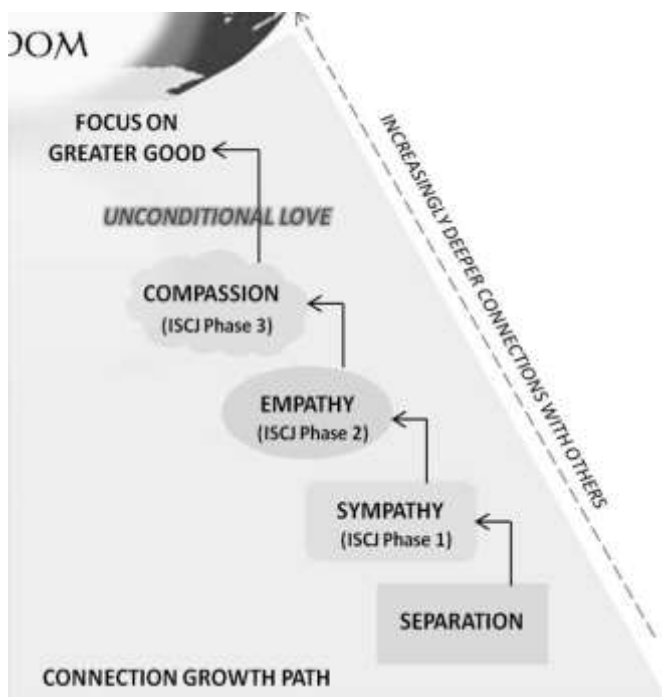


Figure 3. *As we recognize the Oneness of all things. The "us" becomes part of the "I"; and the "I" becomes part of the "us".*

Thus, we have now linked wisdom to higher mental thought developed through experience, particularly the development of tacit knowledge, and deepening connections with others, all of which enable intelligent activity. And as Sternberg reminds us, "Wisdom is not just a way of thinking about things; it is a way of doing things. If people wish to be wise, they have to act wisely, not just think

wisely. We all can do this. Whether we do it is our choice."⁴⁵

There is an element of wisdom—both the content and the capacity—within each human.

Recall a time in your life when a large issue or problem loomed in front of you. Things that used to work for you in the past didn't work, and there was a sense of confusion. An opportunity was there for you to shift your way of thinking and acting, and it was there because you were ready for it ... and the answer is there. It might stream from the unconscious, perhaps triggered by a passing unrelated conversation, or translated from an advertising sign along the road, or emerging as a picture in the mind. Somehow, you just *knew* the road ahead, and you *knew* that this was the direction you needed to head. This was inner wisdom emerging.

Now, we take pause from the larger frame of reference to spend a few minutes exploring YOUR inner wisdom.

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EXERCISE: *Learning from Your Inner Self*

Since wisdom requires experience, this exercise requires full engagement of your creative imagination.

STEP 1: As you read the newspaper, scan the Internet or listen to conversations regarding current news, choose one event or situation that bothers you,

that attracts your attention. Then, look up more detail on the Internet and read a bit about it so that you increase your understanding of the circumstances of the event. *Do not* immerse yourself in this, nor do you want to deeply involve your emotions. Rather, note that you do not like the situation, read some of the details from a systems perspective, then let it go. This balance is important so that you don't fully engage previous mental models.

STEP 2: Later that evening, when you have a short period of time where you will not be interrupted, find a quiet place, make yourself comfortable, and close your eyes.

STEP 3: Engaging your creative imagination, picture yourself as the wise King Solomon. You are sitting on a high throne at the end of a large room, with your subjects grouped along each side of the room, quietly and reverently waiting.

STEP 4: Keeping your eyes closed, recall the event or situation that you identified earlier in the day. In the center of the room, all the subjects involved in that event or situation are standing expectantly in front of you. A quiet mumble arises from this group, acknowledging *you* as a person of wisdom, and agreeing that they will act as you direct them to act. They wait for your direction.

STEP 5: Imagine you, as King Solomon, closing your eyes (going within the within state you are already in) and reaching deep down inside for

wisdom. Go deeper. You *know* the wisdom is there; it is just a matter of opening the door and receiving it. Take several deep breaths and recognize that thoughts are following your breath as you exhale. Now, as King Solomon, speak the words that come to your mind. Speak them out loud and listen to your Self.

While it may take several tries to successfully tap into the flow of thought that is emerging from within your depths, know that, in fact, it IS there. YOU are multidimensional, and you have been learning, expanding, connecting and discerning for the entire length of your life, whether or not you are aware of this learning. Repeat this exercise periodically until you are able to easily tap into the flow of knowledge and wisdom within you. Then, act on it.

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Idea 5: There is wisdom in mental discipline.

Development of wisdom can be escalated when an individual chooses to engage in mental discipline. What does this mean in practical terms? While during the course of life an intuitive flash can occur to pretty much anyone, disciplined preparation is required in order to interact with others and bring that idea into service, what could be defined in the business world as innovation.

Mental discipline is advantageous for *all* domains of knowledge. For example, an athlete requires disciplined preparation of the body accompanied by a harmonious consciousness (disciplined preparation of the mind) to perform well. Physical actions are repeated over and over again to embed them in the very fabric of our bodies such that they become an unconscious response to self (embodied tacit knowledge).

Mental is of, or having to do with, the mind, which is a material mind where our personality lives, is self-conscious and makes decisions. Discipline as applied to the self is in terms of self-control, self-mastery, self-government, self-direction and self-reliance, all connected with self-knowledge. For example, planning is a tool for preparation of the mind. It involves recognition of past patterns, a

higher level of truth, the ability to have more effectiveness and accuracy in our living, and increased intelligence in our actions. Then, there is the idea of consistency such that wisdom is intelligently applied wherever it can be useful, where it can be of service to others. These are good starting points. Now, as part of our developmental journey and deepening connections with others, we bring to this our understanding of the power of collaboration and cooperation, and our role as co-creators.

The mental plane offers a continuous opportunity for growth, and there is great opportunity to do mental service in the world. As we develop mentally, our learning becomes part of our identity and our self changes and expands, *resulting in more of us to interact with the world and a larger capacity to effectively act in and on the world*. While Jung's theory of the collective unconscious lays a foundation for this interaction, biologist Rupert Sheldrake's concept of formative causation makes this much more explicit.⁴⁶ Through morphic resonance, **our thoughts have the capacity to influence other people, making it more likely for others to think in the same way we are thinking**. That our minds are much more permeable and porous to others than we have understood in the past has many implications. Our thoughts are not private, tucked away neatly in our brain. As Rupert describes: "From the point of view of formative causation, even our thoughts and attitudes influence

other people, and we're in turn influenced by countless other people's thoughts and attitudes. So, our minds are not insulated and separate in the way many modern people like to imagine, they're far more permeable to each other Formative causation makes us see societies and social groups as having a wholeness, a unity, and enables us to think more about the reality of the social forms in which we live.”⁴⁷

Think about what all that means! Even when we don't set out to do so, our thoughts and feelings are affecting others, and their thoughts and feelings are affecting us. Have you ever walked near someone and all of a sudden had a whoosh of some kind of strong feeling? This has happened to me a number of times. Sometimes I'd say to myself, where did that come from? Other times I could actually *feel* where the energy was coming from!

This brings in German philosopher Immanuel Kant's *categorical imperative* as a basis of morality.⁴⁸ Kant defined an imperative as a proposition that declares a certain action or inaction to be necessary. A categorical imperative is **an unconditional moral law**, a universal imperative for humanity.⁴⁹ When we understand that our thoughts influence others, *our thoughts become our responsibility as well as our actions and words*. That is a categorical imperative which suggests the necessity for developing mental discipline.

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INSIGHT: When we understand that our thoughts influence others, our thoughts become our responsibility as well as our actions and words.

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Because we are part of a larger eco-system and social beings who are in continuous two-way communication with those around us, *we have the ability to develop mental sensing*. Stay with me for a few minutes here; this is kind of interesting. This mental sensing can be developed over time with practice. As described by physicist Niles MacFlouer, there are three ways of mental sensing:⁵⁰

- (1) Sensing what someone is thinking from thought that is relatively whole and truthful, in real time;
- (2) Sensing one's own or another's egotistical thought that has been written or spoken—which causes pressure against one's own thought (many people are able to sense this kind of pressure); and
- (3) Sensing another person's thought using *all* of the mental senses.

Strong thought is easier to sense than weak thought or passing thoughts. That certainly makes sense! When you are working with groups, people who have a weak presence are sometimes easy to

overlook. Hmmm. "Strong thought comes from the wholeness created from a well-focused concept that is connected to a complete series of thought forms [examples] that explain the concept."⁵¹ We are offered a pragmatic approach to developing mental discipline. In an attempt to honor the author while forwarding it in the context of this little book, Nile's seven methods will be loosely described below.

First, establishing a daily rhythm, consistently read material that increases truth in the mind (creating spiritual thought). It is suggested that this reading occur in the early morning upon waking when the mind is clearest, with the least amount of retained energy from the previous day.

Second, practice mental meditation, that is, using the structured mental thought of logic and wisdom to arrive at truth. This "includes planning new ways to think and then checking those new ways for validity by comparing the expected results with previous—known—outcomes [examples]."⁵² Note: There is a Conscious Look Book on *Truth in Context* with exercises.

Third, review and assess the previous day's behaviors in comparison to what was planned to happen. The ability to control/influence the forces in our lives is a measure of our relative level of consciousness. Note: There is a Conscious Look Book on *Engaging Forces*.

Fourth, release thought forms and cease logical thinking prior to relaxing and preparing for sleep.

Fifth, practice mentally thinking for others. It is not necessary to communicate with others to develop this discipline.

Sixth, practice humility, that is, when your thinking does not agree with others, assume you are wrong and the structured thought of others is right. There is a Conscious Look Book on *The Humanness of Humility*.

Seventh, and in the words of Niles: “**Write, speak, and teach truth to others** when appropriate to do so for their mental benefit ... Each person who has created more wisdom in his or her own mental body needs to ***use that wisdom to create more truth in the mental bodies of others*** [emphasis added].”⁵³ This is focusing our energy outward and giving service to others.

The highest virtue of the mental plane is truth, and the directing of energy outwards to others is key to the expansion of consciousness, that state of awareness and understanding of the connections and relationships among ourselves and others.⁵⁴ As a higher-order pattern, wisdom moves across all domains of knowledge, manifesting in intelligent activity in service to the sharing of truth and the expansion of consciousness.



Idea 6: Moving from knowledge to wisdom parallels the journey from ordinary consciousness to extraordinary consciousness.

To quickly lay the groundwork for understanding our usage of consciousness, we provide representative viewpoints from several fields. The psychologist William James said that consciousness was the name of a non-entity in that it stands for the function of knowing (a process).⁵⁵ Another psychologist, J. Allan Hobson, considers consciousness as awareness of the world, the body and the self.⁵⁶ In neuroscience terms, this would be the sensitivity to outside stimuli as translated through the brain and neuron connections into patterns that to the mind represent thoughts. The Nobel Laureate physiologist Gerald Edelman considered consciousness as a process of the flow of thoughts, images, feelings and emotions.⁵⁷ And the spiritualist Ramon Stevens, who writes under the simple name of “Ramon,” describes consciousness as the “energized pool of intent from which all human experience springs.”⁵⁸

We agree that consciousness is a process, and not a state. It is private, continuous, always-changing and felt to be a sequential set of ideas, thoughts, images, feelings and perceptions. Another high-level property of consciousness is its unity.

The mind is continually integrating the incoming signals from the environment as well as connecting many different processing areas within the brain and combining them into a coherent flow of conscious thinking or feeling. When we see a snapshot of the visible world, it appears as a coherent, unified whole.

As can be seen, it is more than awareness of self, although that is certainly a starting point! It is also awareness of the other, the relationship of the other to self, and the relationships among other others, and ... okay, a sequential set of ideas, thoughts, images, feelings and perceptions.

Ordinary consciousness represents the customary or typical state of consciousness, that which is common to everyday usage, or of the usual kind. Polanyi was a resource we used earlier when talking about the relationship of knowledge and wisdom. He sees tacit knowledge as *not* part of one's ordinary consciousness;⁵⁹ thus, tacit knowledge resides in the unconscious. To access tacit knowledge, an individual needs to move *beyond* ordinary consciousness to what we call *extraordinary consciousness*, acquiring a greater sensitivity to information stored in the unconscious in order to facilitate the awareness and application of that information and knowledge in everyday life.

The term extraordinary consciousness is another way of describing an individual who can move beyond their conscious awareness, *tapping*

into their unconscious resources. In various Conscious Look Books, we have talked about these resources in different ways; for example, in terms of tacit knowledge, intuitive and spiritual, and in terms of intuition, earned and revealed. We have also shared that the unconscious (that which is not in our conscious awareness) includes both a subconscious (where intuitive tacit knowledge/earned intuition reside) and a superconscious (where spiritual tacit knowledge and revealed intuition may be available). Further, we have referred to the larger field of which we are a part (which is the superconscious connection) as an energy field, consciousness field, Zero Point field, Quantum field, God field and The Field.

The point that is consistent across all of this language is that *we are much more than that of which we are consciously aware*, and there are unconscious resources that are accessible to us.

Extraordinary consciousness may be created through such techniques as meditation, lucid dreaming, hemispheric synchronization, and other ways of quieting the conscious mind, and by doing so allowing/encouraging accessibility to information in the unconscious. Such techniques create a heightened sensitivity to, awareness of, and connection with our unconscious mind together with its memory and thought processes.

I guess we should describe one or two of those processes. That's a good idea. Pretty much everybody has heard of meditation. In Buddhist meditation, the concept of *bare attention* is introduced to open up the mind. Bare attention is defined as "the clear and single-minded awareness of what actually happens *to* us and *in* us at the successive moments of perception."⁶⁰ The call is for us to pay attention to this very instant, the NOW, to what we are experiencing, separating our reactions from the actual events. Close your eyes for a moment and try this. It takes practice. As Mark Epstein, who writes from the Buddhist perspective, describes, "just the *bare* facts, an *exact* registering, allowing things to speak for themselves as if seen for the first time."⁶¹

The process of meditation can actually change the brain! Meditation creates high levels of gamma synchrony. Psychiatrist Nancy Andreasen says that this "gamma power" is the greatest in the association cortices that are the reservoir of creativity—frontal, temporal, and parietal association regions. She concludes that, "People can change their brains by training them in the practice of meditation, so that they improve the quality of their moment-to-moment awareness not only during meditation but also during the routine of everyday life."⁶²

Hemispheric synchronization is the use of sound to couple with the binaural beat to bring both

hemispheres of the brain into unison. Let's include a bit of background and maybe a few scientific-like words. Binaural beats were identified in 1839 by H.W. Dove, a German experimenter. In the human mind, binaural beats are detected with carrier tones (audio tones of slightly different frequencies, one to each ear) below approximately 1500 Hz. The mind perceives the frequency differences of the sound coming into each ear, mixing the two sounds to produce a fluctuating rhythm and thereby create a beat or difference frequency. Because each side of the body sends signals to the opposite hemisphere of the brain, both hemispheres must work together to "hear" the difference frequency. This creates a whole brain state. What can occur during hemispheric synchronization is a physiologically reduced state of arousal while maintaining conscious awareness. That means you can let your body go to sleep while keeping your mind awake. That's pretty interesting.

As we have discovered, knowledge and wisdom both deal with the *nature and structure of information*, with nature being (or representing) the quality or constitution of information and structure being (or representing) the process of building new information. Wisdom represents higher discernment and the use of tacit knowledge to provide new, situation-dependent, context-sensitive knowledge—perhaps taking the form of intuition. The tacit knowledge driving what is surfaced would be both knowledge (informing) and knowledge (proceeding),

although as noted earlier primarily knowledge (proceeding). On the other hand, *consciousness appears to be a flow, with extraordinary consciousness representing increased sensitivity to awareness of tacit knowledge*. As a process, consciousness represents a characteristic of the human mind to be *aware* of the nature and structure of information. Moving beyond ordinary consciousness to extraordinary consciousness increases this awareness.

As another point of comparison, wisdom has been repeatedly related to systemic thinking and the recognition of a higher order of interdependence in the hierarchy of life, perhaps even the universe. Similarly, extraordinary consciousness delimits ordinary consciousness, increasing sensitivity to, and awareness of, that which is tacit (that which is in the unconscious), whether embodied, affective, intuitive or spiritual in nature. With this larger sensitivity and awareness of that which is tacit would come increased understanding of the interdependence associated with patterns of information, some of which would be patterns of patterns (possibly hierarchical in nature, although they might be represented by any three-dimensional patterns in space).

The figure below provides a visual representation of the relationships among knowledge, consciousness and extraordinary

consciousness. The dotted lines represent a movement from ordinary consciousness into extraordinary consciousness, at whatever level that may occur. The wavy lines represent the fluctuating boundary between explicit and tacit knowledge, with implicit knowledge describing what was thought tacit but triggered into consciousness by incoming information.

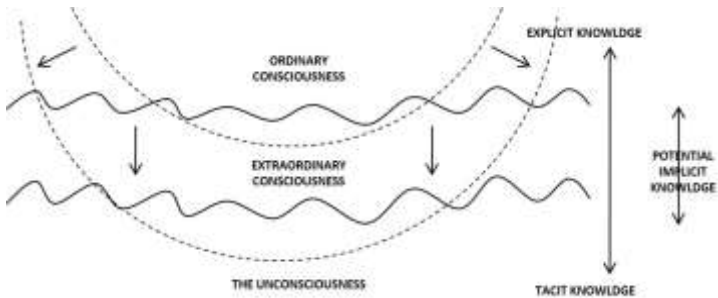


Figure 4. *Expanding the ordinary to the extraordinary.*

While there is still much thinking and experimentation needed to truly understand wisdom, it is increasingly clear that extraordinary consciousness—expanding our sensitivity and awareness of that which is tacit—has an important role to play in developing this understanding.

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 7: Today there is an ageless wisdom seeping back into our awareness.

As the world appears to be breaking apart—a global world caught in recurring patterns of separation and segregation, bigotry and nationalism, with strains of entitlement and fear of difference fanned by political leaders—one by one people are waking up. What does it mean to wake up? While this can be described in many ways, this is no less than a consciousness shift.

There is so much that we have to learn about our universe, our world and ourselves, and all of it has to do with the possibilities of YOU! We are so much more than we think we are. Our thoughts and feelings are actually patterners and attractors creating the reality we perceive. There is a total of 22 Conscious Look Books that are the Possibilities that are YOU! And within each of them is a discovery about ourselves. How appropriate for us to explore a few of those nuggets as we seek to rediscover the wisdom within each of us.

From *Transcendent Beauty*: Beauty is a short-circuit to thinking, enabling us to circumvent the tedium of everyday life in an instant, and inject a feeling of appreciation, love and joy into our lives.

From *Grounding*: You are an energy being that both generates and receives energy from the environment. Everything you think, feel and do has some level of impact on the larger world!

From *Engaging Forces*: You cannot control others for long. However, through your choices you can control yourself.

From *Conscious Compassion*: Empathy helps us to understand others; compassion moves us to act on that understanding.

From *Truth in Context*: Truth is created, not discovered, and it is relative to self. This means that your truth may not be some else's truth.

From *Attention and Intention*: Once you focus on a particular thought, a desire is triggered to turn this information into knowledge upon which to act. Focus on those things you want in your future.

From *Living Virtues for Today*: The creation of good character is a critical step to expanding your consciousness and the larger consciousness of humanity.

From *ME as Co-Creator*: We are part of an amazing field of consciousness. The requirement of creation is the ability to dream.

From *Connections as Patterns*: Just as we take the events of our lives and create a story of us whether real or imaginary, we discover and invent

the patterns which we seek, driven by the need for structure, connections and meaning. Our lives are literally a story created by us.

From *Knowing*: In the human journey of growth there are unending possibilities, and one of those possibilities is the ability to tap at will into the intuitional plane.

From *All Things in Balance*: The greatest barriers to learning and change are egotism and arrogance, which are fundamental difficulties in a rapidly-developing, mentally-focused business environment.

From *The Emerging Self*: The emergence of the individual self begins with our senses. If there is no information coming into the mind then the mind is mindless, that is it doesn't have the resources—or the truth—to construct itself.

From *The ERC's of Intuition*: We have to take responsibility for our thoughts as well as our actions, for who we are as well as who we are becoming.

From *The Emoting Guidance System*: By understanding that emotions can be triggered by perceived external events, yet are simultaneously our creation and an act of will, we can set up situations where external events or internal thoughts provide stimuli to trigger desired feelings.

And more ...

As we open to our own inner wisdom, it is exciting to recognize that there are higher energies assisting us in the consciousness shift underway. Our resource physicist Niles identifies seven energies focused on the planet, which he refers to as *rays*, that **develop the human in the journey toward intelligent activity**, wisdom and transcendence.⁶³ These focused energies correlate to the planes of human focus and several planes beyond those as the human evolves to higher levels of thought, becoming superhuman. The seven planes are: the physical, emotional, mental, intuitional, spiritual, monadic and divine. Each of the energies of the seven rays is focused on specific human actions from which *cosmic virtues* emerge. There is a Conscious Look Book on *Living Virtues for Today*.

Attempting to hold close to the author's intent while simultaneously taking a consilience approach, we communicate these energies consistent with the language forwarded in the current text. From the viewpoint of the physical plane (7th ray energy), this energy is focused on organization and synthesis, from which the *virtues of cooperation, collaboration and sharing* emerge. From the viewpoint of the emotional plane (6th ray energy) the focus is on movement among energies, from which the *virtues of compassion and love* emerge. From the viewpoint of the mental plane (5th ray energy) the focus is on structure and formulating to both reduce forces and increase the replication of thought forms with other

energies, from which the *virtue of truth* emerges. The physical, emotional and mental planes are those which are part of our everyday lives, although we can periodically tap into the intuitional plane and have access to spiritual energy, which serves as a counterbalance to the lower planes.

From the viewpoint of the intuitional plane (4th ray energy) the focus is on the balance and harmony of thought, from which the *virtue of beauty emerges*. From the viewpoint of the spiritual plane (3rd ray energy) the focus is on creating intelligent activity, "including perfect levels of changing itself and other energies in density in order to achieve intelligent activity through power and a growth in all life at once,"⁶⁴ from which emerges *more intelligent life*. From the viewpoint of the monadic plane (2nd ray energy), the focus is on creating Oneness of all life, from which the virtue of *unlimited and unconditional love and Oneness* emerges. As this journey reaches its highest stage, the divine plane (1st ray energy), the focus is on creating new and more purpose for life, utilizing limits and increasing will through consistent choices, from which the virtue of *Universal Creation* emerges.

These energies are universal in nature in that they have very much to do with planets, solar systems and galaxies as we move through the universe in interactive patterns.

This is good news if we choose to engage in the larger journey. For we DO have free choice, and advancement requires the spiritual discipline to develop virtue and wisdom in our everyday lives. In this amazing Earth school in which we exist and experience, we have the opportunity to expand our consciousness and help others do the same. Without consciousness there can be no understanding.

What does this mean to me?

Do we dare embrace the concept that we have inner wisdom that is re-emerging within right now? I've heard people say we have all our answers within. Is all that really within me?

There's so much reflection to be had on the topics at hand. And so many questions! Have we stretched too far, or not far enough? So, what have we learned? Let's jot down some ideas.



Wisdom focuses us toward the greater good. As Cophthorne Macdonald describes, “acting with the well-being of the whole in mind.”



“Knowledge can be had by education, but wisdom, which is indispensable to true culture, can be secured only through experience and by men and women who are innately intelligent. Such a people are able to learn from experience; they may become truly wise.”



Wisdom is the value-laden application of tacit knowledge not only for one's own benefit, but also for the benefit of others.



Every situation requires its own picture, that is, its own combination of ideas, interpretations, relationships and actions.



Spiritual discipline is needed to develop virtue and wisdom in our everyday lives.



There is an element of wisdom—both the content and the capacity—within each human.

And instead of a final bullet, I repeat the description of wisdom contributed by John Dalla Costa in *Working Wisdom*:

“Wisdom is the combination of knowledge and experience, but it is more than just the sum of these parts. Wisdom involves the mind and the heart, logic and intuition, left brain and right brain, but it is more than either reason, or creativity, or both. Wisdom involves a sense of balance, an equilibrium derived from a strong, pervasive *moral* conviction ... the conviction and guidance provided by the obligations that flow from a profound sense of interdependence. In essence, wisdom grows through the learning of more knowledge, and the practiced experience of day-to-day life—both filtered through a code of moral conviction.”¹⁸

Let’s work together on this!

Pursue intelligent activity.

Share your amazing learning with others.

We CAN make a difference in this world!

This volume of **Conscious Look Books** builds conversationally on the ideas presented in *The Profundity and Bifurcation of Change Part IV: Co-Creating the Future*, largely presented in Chapter 27: “Moving into Wisdom.” Co-authors of the original text include David Bennet, Arthur Shelley, Theresa Bullard and John Lewis. Full references are available in the original text, which is published by MQIPress, Frost, WV (2017), and available as an eBook on www.amazon.com

Endnotes

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³ See Clayton, V. and Birren, J.E. (1980). "The Development of Wisdom across the Lifespan: A Reexamination of an Ancient Topic" in Baltes, P.B. and Brim, O.G.J. (Eds.), *Life Span Development and Behavior*. Cambridge, MA: Academic Press, 104-135.

⁴ See Holliday, S.G. and Chandler, M.J. (1986). *Wisdom: Explorations in Adult Competence: Contributions to Human Development*, Vol. 17, Karger, Basel. Also, Erikson, J.M. (1988). *Wisdom and the Senses: The Way of Creativity*. New York: Norton. Also, Sternberg, R.J. (Ed.) (1990). *Wisdom: Its Nature, Origins, and Development*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. Also, Jarvis, P. (1992). *Paradoxes of Learning: On Becoming an Individual in Society*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Also, Kramer, D.A. and Bacelar, W.T. (1994). "The Educated Adult in Today's World: Wisdom and the Mature Learner" in Sinnott, J.D. (Ed.), *Interdisciplinary Handbook of Adult Lifespan Learning*. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press. Also, Bennett-Woods, D. (1997). "Reflections on Wisdom", unpublished paper, University of Northern Colorado.

⁵ Quoted from Merriam, S.B. and Caffarella, R.S. (1999). *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide* (2nd Ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 165.

⁶ See Smith, J., Dixon, R.A. and Baltes, P.B. (1987). "Age differences in response to life planning problems: A research analog for the study of wisdom, related knowledge,"

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⁷ Quoted from Baltes, P. B., and Smith, J. (1990). "The psychology of wisdom and its ontogenesis in R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Wisdom: Its Nature, Origins, and Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 87-120.

⁸ See Levitt, H.M. (1999). "The development of wisdom: An analysis of Tibetan Buddhist experience", in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 39(2), 86-105.

⁹ See Trumpa, C. (1991). *The Heart of the Buddha*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

¹⁰ See Woodman, M. and Dickson, E. (1996). *Dancing in the Flames: The Dark Goddess in the Transformation of Consciousness*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

¹¹ See Brown, W.S. (2000). "Wisdom and human neurocognitive systems: Perceiving and practicing the laws of life" in Brown, W.S. (Ed.), *Understanding Wisdom: Sources, Science and Society*. Philadelphia, PA: Templeton Foundation.

¹² See Sherman, N. (2000). "Wise emotions" in Brown, W.S. (Ed.), *Understanding Wisdom: Sources, Science and Society*. Philadelphia, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.

¹³ See Bennet, A. and Bennet, D. (2008). "Moving from Knowledge to Wisdom, from Ordinary Consciousness to Extraordinary Consciousness" in *VINE: Journal of Information and Knowledge Systems*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 7-15.

¹⁴ Quoted from Macdonald, C. (1996). *Toward Wisdom: Finding Our Way to Inner Peace, Love, and Happiness*. Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads, 1.

¹⁵ See Murphy, N. (2000). "Introduction: A hierarchical framework for understanding wisdom" in Brown, W.S. (Ed.), *Understanding Wisdom: Sources, Science and Society*. Philadelphia, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 7.

¹⁶ See Schloss, J.P. (2000). “Wisdom traditions as mechanisms for organismal integration: Evolutionary perspectives on homeostatic ‘laws of life’” in Brown, W.S. (Ed.), *Understanding Wisdom: Sources, Science and Society*. Philadelphia, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.

¹⁷ Quoted from Erikson, J.M. (1988). *Wisdom and the Senses: The Way of Creativity*. New York: Norton, 184.

¹⁸ Quoted from Costa, J.D. (1995). *Working Wisdom: The Ultimate Value in the New Economy*. Toronto, Canada: Stoddart, 3.

¹⁹ See MacFlouer, Niles (2004-16). *Why Life Is...* Weekly radio shows: BBSRadio.com (#1-#480) and KXAM (#1-#143). Retrieved from

http://www.agelesswisdom.com/archives_of_radio_shows.htm

²⁰ See Gardner, H. (2006). *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons in Theory and Practice*. New York: Basic Books.

²¹ Quoted from Wilson, as cited in Hodges, D. (2000). “Implications of Music and Brain Research” in *Music Educators Journal*, 87(2), 17-22, 18.

²² See Gardner, H. (2011b). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: BasicBooks.

²³ See (Sternberg, 2003, p. xviii)

²⁴ See MacFlouer (1999).

²⁵ See Stonier, T. (1997). *Information and Meaning: An Evolutionary Perspective*. London: Springer-Verlag. Also, Stonier, T. (1992). *Beyond Information: The Natural History of Intelligence*. London: Springer-Verlag. Also, Stonier, T. (1997). *Information and Meaning: An Evolutionary Perspective*. London: Springer-Verlag.

²⁶ Ibid. (1997), 14.

²⁷ See Ryle, G. (1949). *The Concept of Mind*. London, England: Hutchinson.

²⁸ A polymath is a person who has expertise in many different subject areas and draws on that knowledge to solve complex issues.

²⁹ See Hodgkin, R. (1991). “Michael Polanyi—Profit of Life, the Universe, and Everything” in *Times Higher Educational Supplement*, September 27, 15.

³⁰ See Russell, P. (2007). *The Awakening Earth: The Global Brain*. Edinburgh: Floris Books.

³¹ See Porter, D., Bennet, A., Turner, R. and Wennergren, D. (2003). *The Power of Team: The Making of a CIO*.

Alexandria, VA: Department of the Navy. Also, Bennet, A. and Bennet, D. (2004). *Organizational Survival in the New World: The Intelligent Complex Adaptive System*. Boston, MA: Elsevier.

³² In order of growth toward wisdom and beyond, the seven levels of consciousness focus on: (1) structured concepts: material, ideological, causative; (2) spiritual concepts: focused and limited love at the personal level; (3) spiritual concepts: soul as part of a larger structure, awareness and connectedness through giving; (4) senses other souls: giving what is needed by others so they can create virtue; balance, humility and hierarchy of thought and need in giving virtue; (5) spiritual awareness: planetary level, advancement of new knowledge communicated to humanity and re-communicated in mental framework; contribution to development of civilization to assist in creating virtue; (6) understanding soul as part of God (wisdom): creating virtue, teaching in soul capacity, leading; and (7) awareness of soul as a functional part of God: creating more of God in a fully aware and conscious method. See MacFlouer, Niles (1999). *Life's Hidden Meaning*. Tempe, AZ: Ageless Wisdom Publishers.

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³⁴ See Goldberg, E. (2005). *The Wisdom Paradox: How Your Mind Can Grow Stronger as Your Brain Grows Older*. New York: Gotham Books.

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³⁶ See Nussbaum, S.W. (2000). “Profundity with panache: the unappreciated proverbial wisdom of sub-Saharan Africa” in Brown, W.S. (Ed.), *Understanding Wisdom: Sources, Science and Society*. Philadelphia, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.

³⁷ Nelson, A. (2004). “Sophia: Transformation of Human Consciousness to Wisdom”, unpublished paper, Fielding Graduate University, Santa Barbara, CA.

³⁸ Sternberg, R.J. (Ed.) (1990). *Wisdom: Its Nature, Origins, and Development*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 353.

³⁹ Quoted from Costa, J.D. (1995). *Working Wisdom: The Ultimate Value in the New Economy*. Toronto, Canada: Stoddart, 3.

⁴⁰ Sternberg, xviii.

⁴¹ Quoted from Hawkins, D.R. (2002). *Power VS Force: The Hidden Determinants of Human Behavior*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House, 281.

⁴² MacFlouer (1999), 524.

⁴³ *The Urantia Book* (1955). Chicago: URANTIA Foundation, 1204.

⁴⁴ This is the thread that ties all 22 of the Conscious Look Books together and is the subject of *The Profundity and Bifurcation of Change*, Parts I through V.

⁴⁵ Sternberg, 188.

⁴⁶ See Sheldrake, R. (1989). *The Presence of the Past: Morphic Resonance and the Habits of Nature*. New York: Vintage Books.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 168-169).

⁴⁸ See Kant, I. (1993) [178]. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated by Ellington, J.W. (3rd ed.) Hackett.

⁴⁹ See Pelegrinis, T.N. (1980). *Kant's Conceptions of the Categorical Imperative and the Will*. Hyderabad, India: Zeno Publishers.

⁵⁰ MacFlouer (1999), 630.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 632.

⁵³ Ibid., 633.

⁵⁴ See Bennet, D. (2001). “Loosening the World Knot.” unpublished paper available at www.mountainquestinstitute.com

⁵⁵ See McDermott, J.J. (1977). *The Writings of William James*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

⁵⁶ See Hobson, J.A. (1999). *Consciousness*. New York, NY: Scientific American Library.

⁵⁷ See Edelman, G. and Tononi, G. (2000). *A Universe of Consciousness: How Matter Becomes Imagination*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

⁵⁸ See Ramon, S. (1997). *Earthly Cycles. How Past Lives and Soul Patterns Shape Your Life*. Ojai, CA: Pepperwood Press, 48.

⁵⁹ See Polanyi, M. (1958). *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago.

⁶⁰ Quoted from Thera, N. (1962). *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*. New York: Samuel Weiser, 30.

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⁶² Quoted from Andreasen, N. C. (2005). *The Creating Brain: The Neuroscience of Genius*. New York: The Dana Foundation, 164.

⁶³ MacFlouer (1999).

The Volumes in
Possibilities that are YOU!

All Things in Balance

The Art of Thought Adjusting

Associative Patterning and Attracting

Beyond Action

The Bifurcation

Connections as Patterns

Conscious Compassion

The Creative Leap

The Emerging Self

The Emoting Guidance System

Engaging Forces

The ERC's of Intuition

Grounding

The Humanness of Humility

Intention and Attention

Knowing

Living Virtues for Today

ME as Co-Creator

Seeking Wisdom

Staying on the Path

Transcendent Beauty

Truth in Context

The highest part of mental thought is wisdom, yet it is more than mental thought. Representing *completeness and wholeness of thought*, wisdom is universally a lofty consideration, and too often we sense that it eludes us. The more we seek it, the more we understand that it comes through experiencing and learning, and brings with it the desire to learn more.

