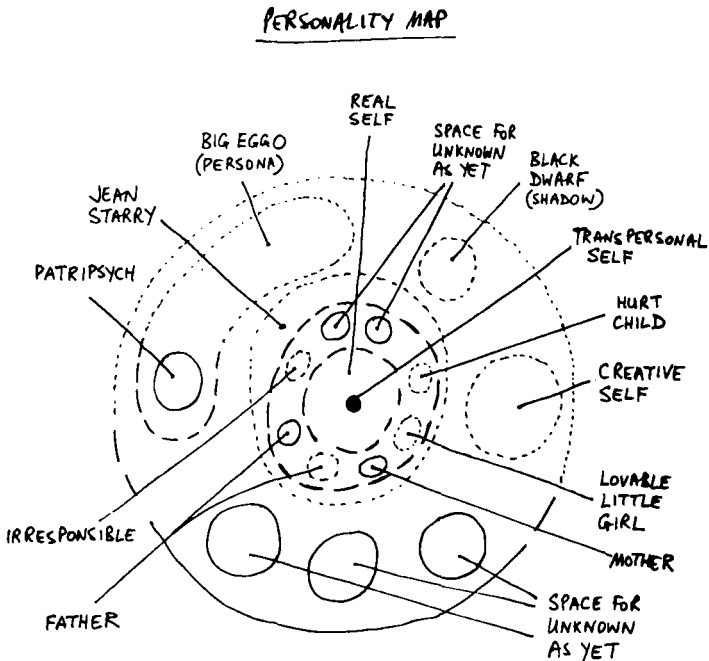


John Rowan

AN INTEGRATED THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT

In 1976 I came across two sets of diagrams which interested me, one by Conrad Lodziak in *Self and Society*, and one by Tom Yeomans, in a book called *The Live Classroom*. I put them together, and they led me to a theory which I think is compatible with most of what is said by humanistic psychologists and therapists.

Very briefly, it says that the person starts off OK, but is usually or often subjected to experiences which lead to a primal split between the OK-me and a not-OK-me. The not-OK-me is a false self thrown up to deal with an "impossible" situation, at that stage of development and becomes further differentiated into a number of false selves or sub-personalities. The OK-me is the true or real self, but it hides behind the false self or selves. (Winnicott, Lake and Janov are all worth reading on this process.)



JOHN ROWAN IN 1976

As childhood goes on, external people and objects are taken in, originally to "ride herd" on the false selves and make sure they don't get out of line. These eventually get incorporated into these subpersonalities as controlling portions or "topdogs". (This fits very well with the object-relations school, and some of Perl's work, and also with Freud's story of the origins of the superego.)

When adolescence comes, childish things are put away, and the whole childhood scheme of things is pushed down and sealed off. So we now have three layers - the real self innermost, the child selves surrounding it, and the adult subpersonalities forming on the outside. During adulthood, these develop in various ways, but usually most of the child selves and some of the adult subpersonalities are blocked off to consciousness - we are unaware that we have them. But in reality, a game is being played, because we are using up quite a lot of energy in keeping them blocked off, so we must know they are there in some sense or other.

In creating the diagrams, I used the connection that solid lines would indicate blocked-off energy, and dotted lines would show energy flowing freely. Dashed lines would be intermediate between the two.

In the specimen diagram given here, the main executive subpersonality I called at this time *Big Eggo*. It is inflated at the expense of all the other subpersonalities. And it contains within it the *patripsych* (pronounced *pay-tri-syke*) the unconscious representation of patriarchal social relations, which John Southgate talks about in *The Barefoot Psychoanalyst*.

Black Dwarf is a subpersonality I had opened up the year before, and which had given me a tremendous amount of energy once I had stopped locking it up. I identify it with Jung's "shadow", because it seems to fit very well with everything he says about it.

The Creative Self is one I had been in contact with for a long time, and knew well. It is never short of ideas, is very playful and un-pin-downable, full of paradoxes.

Jean Starry is an example of what I call "the inner self", in much the same sense that a target has an "*inner*" which is fairly close to the bullseye. It is a shadow or projection of the real self, and continually reminds one that life is not just a series of roles. In my case, Jean Starry is an existential androgyne, personal and political, objective and emotional. I've specially tried to cultivate this one, because I like it so much.

Hurt Child feels very vulnerable, reacts badly to putdowns, needs a lot of support and praise. The *lovable little girl* can accept things very easily; at this time she was the only one who was allowed to be lovable.

Mother is shown as blocked off completely, because on theoretical grounds there probably would be a mother complex at that point, but I had not got in touch with that part of myself yet.

Father is shown as one part which I had got in touch with, and one which still remained blocked off. This was a good guess at the time, as I did later discover a lot more about my father within me.

Irresponsible is a child self who often took over at serious times, going off with someone interesting when I should have been listening to scientific paper, or whatever. Plenty of rationalisations thrown up by this one, like -"What does it matter - it's all absurd anyway -in a hundred years it will all be the same - who cares?"

Real Self is shown with dashed lines, to indicate that it had been opened up, but was not always in contact. My experience of contact with the real self has always been that it is ecstatic - but it does mean letting go my hold on everything else, and this always seems difficult and dangerous. (I have written about this quite a lot in my book *Ordinary ecstasy*.)

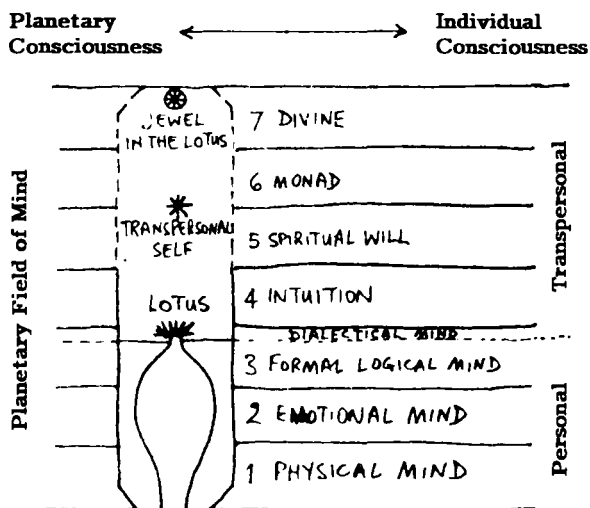
The *Transpersonal Self* I have only been in touch with briefly a couple of times, but it has meant an enormous amount to me, out of all proportion to the amount of time involved. I wrote something about this in my article *A growth episode*, in *Self and Society* for November 1975. It has occurred to me since that it is also like *some* descriptions of the positive nurturing parent in transactional analysis. It has to do with giving love and care to oneself, and it also has to do with spiritual connections.

This example shows how it is possible to deal with a person's complexity in a way which does justice to the dynamics involved. All forms of therapy, it seems to me, have the effect of opening up blocked-off subpersonalities, and releasing energy in the process. And those therapies have the biggest and most fundamental effect which open up the real self by going through the blocked-off childhood subselves, some of which can go back to birth or earlier. This can then open the way to discovering the transpersonal self, and this leads to seeing therapy as essentially a spiritual path.

A MAP OF CONSCIOUSNESS

A map which I've found very useful comes from an article by Elmer and Alyce Green, which appeared in the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* in 1971. I haven't seen it talked about much, and it seems worth passing on. I've modified it slightly in terms of my own interests.

The diagram shows a vertical dimension which has to do with spirituality, and corresponds rather well with the height-depth dimension which Assagioli talks about. But it also has a horizontal dimension, which goes from individual consciousness at the right-hand side to planetary consciousness at the left. There is a barrier between individual and planetary consciousness at the lower levels, but not at the higher levels.



THE GREEN DIAGRAM

The important message of this, for me, is that it makes clear that there are two basic ways of going into ecstasy - upwards or leftwards. And this means that it is possible to have ecstatic experiences at every level, not just at the more spiritual ones.

But there is another useful feature of the diagram. It suggests that on the way from level 3 to level 4 there is a particular structure - a narrow tube, tunnel or path. And it does seem, from a lot of people's experience, that the way from ordinary thinking to intuition does often involve an actual vision of such a thing, usually with some kind of experience of light at the end of the journey through this tube or tunnel. And this often leads to the awakening of the transpersonal self, sooner or later.

This does seem to be a difficult path for most of us, in our culture. And some of us actually put up barriers to going through it, as does Janov, for example, in his book *Primal Man*. He firmly states that there are just three levels - the somato sensory or first-line (corresponding to our "physical mind"); the affective or second-line (our "emotional mind"); the cognitive or third-line (our "formal logical mind" and even the beginnings of our "dialectical mind", in the confused form of dialectical materialism); but nothing beyond. "This leaves no room in our theoretical scheme for a mystical force. . ." What a shame. Just go through the tunnel, Arthur!