Chapter 2
Hidden Dimensions and the Search for Meaning

At the peak of his brilliant high-tech career, AI authority, bestselling author of multiple books, including *AI Superpowers*, and mega venture capitalist Kai-Fu Lee was forced to face his own mortality following a diagnosis of lymphoma. Lee wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on AI in the 1980s and contributed to this exciting field through brilliant ideas such as the “quantification of the human thinking process, [and] the explication of human behavior.” Thirty-five years later, as he fought for his life, he made an unexpected, and arguably uncharacteristic, comment about his life: “Instead of seeking to outperform the human brain, I should have sought to understand the human heart.”1 A man who had spent his entire career living like a “supercharged productivity machine,” and encouraging the rest of the world to do the same, had now turned his “egocentric wallowing inside out.”2

Was this a classic case of someone rethinking their life when confronted by death? Or was it something bigger, something we could conceivably regard as being part of a global trend? My own research3 tells me his change in mindset is not unique. In fact, I would suggest that such mind shifts are increasing in a significant way, and may even explain current trends toward systemic transformations, be it in investing, business, politics, or economics.

When Silicon Valley companies like Google and Salesforce offer free meditation to their employees4 and major players, authors, and business drivers like Lee begin to speak of love as the underlying force that should drive the global “new world order,” it is time to take a closer, deeper look at what is happening to uncover the hidden determinants behind what Ernst von Weizsäcker and Anders Wijkman described as “the call for a new enlightenment” (see Chap. 1).5 Why? Because the

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1Lee (2018, p. 231).
2Lee (2018, pp. 180–185).
3Bozesan (2016).
4See, for example Schoenberg et al. (2018); Brodwin (24 August 2017).
5Von Weizsäcker and Wijkman (2018).
more I look around me, the more evident it seems to me that our current problems are not only environmental, political, social, or even, dare I say, technological. They are also systemic and holistic. In other words, they are integral. They do not seem to relate only to the exterior—the objective or conscious dimensions of reality. Their true nature appears to be also related to the interior—the mindset, the subjective, and the unconscious dimensions such as the interior individual and interior collective, the cultural. They are emotional and psycho-spiritual. As we contemplate the evolution of the current enlightenment toward its next stage, Enlightenment 2.0, we should be alert to the possibility that we ought to be contemplating aspects of the human psyche that have never previously been on our radar.

2.1 What Is the Purpose of Your Life?

Astrobiologists Michael Russell and Isik Kanik argue that the purpose of life is “the hydrogenation of carbon dioxide.” You are free to adopt this as the purpose of your own life. Indeed, I have many friends who do. Personally, I am not convinced. I believe that we would be misguided if we allowed the purpose of our lives to be reduced to carbon, or quarks, or whatever else scientists are bound to discover next—but I am a scientist myself, so I am open to being proven wrong about this at some point in the future. Russell and Kanik look at life from a thermodynamic point of view and theorize that it “evolves to maximize entropy and attempts to reach this state as rapidly as possible.” And within the context of the evolution of life being key for building AI-based systems, it behooves us to remember that Richard Dawkins described DNA as “a set of instructions for how to make a body.” If we are truly nothing more than the sum total of our genes, once the technology is available to us, we will be able to download ourselves into a robot and live forever. But can life—can humans—really be reduced to a genetic code that could be completely replicated and eventually downloaded into sophisticated AIs in order to perpetuate, broaden, enhance, and expand life beyond Earth as the transhumanist movements intend? It is a fascinating—and for some of us, even the scientists among us, disturbing—prospect. Only time will tell if it is also realistic. However, when Lee wrote that “instead of seeking to outperform the human brain, [he] should have sought to understand the human heart” and that he had not previously recognized “that something far more meaningful and far more human lay in the hearts of the family members,” he did not refer to the heart as a collection of carbon atoms whose purpose is to maximize entropy. No, he talked about love: that inexplicable, illogical

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6Vollmann T (2018a) & (2018b).
7Russel and Kanik (2010, p. 1012).
8Russel and Kanik (2010, p. 1015).
9Dawkins (1976, p. 23).
10Bostrom (2005).
feeling that is bigger than our physical selves. It is possibly the very factor that makes us human, and it cannot be squeezed into a single gene sequence, no matter how hard we try—or how much we would like it to be possible.

To deepen our understanding of the purpose of life and our understanding of matter, the mind, and consciousness, we could participate in the centuries-old but ongoing debate between mechanistic dualists, scientific materialists, cognitive psychologists, and panpsychist philosophers, to name only a few. (See the box below for an explanation of these.)

**Mechanistic dualism**, or the mind–body dualism, is also called Cartesian dualism, after French philosopher René Descartes, who regarded matter as unconscious and soul as immaterial. With his famous utterance “I think, therefore I am,” Descartes expressed his thought that “the whole essence of nature... is simply to think.” However, the soul–body or mind–brain relationship, the “hard problem of consciousness,” is still with us and will probably stay with us until we are finally able to explain how and why sentient beings have phenomenal experiences.

**Scientific materialists** such as Daniel Dennett and Richard Dawkins reject the mind–body dualism and notions like consciousness or purpose because of the subjective nature of such phenomena. They insist there is no purpose to life.

**Cognitive psychology** is interested not in the structure of conscious experience but in higher mental processes such as decision-making, thinking, and knowing. It is a form of scientific materialism that investigates human cognition and tends to treat mental activity like a software that runs on a computer. In cognitive psychology, sentient beings are regarded as conscious machines with feelings that are generated through brain activities. Consciousness is therefore understood to be like a simulation by the brain. Drawing on these reductionist theories, scientists such as Dietrich Dörner, author of *Bauplan für eine Seele* (literally, *Blueprint for a Soul*), have been instrumental in the current development of artificial intelligence applications.

**Panpsychism** is one of the oldest forms of philosophical theories. Its influence can be found in philosophies and belief systems all over the world, from Taoism in China to Platonism in Greece, and Vedanta in India. It fell out of favor in the mid-twentieth century, when logical positivism ruled the day but is currently enjoying something of a revival through scientists such as

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11 Descartes (1998/1637, pp. 18–19).
12 Dennett (2006); Dawkins (2006).
13 Davis and Palladino (2005/1995).
14 Dörner (2008/1998).
15 Kelly et al. (Eds.) (2015).
Thomas Nagel, who in his book *Mind & Cosmos* has researched “why the materialist neo-Darwinian conception of nature is almost certainly false.”

Going deeper is beyond the scope of this book. Instead, I invite you to take a simpler approach: Stay open-minded and maybe begin to take a multi-perspectival view of the world. I say this because we can use our own life experiences to identify the purpose of our lives and find out what values inform the decisions we make as investors, entrepreneurs, businesspeople, parents, and caring human beings.

I underwent a whole series of personal awakening and transformations several decades ago. Afterward, I realized not only that I was not alone but also that there was a mind shift occurring across the planet, a *collective awakening*, if you like. With hindsight, it seems to me that the birth of initiatives such as the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), impact investing, and conscious capitalism, to name only three, were born through mind shifts and interior transformations of people whom Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson called the Cultural Creatives. These were a group of awakened leaders who brought higher standards of ethics and morals, as well as a social and environmental mindset, into the business world and began transforming it in the late 1960s. When Ray and Anderson published *The Cultural Creatives: How 50 Million People Are Changing the World* in 2000, they estimated that the mindset of the Cultural Creatives had penetrated between 25% and 30% of the Western population. A new market comprising consumers interested in personal health and a more natural lifestyle, eco-tourism, alternative energy, alternative vehicles, and green buildings began to emerge in tandem. That market, named the LOHAS (Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability) segment in 1999, had a market share of US$290 billion in 2017.

**Authenticity Rules the World of LOHAS**

LOHAS are seriously critical to anything that may be labeled as “fake.” They are the ones that read the small prints; look up brands on Internet forums and like staying informed by unbiased reviews. To appeal to LOHAS brands need to be genuine and trustworthy, from the inside out. LOHAS individuals tend to perceive brands as authentic when things are done exceptionally well,

(continued)
executed individually, and extraordinarily produced by someone demonstrating human care. Originality in design or being first of its kind is also reinforcing authenticity. Artificial, synthetic run of the mill products are rejected, as well as imitations and products made by an exploited workforce or from abused animals. (From the LOHAS Sweden website: lohas.se/about-lohas)

I became so intrigued by this emerging mindset change, and its potential impact, that I enrolled in a doctoral program to research it more thoroughly. My aim was to find out whether it was an anomaly or a trend. Before I share my findings with you, I would like to direct your attention to the section entitled Confessions: The Involuntary Awakening of a Marxist. It is the story of my own awakening from being a young Marxist who grew up in a communist country to becoming a world citizen who lives in the free world and has a greater understanding of my own place in the universe. Note that when I talk about Karl Marx, I am referring to him in his politically purest form: the humanist, as opposed to the sham created by the communist governments of the former Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union. The communism endemic in those regions had absolutely nothing to do with Marx’s ideals, which when implemented as intended could actually have resulted in a well-functioning democracy. As a young Marxist with little experience of the world, I not only was impressionable but I also unquestioningly accepted his ideals with all the naivety of one who does not yet understand that humanity as a whole is not ready to turn them into reality. However, I gradually began to question the entire concept of communism, even before my family and I managed to emigrate to West Germany. As I grew up and learned more about the world on both an academic and personal level, I found myself questioning standards, concepts, aims, and ideals more and more. I learned to trust in myself as a physical, thinking being. And I eventually underwent my own mind shift—a mind shift that propelled me to integral thinking. Intrigued? (For a more detailed description of my own journey toward Waking Up see my Confessions: The Involuntary Awakening of a Marxist in Sect. 2.2.2, Waking Up).

2.2 Mind Shift as a Trend

As a species, we appear to rule the world and are living in relatively unchallenging times, even when you factor in the current COVID-19 pandemic or the looming threats posed by the grand global challenges, and yet we are still troubled. Otto Scharmer of MIT has written that we are currently experiencing a consciousness crisis because we are dealing with an “intellectual bankruptcy” whereby “the blind
spot of economics and economic theory is our own consciousness.”

This crisis seems to have initiated a significant mind shift that is not only challenging but also actively starting to change outdated structures that cannot accommodate the needs of the new global reality. A host of leaders from all areas of life, including high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth individuals, have emerged as major players in this shift. Spurred into action by both personal crises and major global emergencies, they have begun to act more daringly. As a result, new structures and new measurement criteria in the areas of investing, philanthropy, business, and finance are mushrooming, resulting in reforming banks such as the GLS Bank in Germany, the TRIODOS Bank in The Netherlands, and the Crédit Coopératif in France to name only a few. At the time of writing, 59 financial institutions, four associate banks, and 16 partners had joined together to form the Global Alliance for Banking on Values (GABV) to serve close to 60 million clients worldwide. In their 2019 annual report, the GABV:

- Challenge the myth that sustainable investments yield lower returns
- Show that sustainable banks have significantly higher levels of growth in deposits and loans than traditional banks
- Demonstrate higher and better-quality inflows of capital
- Reveal that sustainable banks are investing more successfully in a greener and fairer society
- Show that their business model is more robust and resilient than that of traditional banks

Furthermore, we continue to witness the emergence of progressive organizations such as SOCAP, the Social Venture Circle, the UN PRI (Principles of Responsible Investing of the UN), the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), the Giving Pledge, and the Toniic investors network, to name only a few again. Some were started by ultra-high-net-worth individuals such as Richard Branson, Warren Buffett, Bill Gates, Al Gore, George Soros, and Elon Musk, who apparently use investing in reformist institutions as a self-actualizing vehicle that aims to guide humanity toward a better future. But research by, for example, Christian

22 Scharmer (2010, p. 17) & (2013).
23 Göpel (2016).
24 See, for example, Balandina (2011) & (2016); Bozesan (2016); Giving Pledge (2020); Godeke et al. (2009); Soros (2008); Strong (2009).
25 http://www.gabv.org/
26 https://issuu.com/bankingonvalues/docs/annual_report_2019_en
27 SOCAP (2012); https://socialcapitalmarkets.net/
28 Social Venture Circle (2020); www.svcimpact.org
29 https://www.unpri.org/
30 https://thegiin.org/
31 https://givingpledge.org/
32 https://www.toniic.com/100-impact-network/
Arnsperger, Julia Balandina-Jacquier, Antony Bugg-Levine and Jed Emerson, Hal Brill et al., Cathy Clark et al., Edward Kelly and Bill Torbert, Peter Senge et al., and Rajendra Sisodia et al. supports the view that an increasing number of regular wealth owners have awakened to later stages of consciousness, driving them toward transformation referred to as integral, second tier, yellow meme, or strategist (see below for more on this).

When we look more closely at this phenomenon, it appears to be a trend toward personal growth. It seems to me that the desired changes toward sustainability are taking place within a rather complex context, comprising changes not only in environmental, financial, economic, and social perspectives but also in individual behaviors. What Nobel Prize laureate Paul Krugman called “obsolete doctrines that clutter the minds of men” are actually sociopolitical and interobjective rules, circumstances, and regulations that often impede transformation, but also contain culturally interior, intersubjective, and deeply ingrained norms, such as ethics and morals, that heavily influence both our individual and our collective behaviors.

Transformations in consciousness are not a new phenomenon. They have evolved over thousands of years and, in relatively recent times, have been represented by Abraham Maslow in his hierarchy of needs, Jean Gebser in his structures of human consciousness, and Robert Kegan in his order of consciousness models to name only three of the most commonly known and discussed. While these models help us make sense of the trajectories of human evolution, phenomenological investigation into the interior transformation of the participating agents has been relatively scant.

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33 Arnsperger (2010).
34 Balandina (2011) & (2016).
35 Bugg-Levine and Emerson (2011).
36 Brill et al. (1999) & (2015).
37 Clark et al. (2015).
38 Torbert and Kelly (2013).
39 Senge et al. (2005).
40 Sisodia et al. (2007).
41 Arnsperger (2010).
42 Beck and Cowan (1996).
43 Cook-Greuter (2004) & (2005) & (2008) & (2013).
44 See for example, Aburdene (2005); Adams (2005); Boyatzis and McKee (2005); Cook-Greuter (2013); Goleman et al. (2002); Hendricks and Ludeman (1996); Jaworski (1996); Kelly (2011); Marques et al. (2007); Mitroff and Denton (1999); Ray and Anderson (2000); Rooke and Torbert (2005); Senge et al. (2005).
45 Krugman (2012, p. 191).
46 Stückelberger and Duggal (2018).
47 Wilber (1998) & (2000b) & (2000c) & (2017).
48 Maslow et al. (1998).
49 Gebser (1984).
50 Kegan (1982) & (1994).
despite increasing occurrences of individual dissatisfaction within the financial and business worlds.\textsuperscript{51} Money appears to have stopped providing the security it has promised since its invention, and a growing number of people are becoming aware of the schism between the material world and a life of meaning.\textsuperscript{52} Financial abundance is no longer the ultimate goal for these individuals because material prosperity has not brought them the happiness they anticipated.\textsuperscript{53} In fact, if anything, the opposite appears to be true.\textsuperscript{54} Moreover, the overall dissatisfaction appears to be rooted in the fact that the majority of today’s institutions are still operating primarily via outdated corporate values,\textsuperscript{55} short-term monetary and profit-only orientation,\textsuperscript{56} bitter competition,\textsuperscript{57} mostly hierarchical organization structures with controlling management styles,\textsuperscript{58} disrespect for individual values,\textsuperscript{59} and an inability and/or unwillingness to acknowledge, let alone prevent, negative action,\textsuperscript{60} and anxiety and mistrust.\textsuperscript{61}

\subsection*{2.2.1 Researching the Mind Shift}

In 2001, I began to interview and collect data from global investors between the ages of 30 and 70 for my Ph.D. research (Note: by 2020 I have researched 138 subjects). My research subjects were independently wealthy individuals who worked as angel investors or venture capitalists or company builders—including presidents of Fortune 500 companies—Wall Street financiers, serial entrepreneurs, and also musicians, lawyers, artists, medical doctors, and business owners in the context of the entertainment business. They all held doctorates, master’s degrees in science, or MBAs from the world’s elite universities. My research, which was published in 2010,\textsuperscript{62} was centered on identifying and analyzing the transformational experiences of high-net-worth individuals, all of whom had faced various personal and professional crises at various points in their lives in addition to what are, in a global finance context, relatively common financial crises. I wanted to uncover the most significant emotional, physical, cognitive, spiritual, and other experiences that had resulted in

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{51} Kofman (2006); Ray and Rinzler (Eds.) (1993); Secretan (2006).
\bibitem{52} Klein and Izzo (1999).
\bibitem{53} Ricard (2003).
\bibitem{54} Blanchflower and Oswald (2004).
\bibitem{55} Kofman (2006).
\bibitem{56} Collins and Lazier (1992).
\bibitem{57} Collins (2001).
\bibitem{58} Eisler (2007) and Smith (2007) & (2008).
\bibitem{59} Toms (1997).
\bibitem{60} Senge et al. (2005).
\bibitem{61} Secretan (2006).
\bibitem{62} Bozesan (2010).
\end{thebibliography}
an interior transformation that made these individuals move from having an ego-centric to a world-centric world view. I also wanted to know:

- What were the triggers, context, and process of their transformation
- What were the factors that facilitated or inhibited the change of their minds
- What ensured the continuity and longevity of their transformation, especially as it may have occurred in a hostile, litigation-friendly environment dominated by less-conscious investors, peers, and money managers
- How they created new investing structures in the light of the current global contexts
- How they saw the future of investing, capitalism, business, and philanthropy within the context of global challenges

I used a research method called heuristic structuralism and developed it as a pluralistic mode of inquiry in which each point of view is respected as a potential source of insight. My approach was a combination of Clark Moustakas’s in-depth heuristic method and Ken Wilber’s integral methodological pluralism, which contains “at least eight fundamental and apparently irreducible methodologies, injunctions, or paradigms for gaining reproducible knowledge or verifiable repeatable experiences.” I shared my findings using mythologist Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey as a demonstration vehicle. I chose this over more advanced evolutionary models such as Clare Graves’s evolution of human values, Lawrence Kohlberg’s and Carol Gilligan’s moral development, Jane Loevinger’s and Susanne Cook-Greuter’s ego development, Robert Kegan’s self-development, or Wilber’s Integral Theory of evolution because of the general popularity of the Hero’s Journey, which has been applied in various legends, myths, and tales, as well as in Hollywood movies such as The Lion King, Star Wars, and the Matrix Trilogy. (Note that some portions of the following research summary and feedback have previously been published.)

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63 Moustakas (1990).
64 Wilber (2006, p. 33).
65 Campbell (1968/1949).
66 Beck and Cowan (1996).
67 Kohlberg and Ryncarz (1990).
68 Gilligan (1993/1982).
69 Loevinger (1977).
70 Cook-Greuter (2005).
71 Kegan (1982); Scotton et al. (Eds.) (1996).
72 Wilber (2000b).
73 For more detail, see Bozesan (2010) & (2016).
74 For example, Bozesan (2010) & (2013, June) & (2016), to name only three.
2.2.2 Waking Up: The Hero’s Journey Toward Awakening

My research subjects were competitive, highly intelligent high-achievers, driven to work hard in order to fulfill their maximum human potential, and powered by innate curiosity and creativity. Their exceptional material and financial abundance was openly displayed and confirmed their original self-reinforcing mentality that success is measured by extrinsic metrics—the house, the vacation home, the luxury car, the yacht, for example—rather than intrinsic metrics, such as a deep-seated, self-defined feeling of self-worth. The visible, outward signs of success seemed to solidify their belief that their actions had led directly to personal happiness. This belief helped them achieve high social status, build exceptional reputations, accumulate remarkable wealth, and create strong egos. They truly believed that they were in control of their own lives. They were, in eighties parlance, the masters of the universe.

For example, one research subject, the former president of one of the largest beverage companies in the world, told me, “I built the myth of myself that I was better [... ] than anyone else ... I was ego-driven, totally externally oriented, manipulative in dealing with human beings, not open to feedback ... All that mattered was outcomes ... [I was] very intense, very driven, never present in any conversation.” His success appeared secure—until it was not. At the peak of his brilliant career, he became aware not only of his own physical and emotional challenges but also of the futility of climbing the corporate ladder. He recognized that there were “fewer jobs left” in the world that could potentially give him the satisfaction he sought. He Woke Up to the fact that he “was getting to the point of diminishing returns” and that something was missing. He would later realize that the “something” he was missing was authentic happiness. He said, “If I didn’t get my result, I wasn’t happy. If I got my result, I wasn’t happy.” Extrinsic success had lost its meaning for him, because “the next gold ring was less meaningful ... than the previous one.” When “a number of peers who were in similar positions in other companies ... died [of stress] in their 40s at their desks,” my friend realized that he “wasn’t manifesting” why he “was here” and asked himself the key question: Is this it?

His Journey toward Awakening had begun (Fig. 2.1).
The research subjects’ egocentric view of the world began to crumble as they became tortured by dreadful pain of various kinds, which challenged their common belief of always being in control. Their source of pain was often physical (*Body Awakening*) and manifested in the beginning as simple “colds and sore throats,” “heart hurting,” “back problems,” weight gain, “migraines,” or food allergies. Other times, the pain was emotional in nature and was triggered by a “horrible divorce,” death of a “mother,” a “terrible financial loss,” not getting a dream job, or being “fired” from an important position.

The emotional pain manifested as “heartbreak,” a “high degree of anxiety,” “worry and fear,” “grief,” tension between “fear and desire,” the “need” to be accepted by the outside world, and “frustration.” The result was a “feeling of helplessness,” “unhappiness,” “deep sadness and almost shame,” lack of fulfillment, lack of “joy,” lack of “love,” “unrest,” and lack of “trust.” Most of the investors who participated in my research did not initially understand the message their physical being was sending them; they essentially remained in denial and changed nothing. Sure, they began taking better care of their bodies through improved nutrition, exercise, and massages, but as soon as the pain diminished, they went back to their old behaviors—until the next painful encounter. They fell into the trap of addressing their agony by using the same cognitive abilities and talents that had made them successful, including an ability to control people and outcomes. Some of them noted that they became “a control freak,” some “closed down” to “never” be emotionally available again, others began wearing “a coat of armor.” Eventually, both the physical and emotional pain increased so severely that they hit a *tipping point* and were forced to Wake Up and face their “worst nightmare”: the shadow of their egos. Once they were willing to *cross the threshold*, a term used by Campbell to describe this process, and relinquish control, they opened the door to higher levels of consciousness and were liberated.

Each individual demonstrated a different ability and approach to face their own shadows, ranging from the decision to experience the “dark night of the soul” through holotropic breathwork and a willingness to face the “worst [emotional] pain,” to participating in meditation retreats, personal-growth seminars, or “vision quests.” The sum result of such a journey is known as Maslow’s *peak experiences* [75]. Meditative or contemplative experiences, *near-death experiences*, *out of body experiences*, experiences of *flow*, state or *unity consciousness experiences*, *exceptional human experiences*, *transpersonal experiences*, or other spiritual emergencies [76].

One research participant, for example, described his experience as a “lightning bolt [that] moved through” his body and caused a feeling “so powerfully strong that it was almost to the point where I couldn’t walk.” Others expressed having witnessed their extraordinary states as a “mystical experience,” “divine light,” or “divine intelligence.” One investor described his experience as a feeling in which the

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75Maslow (1999/1968).
76Alexander and Langer (Eds.) (1990); Commons et al. (Eds.) (1984); Cook-Greuter (2005); Csikszentmihalyi (1990).
“heart was exploding with love” and the “body turned into an intense beam of light” that opened his heart completely. Remember: The people making these comments were non-religious, had high-level science educations, and had built tremendously successful careers. At the time of their first experience of this kind, most of them had neither the framework nor the language to interpret or articulate what they were experiencing. Their entire world view was shattered as soon as they gave up control and surrendered to the “unknown,” the “unbearable fear,” and the “terrible pain” they were experiencing. It was the beginning of a “major shift,” called by some a “quantum leap in consciousness.” Neuroscience research indicates that such exceptional human experiences can contribute to the achievement of higher levels of personal integration and move an individual to later stages of ego development.77

Having decided to embark on a healing journey through shadow work, the participants then entered the next phase of the Hero’s Journey: the Initiation phase.

Confessions: The Involuntary Awakening of a Marxist

It was a beautiful sunny day in the summer of 2000. I had been fasting for 5 days when I met my colleague Larissa for lunch in downtown Palo Alto, California. Although I was not physically hungry, my eyes devoured the spicy kale with tofu and the organic Brussels sprouts mixed into a bouquet of red bell pepper with sprouted pine nuts in Larissa’s lunch. The juicy carrot salad with raisins and the smell of freshly baked bread made my mouth water and reminded me of the pleasure of eating a good, healthy meal. I found myself thinking about all the times I had gone to school on an empty stomach and how grateful I was that my life was so different now. As we chatted, Larissa asked me about my childhood. As I related my tale of poverty and privation, Larissa looked at me in disbelief, asking how I had been able to study on an empty stomach. “Common knowledge,” she said, “maintains that people cannot study on an empty stomach.” What had kept me going, she wanted to know—but truly, I had never thought about what kept me going. I knew simply that I must not only go on but also do well. We were taught that we had the power to make a better world for ourselves through hard work, learning, and sacrifice. Before I was 9-years old, I had already adopted Lenin’s mantra, which my father taught me: “Learn, learn, and learn.” I believed that in order to get what I wanted in life, I would have to work hard, which for me meant being a good student. I was told this by my parents, and I, therefore, believed that hard work was my ticket to a better life—despite seeing my parents’ hard work not pay off in this way. An empty stomach did not sway my certainty that a better future would be mine.

We were poor, life was hard, and money was tight, so I grew up appreciating everything that came my way. Two memories, in particular, will stay with me forever: (1) getting my first doll when I was 7 years old, and (2) receiving a little parcel with beautiful clothes from our relatives in Canada following the terrible

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77See, for example, Alexander and Langer (Eds.) (1990); Beauregard and O’Leary D (2007); Commons et al. (Eds.) (1984) & (1990); Cook-Greuter (2005) & (2008); Damasio (2006); Goleman (2000); Goleman et al. (2002); Kegan et al. (1990); Kopelowitz (1984) & (1990); McCraty (2001); Newberg and Lee (2005); Vaughan (2000) & (2005); Walsh and Vaughan (1993); Wilber (2000b).
Romanian floods from 1971. So, overall, despite the poverty, I grew up believing that bad times always turned into good ones because people care. Subconsciously, I chose early on to be very grateful for my little fortunes and learned to focus on the things that gave me great inner satisfaction.

It was around this time that I identified a world that gave me great pleasure and a sense of control in an uncertain world: the world of math and science. “Why science?” Larissa wanted to know. Again, I had to admit that I had never given this much thought, but even as I voiced this confession, the answer came to me: “I get a deep sense of fulfillment from solving a difficult math problem that has kept my mind busy for a long time,” I said to Larissa. I continued to explain how I love the feeling when, after long hours or sometimes days of thinking about it, I suddenly and seemingly out of the blue find the solution to a difficult problem regardless of where I am physically. When you live in a society where everybody lacks so many things, people become manipulative in order to survive. But math could not be manipulated. Unlike many other subjects, it was deterministic and not a matter of interpretation or control. Coming from a blue-collar family, I had neither the means nor the money to bribe anybody to receive good grades in school as so many other people did. Therefore, I had to be self-reliant. I owe much of my academic achievement to my remarkable middle-school math teacher. Mrs. Fotache, who showed me how I could succeed if I only worked hard enough. And I did work hard. And I was rewarded many times over. At age 14, I left the ranks of the young Pioneers and joined the Young Communists. But even at that young age, my enthusiasm for the communist society I was living in had already begun to wane. I began to see that we were not equal after all. No matter how hard I worked, it seemed likely I would still not enjoy the standard of living that many people around me did. One of my girlfriends, for example, had poorer grades than I did but ate strawberries in the middle of the winter, while we had hardly anything to eat even though I was a high achiever in school and both my parents worked very hard. But even as my idealism began to fade, I still hoped for better times. Not so my parents. While they retained their belief in the principles of communism, they were done hoping that Romania would ever change into a genuinely communist society as envisioned by Karl Marx. It was time to make a change. Without discussing politics, they started the process of emigrating to West Germany on the grounds of family reunification, as my mother was of German heritage.

After World War II, West Germany experienced the economic miracle known as the Wirtschaftswunder, and recruited workers from Greece, Italy, Turkey, and what was then Yugoslavia. However, reuniting displaced Germans from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe with their families in the West was preferable in terms of cultural integration. My father listened daily (and secretly) to both Radio Free Europe and The Voice of America and knew that the West German government was willing to pay Ceausescu a fair amount of money for every worker of German heritage who was allowed to leave Romania to go work in West Germany. My mother’s immediate family already lived there and visited us every year, so we asked for an invitation to join them, painfully aware that the approval process might take up to 13 years. But we were lucky. We lived in Moldova, where there were few German
nationals and willing potential emigrants, and in less than 5 months, we received permission to leave. On Halloween 1974, at age 16, I boarded the plane to leave Romania with my parents. Life would never be the same again. We did not know what would happen to us, but we had faith. Not in God—God was never in the picture for committed communists like us—but in the West German government and in ourselves and our own ability to work hard to prove that we would be willing to do anything and everything to earn not only a living but also respect for our work and integrity. We had nothing to lose at that point. The future could only be better.

And it was.

My parents had no expectations beyond the hope that our relatives would give us a bed to sleep in and that they would find jobs quickly. But things turned out much better. The Germans were extremely good to us. From lodging, to food, to job hunting for my parents and schooling for me, they took care of absolutely everything, including paying for German classes for my father who, like me, did not speak German. We were ecstatic and deeply grateful. My parents found work and I went to high school. Four years later I became a student in computer science and mathematics at KIT, the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. I loved my life and enjoyed being a university student. And then I started to have inexplicable stomach pain. Before midday, every day, my stomach would start burning and I would have to go home to bed. One day, as I lay in bed in my dormitory, I thought to myself that going to the doctor would be useless. He would just prescribe me antacids. The doctor had diagnosed stress as the cause of my condition and called my pain psychosomatic, so I now had a label for my discomfort, but it did not tell me anything about how to get rid of it or why I was stressed when my life seemed to be going so well. Eventually, I remembered a somewhat similar situation from a few years earlier when my doctor had prescribed cough syrup although I had spots on my lungs. I had an ongoing dry coughing condition, not a cold. I was curious, to say the least. The doctors I had consulted were loving, caring people, but I would not feel totally happy again until I knew more about my condition and treatment. I needed more information. Not knowing what else to do in those pre-Internet years, I went to a bookstore. After browsing through several medical books, I learned that I had chronic bronchitis caused by a flu in my youth from which I had not fully recovered—thanks to a childhood passion for ice-skating. The dry coughs were my body’s attempts to rid itself of the mucus from my damaged bronchi and not caused by the TBC I had had in my preschool years. The books advised participating in sports regularly to aid this process. That would relieve me of the dry coughs. Now I had some answers. Why in the world, I wondered, did not the doctors tell me that? Were they lacking time to explain, or did they think I would not understand? Whatever it was, it did not matter. At 17, I had learned a big lesson about having faith in my body’s natural tendency to heal and in taking responsibility to address my own ignorance, even with respect to complicated medical issues.

So here I was, 4 years later, in a similar situation with my stomach problems. As I reflected on my past experience, I took one more antacid and decided to take responsibility for my health again by learning what was going on and how I could treat myself. After a couple of hours’ research in a bookstore, I came out with a book
on autogenic training and one on fasting. I followed the exercises recommended in
the bioenergetics book and calmed my mind and body so well that my stomach pain
disappeared completely within a couple of days—with no recurrence since then. I
was amazed at how positively my body responded to the simple relaxation exercises.
In addition, my mood improved. I practiced the visualizations and began meditating
daily and felt as fresh and recovered as after a good night’s sleep.

For the first time in my life, I was learning that I was not my thoughts but that I
had thoughts. I became conscious of the power that my mind had over my body.
Until then, I had treated my body like a machine that had to obey my will. When my
body revolted, I was surprised and upset at the same time. I had lost control and did
not understand why. My mantra that everything was possible if I only wanted it
enough and put in enough effort no longer worked. My body obviously had a
different agenda. All I wanted was to get back to my old routine in life. Little did I
know that this would not be an option.

I had learned to derive great satisfaction from math and science, and I loved both
subjects. But my ultimate motivation was the promise of a better life by escaping
poverty through material gain. I now lived in a free country and I had the intellectual
capacity to achieve such a life. I believed that while the road to financial indepen-
dence was indeed paved with sacrifice, eventually I would be happy. I had no reason
to question my modus vivendi, because it seemed to work. And it did work—until it
did not. Until my body rebelled, my life had had but one dimension: the thinking
mind inside a machine that was my body. I defined myself as the person in here
looking to the outside world for approval, for a place in the world, for extrinsic
recognition. My joy and satisfaction depended on it. My orientation was outward
and linear. It was me in relation to those on whom I depended. I did not exist without
the outside world.

Triggered first by physical pain and then by the eventual relief from that pain, I
started thinking, for the first time in my life, about the beautiful miracle that is the
human body. I realized that I had taken my body for granted my whole life. I took a
shower daily and brushed my teeth twice a day, but it never occurred to me that an
internal cleanse might be required. The book on fasting revealed how I could take an
internal “shower” to do just that. It made so much sense (although I was painfully
aware of the irony of fasting as an adult after a childhood in which the only thing I
experienced in abundance was deprivation). For the first time in my life, I began to
look within. After the third day of my first fast, I started feeling light and weightless.
My mind was pure and lucid. My thoughts were quiet and clear. My skin looked
bright and almost translucent. I had more energy than ever, needed less sleep, and
preferred quietude and contemplation over chatter. I became more tranquil and in
touch with some part of me that I had never known existed. Thinking, my endless
internal chatter, was replaced with total awareness. I was grateful to be alive. I felt
blissful and fulfilled. I was serene. Now I finally understood—no, I viscerally felt it
at the level of my soul, not in my physical body—what Erich Fromm meant in his
book To Have or to Be. Fromm thought that the needs of the human soul must be
fulfilled if we are to free ourselves from the shackles of consumerism. I now
understood what he meant. As a scientist, I had been spiritually deprived because
of my scientific mindset. Now, for the first time in my life, I felt I had a soul. I noticed that I was happy just because I existed, regardless of what I did or owned. I felt pure happiness without doing anything. I noticed a deep quality of being that came from within. I had a sense of security and absolute trust in the future. I felt the absolute and unconditional love about which Fromm talked: the experience of loving, of joy, of grasping a truth does not happen in time, but in the here and now. “The here and now is eternity, that is, timelessness.”

The sound of a glass shattering as it hit the floor wrenched me away from my thoughts and back into the room. I had gotten so carried away by my story that I saw with a start that Larissa had finished her meal. Her beautiful eyes and spirit had been supporting me throughout, enabling me to forget where I was. “Keep going,” she smiled, as we prepared to go our separate ways. “The initiation of your soul is very beautiful. You were spiritually deprived, and you did not know it. Now you know that you are not a human being having a spiritual experience but the other way around.”

My inner journey had begun with that wake-up call in 1980, but my atheist upbringing, my Marxist convictions, and my scientific mindset allowed me to trust in, and then embrace, my physical, emotional, and other experiences only after several more years of serious scientific research and further personal growth and development. Without realizing it, I had become a player in a mind shift trend that was still in its embryonic stage.

2.2.3 Cleaning Up and Embarking on Vertical Growth

The research participants perceived their experiences as ultimately tremendously healing. They gave the participants a glimpse of the hidden dimensions of their inner reality and encouraged them to pursue further inner transformation with the same devotion with which they had developed their professional lives. They hired some of the best available resources, including teachers, counselors, coaches, and psychotherapists. Their pain, both physical and emotional, diminished and the quality of their lives improved. They lived for a time like “closet mystics” (I did) and “spiritual dilettantes” as they exposed themselves to a host of techniques, philosophies, and teachings that ran counter to their scientific predispositions and training and, it could be argued, would have challenged their credibility as business people and scientists in their regular circles. Some discovered a certain teacher and/or method that worked well for them and stayed with that teacher or method, sometimes for several decades. I was interested to note that all the research participants expressed an inner yearning

78Fromm (1983/1976, p. 125). From the German original Haben oder Sein “das Erlebnis des Liebens, der Freude, des Erfassens einer Wahrheit geschieht nicht in der Zeit, sondern im Hier und Jetzt. Das Hier und Jetzt ist Ewigkeit, das heißt Zeitlosigkeit” (my emphasis).
for a “common sense spirituality” that explicated their mystical experiences and transcended traditional religious norms, which they all refused to accept.

In the beginning, the Initiation phase, their extraordinary experiences conflicted with their scientific education and knowledge, which could not explain those experiences. But by using an approach they were comfortable with—studying the research data—they were able to integrate their newly discovered mystical selves with their former, pragmatic selves. One research participant described his Initiation phase as “like drinking out of a fire hose. In this area, MIT and Stanford Business School were like drinking out of a fire hose for academic and business issues. This was like drinking out of a fire hose for emotional, spiritual, and consciousness issues.” These “unitive experiences,” as one participant described them, healed and transformed the research participants in significant ways, which they referred to as:

- Learning how to “reconnect to that authentic self”
- Realizing that we are all “part of oneness, a greater whole”
- Developing the ability to understand their “own consciousness,” the “collective consciousness,” and how we “are part of that greater human consciousness and then beyond”
- Understanding the “dimensions and interconnectedness of body, mind, and spirit” up to the point where there was “absolutely no fear of death,” as a well-known serial-entrepreneur-turned-investor stated after his out-of-body experience
- Becoming more “rounded [and] balanced”
- Receiving “structure and specific knowledge” on how to continue to grow on the path to self-actualization

In short, the research participants moved from an egocentric approach to life toward a more world-centric one. Their transpersonal experiences led them all to ask essential questions such as “Who am I?” “Why am I here?” “Is this it?” and “Why do I let the mob psychology [of Wall Street] tell me whether I am having a good day or not?” Their new mindset encouraged them to question more deeply the status quo of their lives and the world as a whole. Eventually, they not only noticed the “collective insanity” of the “money game” and questioned whether the “standard operating procedure” for a “successful” person was still the game they wanted to play, but also recognized that (a) they were not “manifesting” their raison d’être, (b) the values they had “adopted” were not “self-selected,” and (c) they were “following a script that was not authored” by them.

As they “looked into the future” and saw the “endless stream of closing quarters” as the essential driving force in the business world with its short-term operational approach, they detected the “almost mind-numbingly impossible monotony” around their future lives. They understood that the rewards “were running out” and the next

79 See Alexander and Langer (1990); Commons et al. (1984) & (1990); Cook-Greuter (2005) & (2008); Gardena et al. (Eds.) (2000); Goleman (2000); Goleman et al. (2002); Kegan et al. (1990); Koplowitz (1984) & (1990); Senge et al. (2005); Wilber (2000b).
“gold ring” was a less and less tempting reward for a job well done. They saw that there were “fewer [attractive] jobs left” in the world and that “maximizing shareholder value” was no longer enticing. Their value systems shifted from their need to control the future to being more present in the now.

One investor described his transformational shift from an egocentric view to a world-centric view in the following way in an interview with me:

“At the time, I had no clue what was going on. Basically, I was being rewired. Everything I used to think was important was no longer important to me. It was me, me, me and my fabulous career and how do I help create more money for the company so I can create more money for me and more success for me and more power for me? I was never a bad guy, but it was just a small game. It felt like a big game. I thought it was the biggest game in town. But suddenly, when I was rewired, it felt like the smallest game in the universe. When you really make that shift and you start playing for an idea bigger than yourself and you start sensing into what is that divine creative impulse that’s seated within me that is my gift to the planet? Within that surrendering was recognizing that there’s something unique within me that I was born to become and that by surrendering to that, by paying attention to that, by allowing that to emerge within myself, that I could play a much bigger game, a much more fulfilling game, a much more meaningful game in terms of being able to create from that space in service to a much deeper and broader concept.”

All the investors who participated in the research confirmed after their Initiation that they were “less concerned with material things.” While taking care of their own personal needs was still important, they noted that they did not “need as many things as” they used to. In fact, “things sometimes get in the way” of what they were now “trying to do.” Furthermore, they seemed to not “care about showing off” or “accumulating things” anymore. After their transformation, they also “saw the hollowness” of their previous money and material orientation. They realized there are “a lot of problems that money doesn’t solve” because “it’s not all about the money” but also about “freedom of expression and creativity,” “creating social enterprises and different financing mechanisms that are behind that,” and getting rid of the “ideology of rampant consumerism.”

Outfitted with The Ultimate Boon, as Campbell calls this stage of development, and which includes the acquisition of new instruments, new skills, and a much deeper understanding of their “unlimited potentials,” the “interconnectedness, the oneness, and the holistic nature of things,” the research participants were ready for the next step in their lives: the Return phase of the Hero’s Journey.

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80Bozesan (2010).
2.2.4 Showing Up: Entering the Market with Helping Hands

After their life-changing transformations and mind shifts, the research participants viewed their new life purpose as bringing the unity consciousness mindset into the domain of investing, finance, and business “in a way that creates sustainable change relative to the human beings and the planet.” They had not abandoned their ambition but had instead redirected it. They were determined to have an even “bigger impact” in the finance and business worlds than before—but in a much more integrated manner. They began to see investing, economics, and business as an “incredible laboratory of consciousness” in which the integration of the interior with the exterior dimensions of life is of utmost significance. They began:

- Expressing a desire to “move capitalism beyond the pure maximizing of profits” by establishing parity between profits, the people, and the planet
- Designing ways to make an “impactful contribution to sustainability, holistic sustainability”
- Wanting to explore, to lead, and to “show different ways of creating social enterprises and different financing mechanisms that are behind that”
- Regarding “societal analysis [as] a spiritual discipline”
- Viewing active participation in and management of the economy as a “deep spiritual practice”
- Realizing the unity of our collective consciousness, that we are truly all one, and the importance of “engaged spirituality” in investing, finance, and business
- Desiring to work on “different governance models and different business models” to start integrating their mission with their evolving “human condition”
- Making sure they were “taking care” of themselves and their “community at the same time”

In short, they now sought to lead a “purposeful life” in which they could use their talents and the process of “consciousness development” to make an impactful contribution to “integral” and “holistic sustainability.” They realized there was “no going back” and “change became unavoidable.”

2.2.5 Remarkable Waves of Evolution

As a result of their personal transformations, and their realization that they wanted to make an even “bigger impact” in the investing and business world than before and in a much more integrated way, the participants now viewed investing, economics, and business as an “incredible laboratory of consciousness” in which the integration of the intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions of life is of utmost significance. Their newly acquired skills enabled them to have an impact on both their own corporate culture and their broader social environments. They became better relationship people because they were now able to connect on a personal level, rather than seeing
relationships only in terms of business opportunities, and to build a bridge between the mind and the heart, between the intrinsic and the extrinsic, between having an “enjoyable business as well as make[ing] money.” They became venture philanthropists in addition to or instead of investing because they now viewed “business as a service” to humanity and the planet. Over time, they became involved with the creation of sustainable investing, economic, and business models by, for example:

- Promoting long-term thinking through the realization that it “was not necessarily the shorter-term end state you are working toward but the greater good, the greater end state”
- “Creating social enterprises and different financing mechanisms that are behind that”
- Ceasing to support the “ideology” of “rampant consumerism”
- Getting involved with social justice activism and seeking a more integral “political leadership” to name only a few tactics

As the participants evolved, they uncovered deeper truths about life that liberated them. It was “a liberation from the distortions, lies, and delusions that were constructed to hide the truth”\(^81\) about their true nature. Subsequently, they developed more trust in themselves as well as in other people. This resulted in an increase not only in their authenticity but also in their self-esteem. Yes, you read that correctly. Their “self-esteem,” which had been a driving force for their previous success, actually increased because, as they evolved away from their previous superficial, ego-driven state to a trust-driven state, they could now authentically trust in themselves, who they were and what they had to offer the world. They became more self-confident. Concurrent to this they developed a deeper understanding of the “interconnectedness” between people, planet, and profit as well as their own life’s purpose, and their personal passions could now be manifested. In a modest way, their mission in life had become more important to them than personal achievement and extrinsic success.

Their significant mind shift led to these investors realizing that they must take a new investing approach, one based on the integration and equality, or parity, of people, planet, and profit rather than prioritizing just one of these (guess which one) at the expense of the other two. They saw that without a comprehensive understanding of global problems, no sustainable solutions to those problems are possible. They realized that social and environmental sustainability were just as important as financial sustainability. They understood that reality comprises subjective, intersubjective, objective, and interobjective aspects. Their transformation attuned them to how crucial the interior aspects of the individual and the collective are in determining a full-spectrum investing philosophy and portfolios. They saw that we do not only have ecological, financial, water, or poverty crises; we also have interior human crises that must be given equal consideration. They realized that their actions in the

\(^81\)Wilber (2000a/1995, p. 578).
world must be grounded in the quintessence of life as a whole, its interior as well as exterior reality.

It would seem that a number of business leaders are ready to move up to later stages of consciousness, or a more world-centric view of the world. A brief look at current market dynamics indicates that a new paradigm in investing, philanthropy, business, and leadership is emerging. Moreover, ultra-high-net-worth individuals such as Warren Buffett, Bill Gates, Al Gore, and George Soros are apparently using investing as a self-actualizing and legacy-building vehicle with the intention of making the world a better place.\(^{82}\) But why? One possible explanation may be rooted in the developments of the nineteenth century and reflected in part in the writings of philosopher Karl Marx. Marx hypothesized that the forces of production—such as land, natural resources, and technology—develop faster than the relations of production—that is, the technical and social relationships and interconnections that people develop while using the forces of production.\(^{83}\) The fact that the forces of production can move ahead of the relations of production also speeds up the development of culture, techno-economics, and socio-economics, because they co-arise. That can in turn, as we have seen in the rise of socialist movements, produce major disruptions in society and force the development of different levels of consciousness in people. Marx’s hypothesis could mean that the significant exponential tech evolution of the past decades can be viewed as a major force of production that has run well ahead of the relations of production or the social crisis.

But the current social crisis is not new. It is the old one, but exacerbated and, unfortunately, not alone this time around. We now also have an environmental crisis that, in a global example of something good coming from something bad, has given birth to the green movement. In his comparative analysis of Marxism and the Green movement, Wilber identifies reductionism as a common thread. He suggests that Marxism disregarded people’s interiorities and reduced their “higher cultural endeavors in the economic or material realm” to “material productions and material productions and material means.”\(^{84}\) Similarly, “the Greens tend to reduce all concerns to the ecological exchanges of the biosphere,” never mind their “integrative potential for a planetary federation of world citizens.”\(^{85}\)

If there is one lesson learned that all my research participants have in common and that seems to have accelerated their mindset change to later stages of consciousness, it is that they should honor their interiorities. Imagine if we collectively began to do that in a systematic way. What would the outcome be? Could this inner work be the foundation of an Enlightenment 2.0, as discussed earlier?

In support of such transformation, Thomas Friedman argued in his 2005 book *The World Is Flat*\(^{86}\) that in the early years of the twenty-first century, humanity reached a
tipping point. Certainly, several significant components of production—led by the Internet as an exponentially growing technology—converged around that time and created a breeding ground for change. Friedman posited that the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the launch of the Internet browser Mosaic, and the growth of global outsourcing, offshoring, open-sourcing, insourcing, supply-chaining, in-forming, and so on all reinforced both the effects and the impacts of each other. The net result of this convergence, he claims, was the emergence of our current global, Web-enabled playing field that allows for multiple forms of collaboration—the sharing of knowledge and work—in real time, without regard to geography, distance, or, in the near future, possibly even language. If Friedman is correct, it would be reasonable to conclude that the current “flattening” of the world, and all the consequences of that flattening, could indeed be considered as the result of a massive mind shift or evolution of human consciousness from a previously more ethnocentric view of the world to a more world-centric one, hence the rise of impact investing.\textsuperscript{87} Whether this new way of thinking is a true evolutionary stage that affects humanity as a whole or simply an anomaly affecting a specific group, only the future will determine. What we do know is that at later stages of development, some individuals become able to:

- Understand not just the contexts but also the systems within which they operate
- Generate social transformations through the integration of material, spiritual, and societal factors
- Care a great deal about self-development
- Embrace paradoxes
- Create shared visions that allow both personal and organizational transformation across different developmental levels
- Understand the interconnectedness of life systems on the planet, a fact that enables them to authentically and responsibly become a harmonic part of the whole
- Put theory and principles into practice\textsuperscript{88}

On a personal level, as investors and company builders who believe in holistic sustainability, in the late 1990s Tom and I began looking for an investment model that would reflect our personal and professional experience, was rooted in research, and would both allow and facilitate the integration of the various aspects of our work. That search led us to \textit{Integral Investing}.

\textsuperscript{87} Bozesan (2016).
\textsuperscript{88} See, for example, Cook-Greuter (2013); Maslow et al. (1998); Rooke and Torbert (2005).
2.2.6 The Spectrum of Consciousness Evolution

Researchers appear to be unusually united in their assessment of human evolution. This section looks at some of the more frequently cited researchers on this topic.

The Human Needs Line of Development

Abraham Maslow, a familiar name to anyone who has studied business or management, stressed the importance of focusing on the positive qualities in humans instead of their psychopathologies. His mentor was Alfred Adler, a colleague of Sigmund Freud, the founder of analytical psychology, but Maslow questioned the old methods, believed in human potential, and developed his own ideas about the human mind, which led to the foundation of two new disciplines: first, humanistic psychology and later, transpersonal psychology (also called integral psychology, The Fourth Force). He was convinced that people are inherently good and have a strong desire to achieve their full potential, and he spent his entire life trying to find out which circumstances influence the ability to do so.

Maslow’s pyramid (or hierarchy) of needs (Fig. 2.2), a visual representation of the needs we must meet in order to achieve fulfillment, almost needs no introduction, given its ubiquity in management and human resource manuals—and of course, it is not the only valuable resource for finding out more about this topic—but it is always worth revisiting.

The pyramid of needs contains six successive stages of development:

- Survival, physiological

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89 See, for example, Commons et al. (Eds.) (1984) & (1990); Cook-Greuter (2004) & (2005) & (2008); Gardner (1993) & (2004); Gebser (1984); Kohlberg and Rynkarz (1990); Wilber (2000b) & (2000c).

90 Grof (2006).
• Safety and security
• Social
• Self-esteem
• Self-actualization
• Self-transcendence

The Moral Line of Development and Its Stages
Whereas Maslow focused on the line of development dealing with human *needs*, Carol Gilligan,91 for example, researched and complemented Kohlberg’s92 *moral* development model. She identified three stages of women’s moral development, which she labeled:

• Selfish/preconventional
• Care/conventional
• Universal care/postconventional

Gilligan suggested that as individuals move through these stages, they begin to take a more global view of life and adopt higher moral standards.

The Stages of Sociocultural Evolution
Jean Gebser,93 to offer another example, identified five waves of consciousness awakening as it relates to the sociocultural evolution—or forms of realization, thought, and world views—that he called archaic, magic, mythical, mental, and integral.

It is generally agreed that at later stages of development, individuals appear to be in a much better position to take a high moral stance and to apply Kant’s categorical imperative,94 resulting in more compassionate decisions based on higher ethical standards.95 If individual transformations affect a certain percentage of the population and reach a certain critical mass, a tipping point will be reached whereby, from a collective perspective, the evolution of entire social systems and cultural structures can occur.

Cultural world views are intimately correlated with socio-techno-economic structures because they happen concurrently and influence each other. In accordance with the infrastructural and techno-economic base of society, the labeling and existence of evolutionary periods such as the foraging, horticultural, agrarian, industrial, and informational stages of development are widely accepted as being part of our shared knowledge base.96 We sometimes refer to them simply as premodern, modern, and postmodern stages of development. To better understand the correlation between the

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91Gilligan (1993/1982).
92Kohlberg and Ryncarz (1990).
93Gebser (1984/1949, p. 269).
94Kant (1993/1949).
95Baier (1996/1994); Dalai Lama (1999); Pope Francis (2015).
96Pinker (2018) & (2011).
socio-techno-economic and market structures in which an organization operates and the potential risks associated with an investment performed in such a context, I would like to highlight Clare Graves’s pioneering work on human nature and values development, now called *Spiral Dynamics* (see also the discussion of the due diligence and de-risking process in Chap. 3).

**The Stages of Ego Developmental Line: Spiral Dynamics**

Graves, a contemporary of Maslow, was interested in our varying responses and reactions not only to change but also to the increasing complexity of our world. His work challenged the universality of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, and his main conclusion was that human evolution is both social and psychological, in addition to the overwhelmingly accepted notion that it is physical. As Sharon Ede explains, “Graves observed that as certain thresholds of complexity were reached, the mind’s ability to make sense of the world became overburdened, and to cope, the mind must create more complex models of reality to deal with the new problems of existence.”

Graves was among the first theorists to call for the integration of social and cultural aspects within the context of human development. His model became known as the biopsychosocial system of human development and was later used by his student Don Beck in his efforts to support South Africa as it transitioned from apartheid, the Palestinians with their peace activities with Israel, and the creators of the new Icelandic constitution.

Beck was so impressed with Graves’s model that he left his tenured academic career as a professor at Northern Texas University and worked with Graves until his death in 1986. Afterward, Beck continued to work on Graves’s theory together with his colleague Christopher Cowan, and in 1996 they published their new evolutionary model of flexible intelligence, which they called *Spiral Dynamics*. According to Beck and Cowan, *Spiral Dynamics* uncovers the hidden programs that characterize human nature, produce diversities, and drive evolutionary transformations offering a “unifying framework that makes genuinely holistic thinking and actions possible.”

Tier 1 contains six stages of human development from egocentric, to ethnocentric, to world-centric. Tier 2 is Kosmos-centric and contains higher stages of development that have not yet emerged. As we take a closer, bottom-up look at each stage of development, keep in mind that development is not a linear process; instead, it is fluid and flows in waves, whirls, and torrents, sometimes even regressing to earlier stages. (The flowing stages of development in their spiral are color-coded.) Beck and Cowan refer in their work to “tribes,” but I acknowledge that this term has negative connotations in certain regions of the world:

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97 Beck and Cowan (1996).
98 Ede (2013).
99 Beck and Cowan (1996) and personal communications with Don Beck.
100 Beck and Cowan (1996).
101 Beck and Cowan (1996, p. 30).
• **Beige:** *Survival sense: survival and instinct driven.* This represents a state of nature and human instincts at the level of basic survival in which humans are concerned with mundane things such as food, shelter, and procreation. It is not much different from how things are in the animal kingdom.

• **Purple:** *Kin spirits: harmony and safety seeing.* At this level, people build ethnic tribes dominated by mysterious, magical, and superstitious thinking as well as curses and spells. This type of behavior can be found in gangs and sports teams.

• **Red:** *Power gods: impulsive expression, assertive.* This is the first level of development at which there is an emergence of an individual separate from the tribe. Life is hard and rough, and one has to fight to survive. This tends to be the foundation of feudal empires, which are dominated by archetypal gods and goddesses and see existence as “here and now” with the understanding that there is nothing before or after life. Examples for this meme are feudal landlords, gang leaders, wild rock stars, and epic heroes.

• **Blue:** *Truth force: purpose and order seeking.* At this memetic wave, life is purposeful and divinely controlled, but its outcome is determined by a central authority that is paternalistic, has rigid social hierarchies, and must be obeyed. This authority determines guiding principles for a society, law and order, and the collective understanding of what is right or wrong. Any violation of this order creates a sense of guilt in the perpetrator, will be judged by others, and has significant repercussions for the perpetrator, ultimately severe punishment either here on Earth or elsewhere (e.g., in Hell). This memetic code rewards the faithful. Examples of this are Puritan America, Confucian China, Dickensian England, totalitarian regimes including communism and Nazism, codes of chivalry and honor, patriotism, and religious fundamentalism of all dominations.

![The Spiral Dynamics model (adapted after Beck and Cowan (1996) and Wilber (2000))](image-url)
• **Orange: Strive drive: strategic analysis.** At this level, the laws of science rule a society that thinks for itself and has broken free of the group mentality of the preceding meme. It is achievement-oriented and materialistic. In this meme, the world is viewed rationally; it is mechanistic, deterministic, objective, and guided by scientific experiments. There are plenty of alternatives and opportunities, as thinking is dominated by science and the scientific world view with its natural laws, which can be learned, mastered, and manipulated for one’s own purposes. Scientific law rules politics, the economy, human life, nature, and the universe. Society is oriented toward achievement and success as well as materialistic gains in a world divided into winners and losers. The world is viewed as a global marketplace controlled by an invisible hand and the goal is to build business and political alliances in order to manipulate Earth’s resources for one’s own strategic gains. Examples of such an approach can be found in the Enlightenment, Cold War, emerging middle class, corporations, colonialism, self-interest, and Wall Street.

• **Green: Human bond: self-exploration.** This meme characterizes a world-centric society that is community-oriented and has Awakened to the reality that we all share the same habitat on Earth. The meme is socially and ecologically conscious, and its caring facet supersedes the selfish rationality of its predecessor. The world is regarded as our only home, which we must save from destruction. Thinking is dominated by consensus; it is egalitarian as well as pluralistic and detests hierarchy. The aim of this meme is to free the human spirit from greed, doctrine, and divisiveness. The cold rationality of the previous meme is superseded by feelings of belonging to the global community, a sense of sharing common resources, human bonding, ecological sensitivity, and networking. Examples include Greenpeace, animal rights advocacy, ecofeminism, political correctness, and human rights advocacy.

According to *Spiral Dynamics*, the first three stages—beige, purple, and red—are considered to be egocentric in that at these stages people care only about themselves and their own survival. The next two stages—blue and orange—are considered to be ethnocentric, because at these levels people are concerned with the wellbeing (Note: In earlier publications, I used the two words spelling, well-being, but here I decided to use wellbeing in one word to demonstrate the need for a more integral approach of its definition and usage.¹⁰²) of their own groups (tribes) and are often willing to go to war against other groups or social orders in order to defend their point of view.

Only with the onset of the green meme does the world-centric view begin to emerge. Through this meme, people begin to regard the entire world as their home, a home that they need to preserve and treasure.

As with all evolutionary models, it is important to note that every newborn baby begins at the bottom of this model and grows over time into higher stages of development until they reach their own center of gravity, at which point they stop growing. That center is often predetermined by their family and friends, but their own drive also plays a pivotal role. In other words, no one meme is better than another, for we are all born at square one and stand on the shoulders of those who

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¹⁰²Fiorini et al. (2016).
came before us. Every stage both includes and transcends the previous one. No stage can exist without its predecessor.

However, each of the Tier 1 memes thinks its world view is the correct one or has the best perspective on reality. Therefore, it reacts negatively when challenged and lashes out to defend the position with which it identifies. A sweeping generalization of the differences would look something like this: People at the blue level are rather uncomfortable with both the red impulsiveness of the previous meme and the orange individualism of the next. Orange individualists consider the blue order representatives conservative and backward absolutists, and the green egalitarianists weak and prone to spiritual woo-woo. Green egalitarianists struggle to accommodate excellence and value rankings, big pictures, hierarchies, or anything that appears authoritarian, including science. Therefore, green reacts strongly to blue, orange, and anything post-green. But all this starts to change with Tier 2 thought and perspective.

Tier 2, which is still in the emergent phase, contains the next waves of evolution, with only the yellow (flex flow: align and integrate) and turquoise (whole view: synergize) memes having already been identified. With Tier 2 consciousness, we can, for the first time, vividly grasp the entire spectrum of interior development, and thus see that each level in Tier 1 is crucial for the health of the overall spiral of evolution. Again, each wave both transcends and includes its predecessor. All the Tier 1 characteristics can and will be activated as needed, but people who have reached Tier 2 have their center of gravity there:

- **Yellow: Flex flow: align and integrate.** At this stage, people have arrived at the understanding that all previous stages of Tier 1 are important, and no one meme should be preferred over another. In fact, they see that life is made of natural holarchies, systems, and forms that depend upon each other and must be flexible, aligned, and integrated in a healthy way to enable the emergence of a wholesome yellow meme. In this meme, there is consensus that dissimilarities and pluralities can be integrated into interdependent, natural flows, and egalitarianism can be complemented with natural degrees of ranking and excellence. It is believed that knowledge and competence must supersede power, status, and group sensitivity, and good governance must support the emergence of entities at levels of increasing complexity.

- **Turquoise: Whole view: synergize.** At this universal and holistic level, life manifests as a delicate balance of interwoven forces where we are able to honor our feelings and combine them with the knowledge to create one holistic and conscious system for the benefit of all sentient beings. People believe in a universal order of life that evolves in an organic, conscious manner, one that is not based on external rules, as in the blue meme, or group bonds, such as those imagined in the green meme. Cognitively, people at this level are able to easily navigate the entire spiral; they simultaneously see, honor, and integrate multiple levels of interaction.

In summary, *Spiral Dynamics* offers a natural growth model of value development in which each stage of development includes and transcends the preceding one. Each higher level contains and transcends the one below, just as a cell includes and transcends molecules, which in turn transcend and include atoms, which transcend and include quarks, and so on.
The Leadership Development Framework

While Maslow focused on the development of human potential by fulfilling one’s needs and Graves focused on how human values change in tandem with life’s circumstances, Harvard scholar and leading developmental theorist and methodologist Susanne Cook-Greuter focused her research on the evolution of self-identity.\(^{103}\) Her framework was a refinement of, but goes well beyond, Loevinger’s ego development model and widely used WUSCT (Washington University Sentence Completion Test of Ego Development).\(^{104}\) In Cook-Greuter’s model, and the sentence completion test (SCT) she refined, she considers both the horizontal—the acquisition of new skills and knowledge at a certain stage or level—and the vertical, or structural, transformation in human evolution to later stages of consciousness. She posits that an interior individual transformation in consciousness does not occur through learning or knowledge acquisition alone. Instead, long-term practices and deep self-reflection are required for lasting, structural, vertical transformation. David Rooke and Bill Torbert who collaborated with Cook-Greuter to build the Leadership Development Framework (LDF), wrote in a *Harvard Business Review* article titled “Seven Transformations of Leadership” that “leaders are made, not born, and how they develop is critical for organizational change.”\(^{105}\)

The LDF is a quantitative instrument based on the SCT. It is designed to measure and assess the various stages/levels of vertical development over time, including adult ego development from egocentric to world-centric action logic. Rooke and Torbert used the LDF over 25 years to understand how thousands of executives in Fortune 500 companies perceived their own actions and behaviors as well as their immediate environment. Participants are categorized according to seven stages of consciousness (linked with dominant action logics), noted below with the proportion of leaders who fall into each one:

- **Opportunist and below**: 5% of participant leaders. Characterized as must-win, self-oriented, and manipulative but good in emergency situations and sales positions.
- **Diplomat**: 12% of participant leaders. Characterized as conflict avoiders but helpful when it comes to unifying people.
- **Expert**: 38% of participant leaders. Characterized as ruled by logic and expertise and good as individual contributors.
- **Achiever**: 30% of participant leaders. Characterized as mostly meeting strategic goals and being good team leaders who are action- and goal-oriented.
- **Individualist**: 10% of participant leaders. Characterized as having the ability to successfully balance competing personal and professional goals and who are effective in the venture and consulting positions.

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\(^{103}\) Cook-Greuter (2004).

\(^{104}\) Loevinger (1977).

\(^{105}\) Rooke and Torbert (2005, p. 1).
• **Strategist**: 4% of participant leaders. Characterized as very effective at initiating and generating both organizational and personal transformations.

• **Alchemist and above**: 1% of participant leaders. Characterized as integral leaders who excel at both bringing about and leading social transformation through the integration of what are considered to be the most important aspects of life.

According to Cook-Greuter, “only about 10% to 20% of adults demonstrate postconventional action logics. Transpersonal [post-post-conventional] ways of meaning [making] are even rarer.”

The transformational process of investors and business leaders into leaders with a world-centric action logic, beyond postconventional, is of special interest within the context of this book. The terminology differs—other developmental models also use the terms preconventional, conventional, postconventional, and transpersonal or post-postconventional to describe the full-spectrum trajectory of human development—but the principles are consistent.

I will refer to these levels of development again in Chap. 3, when I discuss the application of the Theta Model and look at how the presented tools can be applied to de-risk investments and to identify leaders who can build sustainable companies and assess the potential of companies to become sustainable and make the transformation feasible.

### 2.3 Mind Shift as a Trend?

What emerges from the research related to various developmental models could be viewed as a common story of mind shift evolution that has been corroborated by various empirical studies on leaders and leadership. Some of those studies were performed at Stanford University and focused on the evolving definition of success from the perspective of accomplished human beings. My theory is also corroborated by research performed by Robert Eccles and Svetlana Klimenko, John Mackey and Raj Sisodia, and Sisodia et al. on “firms of endearment,” companies that uphold a culture of strong ethics and sustainability. The data show that corporations with a culture based on sustainability and higher ethical values have also performed well financially—on average, eight times better than S&P 500 companies. The financial information tends to be a good way to convince people empirically of the value of such an approach, letting the figures speak for themselves, as it were.

Drawing on case studies from numerous organizations in the finance, nutrition, health, education, and political sectors, Sisodia et al. strongly suggest that there is a

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106Cook-Greuter (2004, p. 5).
107Porras et al. (2007).
108Eccles and Klimenko (2019, May–June); Mackey and Sisodia (2013); Sisodia et al. (2007).
genuine ongoing search for meaning and a change of mindset in today’s organizations. The Conscious Capitalism movement, started in 2005 by John Mackey, who founded US food retailer Whole Foods, is one manifestation of this trend. In their book *Conscious Capitalism*, Mackey and Sisodia refer to several of the models discussed above and say they “believe that the vision and values of Conscious Capitalism . . . are consistent with their [Graves, Beck, and Cowan’s] articulation of second-tier memes in *Spiral Dynamics*, as well as Ken Wilber’s work on integral consciousness.” Under the leadership of Mackey, Whole Foods had a 40% higher ROI than organizations that are not classed as firms of endearment over a period of 10 years. The shareholder value for investors in Whole Foods, which was sold to Amazon in 2017 for US$13.7 billion, grew between 1995 and 2006 to more than 1800%. This could be viewed as confirmation that “culture eats strategy for breakfast,” a quote attributed in 2006 to celebrated management consultant Peter Drucker by Ford CEO Mark Fields.

### Cultural Creatives and Conscious Capitalists
Like John Mackey, my husband and I are part of the Cultural Creatives generation. We seek the integration of sound financial, economic, environmentally responsible governance criteria with geopolitical sustainability for the benefit of all—and we can make this happen through our business and investment activities as well as through our philanthropic and venture philanthropy activities. Unfortunately, neither the traditional philanthropic, economics, finance, or investing models in general nor the venture capital models in particular gave us the necessary framework to invest with the wellbeing of both our values and our money in mind. Having been part of the human potential movement for decades, we knew that trusting others begins by trusting ourselves. We also knew that more trust and a stronger feeling of security could not come from higher profits at the expense of people or the planet. We knew that they could only come from our heart and soul, and from what we were willing to give to the world rather than we want to receive from it. Hence, we looked for an integration vehicle that would let us honor all our values. In the words of Maslow, we felt the need to *self-actualize* through an integration of all our activities, not just the financial, business, or philanthropic ones. We did not want to make money at the expense of other people or the environment. We did not want to make money during the day within a for-profit-only-oriented context and spend our evenings or weekends at fundraising events, donating money for various causes to fix the social (continued)

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109[https://www.consciouscapitalism.org/](https://www.consciouscapitalism.org/)
110Mackey and Sisodia (2013, p. 204).
111Sisodia et al. (2007).
112[https://tinyurl.com/ya3k2j27](https://tinyurl.com/ya3k2j27)
injustice and/or environmental degradation caused by mindless investing or business activities. We wanted to prevent all of that from happening in the first place, and we saw investing and company building as a unique vehicle to pursue our goals. Our investment motto was therefore built on the six Ps: Parity of People, Planet, and Prosperity—with Passion and Purpose.

In the fall of 2001, Tom and I attended a personal development seminar led by Tony Robbins in a tent village in the Moroccan desert, and it was there that we discovered our ideal theoretical framework to integrate our investment and company building activities, as well as our philanthropic endeavors: Ken Wilber’s Integral Theory.

In an effort to essentially make sense of the world and integrate a wide variety of systems into one theory of everything, Ken Wilber analyzed hundreds of developmental theories and models, including those discussed above, and developed a simple, elegant, full-spectrum framework he called an integral operating system.\textsuperscript{113} It has since become known as Integral Theory or the AQAL framework. Since its inception, the theory has undergone at least five major iterations and has been applied in more than 50 disciplines, including business, education, ecology, and economics.\textsuperscript{114}

I will introduce Integral Theory very briefly as it relates to investing in the next chapter because for the past 20 years it has been the foundation of our integral investment framework (see Chap. 3).

2.4 Theoretical Foundations of Integral Investing

Let us say you want to travel from Munich to Beijing. Depending on your budget in terms of money, time, or levels of courage and taste for adventure, you can travel by air, train, car, or boat, or you can even hitchhike. No matter what means of transportation you chose, you would better have a good map, or you may never reach your destination. You must be prepared to cope with various surprises arising from differences in the cultures, social and environmental infrastructures, and people you encounter along the way. You will also need to be ready for anything, as the landscape and the people on the ground will all be changing very fast. Buildings are being torn down, new ones are being constructed, people pass away and are born, and change is the only constant.

What if it were possible to find a composite and far-reaching framework that would enable you to navigate the world on the outside and empower you to better

\textsuperscript{113}Wilber (2000a/1995).
\textsuperscript{114}Arnsperger (2010); Esbjörn-Hargens et al. (2010); Esbjörn-Hargens and Zimmerman (2009); Mackey and Sisodia (2013).
understand it on the inside, including traditions, cultures, and societies and how they have evolved throughout the centuries? What if this framework could help you better understand the evolution of life, including the development of human knowledge from science to mathematics to developmental growth? What if there were a map that could help you gain a better perspective not only on yourself and your purpose and place in the world but also on humanity by helping you simplify your decisions and getting a broader perspective and greater insight into the future? Tom and I found Wilber’s integral framework to be just such a map—a veritable theory of everything that condenses all major components of reality into five simple elements: quadrants, levels, lines, states, and types. These five elements (Fig. 2.4) also give the integral framework its common name, the AQAL (pronounced ah-qwul): all quadrants, all levels, all lines, all states, and all types.

2.4.1 Quadrants and Levels

The starting point for the integral framework is the understanding that Plato’s value spheres of humanity—the Beautiful (art/self), the Good (morals/culture), and the True (science/nature)—are ever present, are constantly co-arising, and cannot be divided whether we are consciously aware of them or not. In other words, everything that occurs has three dimensions, or points of view: an individual, or subjective view; a collective-subjective, cultural view; and an objective, provable-facts view. Figure 2.5 shows the Big Three, as these value spheres are also called, embedded in William James’ Great Chain of Being in relation to Wilber’s integral framework.

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115 Wilber (2000a/1995).
116 Plato (1961/1938).
117 James (2017/1890).
Wilber associated the first-person singular pronoun—the I, also referred to as the self, or subjective truth—with Plato’s Beautiful. The first-person plural pronoun, WE, represents the intersubjective truth, morals, and the culture in which we live and is associated with Plato’s Good. And the third-person singular gender-neutral pronoun IT is correlated with Plato’s True value sphere or objective truth. To achieve a higher differentiation and be more inclusive with respect to additional exterior aspects of reality such as the social and the environmental aspects, Wilber expanded the Big Three and added a fourth quadrant, the exterior collective. This is the lower-right quadrant as seen in Fig. 2.6.

The fourth, lower-right quadrant, which Wilber associated with the pronoun ITS (used as a third-person plural gender-neutral pronoun, rather than a possessive, in this context), represents the exterior collective quadrant and refers to the social, global, and ecology realms. This quadrant can be best understood from a systems theory perspective. Being an interdisciplinary field of science, systems theory studies complex systems such as nature, society, and science and provides a framework through which complex systems can be better understood, analyzed, and influenced.

All four quadrants are equally important within our context of Integral Investing, but the fourth is particularly significant because it includes the financial, geopolitical, ecological, and environmental impacts of our collective actions. Wilber’s irreducible, all-quadrant, all-level framework lends itself as a theoretical foundation for Integral Investing because it provides an integrating platform to address the current grand global challenges. It allows and encourages multiple world views and perspectives, which are crucial for making decisions in general and investment decisions in particular. Its content-free framework encourages us to take the

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118Von Bertalanffy (2006/1969).
evolutionary—and contextual—attitude that is so desperately needed in today’s global finance, investing, business, and economic systems.

The upper-left quadrant refers to the interior individual domain or the terrain of personal/individual experience. It represents the personal subjective area as it relates to the inner life of an individual. In it, you will find your feelings, sensations, thoughts, and spiritual awakenings. It “includes the entire spectrum of consciousness as it appears in any individual, from bodily sensations to mental ideal to soul and spirit.”

The upper-right quadrant refers to the exterior, or more objective, states of being, the terrain of behavior that can be seen and registered from the outside (the “IT”), also called the individual exterior/objective domain. It is what you look like from the outside. This terrain is more easily measurable with the scientific methods available.

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119Wilber (2000b, pp. 62–63).
today and includes “the brain mechanisms, neurotransmitters, and organic computations that support consciousness.” The objective perspective at this level permits the examination of exterior behavior and the structure of each individual phenomenon from humans to animals to insects. This is traditionally the home of natural sciences, including cognitive science, mathematics, financial theory, chemistry, physics, biology, biochemistry, neurophysiology, and empiricism. From “the inside, you find not neurotransmitters but feelings, not limbic systems but intense desires, not a neocortex but inward visions, not matter-energy but consciousness, all described in 1st-person immediateness.” The interior and exterior dimensions are equally important, and both must be honored within a holistic world view.

The lower-left quadrant, the terrain of culture, enlarges the perspective of reality through the intersubjective areas of culture such as collective (the “WE”) beliefs, norms, justness, and goodness. Wilber defined this quadrant as “the values, meanings, worldviews, and ethics that are shared by any group of individuals”—the cultural context in which investing, business, and politics occur. This cultural context helps give our existence meaning. In fact, we become almost inseparable from it, because it becomes what we perceive to be our reality. Behavioral economics and scientific psychology only came into existence as academic disciplines after the birth of modern economics. Thus, within the parameters of the prevailing neoclassical economics paradigm, the two territories of felt experience and culture—that is, the interior aspects of both individuals and the collective—have been excluded because of scientific reductionism. In other words, their existence and influence were difficult to prove in a scientific manner. Consequently, neoclassical economics was reduced to profit and utility maximization, called here exterior territories. Based on the prevalent collective center of gravity at that time, the notion of the self-interested homo economicus was born. The 2008 financial crisis was the culmination of this application, and Integral Investing is attempting to demonstrate how this is currently changing within business and economics.

The lower-right quadrant is the territory of systems theory and analysis. This quadrant is the area in which traditional institutions, businesses, and geopolitical organizations usually interoperate in an objectively measurable and systemic way. Similar to the upper-right quadrant, this is also the domain in which science has normally been active, and it is the home of economics, business, civil, and environmental engineering, ecology, astronomy, astrophysics, sociology, and other systemic and infrastructural contexts. This interobjective perspective warrants, moreover, the configuration and exterior behavior analysis of collective phenomena, including economic and financial systems, ecological and social systems, and legal

120 Wilber (2000b, p. 63).
121 Wilber (2006, p. 22).
122 Wilber (2000c, p. 63).
123 Kahneman and Tversky (1982); Tversky and Kahneman (1974).
124 Aspromourgos (1986).
125 Camerer and Loewenstein (2004).
and political systems. However, neither the objective perspective in the upper-right quadrant nor the interobjective view of the lower-right quadrant are in and of themselves able to effectively move individuals or collectives, of any description, to significant action. Change occurs when individuals and/or collective groups are not only cognitively but also, and more significantly, emotionally impacted, i.e., when their interiors are touched in a deep way. Hence, we need both the interior and exterior dimensions.

The quadrants are also subject to evolutionary development. Depending upon their position on the evolutionary ladder, the stage or level of development—individually or collectively—will lend itself to a different view of reality. In other words, an average businessperson or investor, e.g., who lives in a postmodern society such as Western Europe will most likely have a different view of the world, and therefore a different investing behavior and portfolio, than an investor from an emerging economy such as one of the BRIIC states. Thus, the application of Wilber’s integral model allows for a much more differentiated view of individual and collective investment patterns depending upon the vertical position in each quadrant and how well the horizontal integration of the quadrants has occurred.

2.4.2 Lines, Levels, and States of Development

The upper-left quadrant is the home of individual interiority evolution and contains several lines along which our interior development occurs (see “Waking Up: The Hero’s Journey”). The lines of development determine our individual psychograph, a form of which is represented in Wilber has identified several different lines of development that he distinguishes as multiple intelligences, including cognitive, esthetic, moral, emotional, and ego development (Fig. 2.7).126

According to a wide range of leading developmental psychologists, we as individuals are also subject to an evolutionary process of personal development. This development occurs in stages or levels as seen in Spiral Dynamics, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, and Loevinger’s model of ego development. Anyone who has ever tried to lose weight, eat fewer candies, do more sports, stop smoking, or change any unwanted behavior knows how difficult change can be. If we have such a hard time influencing ourselves to change an unwanted behavior when we are in theory in direct control of what we eat, when we eat, and how we behave, imagine how difficult it is to change entire cultures, societies, and dysfunctional systems. In other words, change always starts with us, within our interiors. This is why the aphorism “you must be the change you want to see in the world,” generally attributed to Mahatma Gandhi, resonates with so many of us. Yet, what people are willing to do and what ultimately determines what they will end up doing appears to be, according

126Wilber (2006).
to Harvard professor Robert Kegan, a function of their meaning-making ability as well as their own levels of consciousness evolution.  

All the lines associated with interior or personal growth are significant, but within the context of this book, we are interested in the cognitive, emotional, moral, values, needs, and self/ego lines of development. Why? Because the people we associate with in our business-building activities and investments ought to be integrally informed, integrally developed, and, most of all, integrally acting, whether they use, or are even aware of, these terms or not. In other words, if we look at the research in the context of our own experience over the past three decades, we could reasonably assume that people whose center of gravity is world-centric (Fig. 2.3)—not only cognitively, but also emotionally and morally—would most likely be in a better position to understand and address climate change, ethical AI, biotech, and nuclear threats than those whose center is not world-centric.

The psychograph example in Fig. 2.8 can help us identify where our greatest capabilities, talents, and intelligence are; focus on them for the greatest possible

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127 Kegan (1982) & (1994).
128 See, for example, Commons et al. (Eds.) (1984) & (1990); Cook-Greuter (2004) & (2005) & (2008); Gebser (1984); Gilligan (1993/1992); Goleman (1995) & (2000).
outcome; and thus, avoid wasting our time. In the science-driven Western world, the
cognitive line of development tends to lead, followed by the emotional and the moral
lines of development. Exploring the evolution of these components of development
is important because it could help construct the missing link between the interiority,
subjective aspects of the individual transformation, and the exterior impact, includ-
ing behavior. Both of these points are important in terms of mind shift as it relates to
this book. Thus, as we grow internally, our understanding and our level of con-
sciousness also seem to grow. As a result, our behavior is affected. In other words,
external transformation appears to be a function of the internal transformation, and it
is all reflected in our psychograph. Harvard professor and author of *Changing
Minds: The Art and Science of Changing Our Own and Other People’s Minds*
Howard Gardner considers thinking or cognitive intelligence to be only one of
nine different intelligences that influence our decision-making and meaning-making
processes.\(^{129}\) Beyond the logical-mathematical intelligence, to which we mostly
refer when we discuss IQ-related intelligence, Gardner identified linguistic intelli-
gence, musical intelligence, special intelligence, bodily kinesthetic intelligence,
naturalist intelligence, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence, and existential
intelligence. He posits that we are made up of all of these and that they all influence
human development and behavior. In each individual, these lines are more or less
developed—which makes each one of us unique—and no one line is to be preferred
over another, just as no stage or level is to be preferred over another. Wilber

\(^{129}\)Gardner (1993) & (2004).
associated each line of development with fundamental life questions and ground-breaking developmental scientists as follows:\textsuperscript{130}:

- The \textit{cognitive} (logical-mathematical IQ) intelligence/line of development is the most popular in the Western world, dominated as it is by science. It was discovered, researched, and further developed and popularized by Jean Piaget and Robert Kegan.\textsuperscript{131} It helps respond to life questions such as \textit{What am I aware of?}
- The \textit{emotional} intelligence/line of development addresses \textit{how we feel} and was popularized through the work of Daniel Goleman, who developed the notion of EQ, the emotional quotient.\textsuperscript{132}
- The \textit{needs} line of development represented the core of Maslow’s work, discussed earlier (see Fig. 2.2).
- The \textit{values} line of development deals with what is most valued within human evolution as life’s circumstances change. I discussed this line earlier in the context of the \textit{Spiral Dynamics} model (see Fig. 2.3).
- The \textit{self/ego-identity} line of development is a major line of development of individual ego/identity evolution, discussed above in the context of the work of Susanne Cook-Greuter (see also its application in Chap. 3).
- The \textit{moral} line of development deals with \textit{what should be}. This is why, in an effort to entice people to adhere to ethical norms in their daily lives, the world’s major religions all have their own form of a set of moral guidelines, although their format and wording vary. For example, Christianity has the Ten Commandments, or Decalogue, Buddhism has the Eightfold Path, and Islam has the Islamic Decalogues.\textsuperscript{133}

In \textit{A Brief History of Everything}, Wilber argued that the evolution of consciousness has a direction, evolves along various lines, tends to occur generally toward “greater depth and less span,” and takes place within “nested spheres, with each higher level transcending and including its predecessor.”\textsuperscript{134} These are Stages of Growing Up, an actualization holarchy (see also Chap. 3) in which each stage unfolds and then enfolds its predecessor in a nested fashion. Within this actualization holarchy, it is important to differentiate between the “ladder, climber, and view.” Wilber used the ladder as a metaphor to represent the \textit{level}, or “basic rungs of awareness,” which, once developed, remain in existence as “basic building blocks or holons of consciousness” at various developmental levels/stages of the individual. Wilber argued that the AQAL elements of consciousness “emerge in fairly discrete \textit{stages},” development “enfolds” within certain spheres, and “each higher stage does not actually sit on top of the lower stage.” The presented developmental models

\textsuperscript{130}Wilber (2017).
\textsuperscript{131}Kegan (1982); Piaget (1976/1972).
\textsuperscript{132}Goleman (1995) & (2000).
\textsuperscript{133}Armstrong (2001a/1944) & (2001b/2000) & (1993); Smith (1995/1958); Wilber (2017).
\textsuperscript{134}Wilber (2000b, pp. 128–129).
characterize the climber of the ladder, who can evolve from the (small) egoic self to a higher, world-centric, or even Kosmos-centric Self. This “nuclear self,” as Heinz Kohut\(^\text{135}\) calls it, grows along various lines of development, including, in Wilber’s words, “self-identity, self-need, [as well as] moral sense.”\(^\text{136}\) As discussed in the section about the Hero’s Journey, stage development was often triggered through state experiences, or Waking Up, within the context of what Maslow called transcendent or peak experiences, meditative or contemplative experiences, near-death experiences, or out-of-body experiences; and what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi\(^\text{137}\) called flow state or unity consciousness experiences, exceptional human experiences, transpersonal experiences, or other spiritual emergencies. Furthermore, at each step of the ladder, the climber faces a fulcrum or three-step process of personal growth—Growing Up—that contains “(1) fusion/identification; (2) differentiation/transcendence; (3) integration/inclusion.” Therefore, we need vertical growth within each quadrant as well as horizontal integration at each level of development.

In our culture, the notion of perpetual growth is so deeply ingrained that people tend to gravitate toward believing that later stages are somewhat better than earlier ones. However, this is not necessarily true. Why? Well, think about it: Is a brilliant scientist who devotes their career to developing a lethal weapon that could potentially kill hundreds of thousands of people better or more advanced than someone with no tertiary education who works in an animal shelter? I should say they are not. Cognition development tends to occur first within our education system, but ethics and moral development must be our guiding force if we want to address the challenges that life inevitably throws at us. In order for healthy vertical growth, growth that is rooted in healthy ego development, we need a healthy horizontal integration of our self-identity, because only a healthy ego-identity can be of service to the group and later the world. Therefore, the horizontal integration at each stage of development across all four quadrants (see also Fig. 2.6) is the premise for healthy vertical growth (Fig. 2.9).

Horizontal integration takes care of the skillset development at the same level of consciousness across all four quadrants—individual, culture, society, and the environment. It can help achieve a well-grounded and highly developed sense of self-identity whereby people identify their own place in culture and society. At each level, we develop both functional knowledge and behavioral skills. People can enhance their know-how and technical expertise as well as improve their problem-solving techniques and overall competences.

Vertical development, on the other hand, helps the mindset transformation toward later stages of development from ego- to ethnocentric to world-centric and even Kosmos-centric views of the world. It helps us achieve not only higher cognitive intelligence (IQ), but also higher emotional intelligence (EQ), moral, and inter- and intrapersonal intelligences. Work at this level helps to accelerate our

\(^\text{135}\) Kohut (1985, pp. 10–11).
\(^\text{136}\) Wilber (2000b, p. 132).
\(^\text{137}\) Csikszentmihalyi (1990).
Confessions: Forty Years of Meditation

During my own journey toward personal development over the past four decades, I have noted how easy it has become to live with ambiguity and let go of the need to control. This changed mindset and attitude can be attributed, of course, to the myriad self-development and leadership seminars I have attended over the years, the hundreds of books I have read, my postgraduate psychology studies, and daily exercise and healthy nutrition; in short, my integral practice. Personally, I attribute great merit to my daily meditation practice of approximately 2 hours every morning. However, truth be told, not every meditation practice delivers lasting results. I began meditating in 1980, and over the years I have studied many different techniques with well-known and lesser-known teachers. From attending meditation seminars at the Esalen Institute to teachings with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I have gained vast

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138 Wade (1996, p. 267).
insights and experience in this field. However, when I began meditating in the Mahamudra tradition, I realized I had found the right technique for me. It allowed me to experience first-hand its influence on my own growth, and I was aided by the fact that I connected with the teacher. I had the good fortune to be instructed by Harvard professor Daniel P. Brown, an integral thinker with an ability to adapt Tibetan meditation techniques and communicate them to the Western mind, unlike any other teacher I had worked with before. Tom had the same experience.

2.4.3 The Perception of Bias

Tom and I chose the AQAL framework because it offers what is “arguably the first truly comprehensive or integrative world philosophy.” For two decades, AQAL has helped us navigate not only exponential growth in technology but also the world and evolution in general. From our perspective, AQAL is particularly fitting because it serves as a holding tank for the abundance of available consciousness models that can not only help us steer our own personal development and contribution to a better world but also guide us toward a more complete de-risking model for our business building and investment activities. More important, as we Wake Up to our current existential threats and become increasingly aware of the importance of our personal biases, we must address the interiority of all participating agents from investors, to business people, product developers, politicians, and other decision-makers.

Within the context of AI-based products, the interiority of the programmers has a particular importance since their biases and mindsets influence the computer software they are building. A recent report by the AI Now Institute attributed most bias-related issues to lack of employee diversity, but this is only one aspect of the problem. We continue to be oblivious to interior aspects of personal development, and so we must make a collective concerted effort to bring that into the spotlight. While bringing in more women programmers, more programmers of color, and more trans-programmers, for example, would help significantly, it would not address the questions of Growing Up, Cleaning Up, or Waking Up to later stages of human development. For example, a programmer of any gender, any color, any sexual tendency whose center of gravity is ethnocentric could have a nationalistic bias and thus build an AI that would give their fellow citizens a privileged status over citizens of other countries. We must, therefore, ensure all participating agents begin to Wake Up to not only their personal raison d’être in the world but also the potential impact of their work on humanity and the planet. To achieve this—and it is crucial that they

139Brown DP (2006a).
140See https://integrallife.com/five-elements-aqal
141West et al. (April 2019).
do—they must begin to Clean Up their biases by Growing Up to later, world-centric stages of development.

According to the PriceWaterhouseCoope and CB Insights Money Tree Report, venture capital funding for AI and machine-learning startups for the first three quarters of 2019 was US$12.1 billion, exceeding the 2018 investments of US $10.2 billion, which already represented a 72% increase from 2017. As global spending on AI is projected to grow 28.4% p.a. to US$97.9 billion, according to IDC research, we must become extremely vigilant and begin to take responsibility for addressing the bias issue sooner rather than later before it spirals out of control.

2.5 On Becoming an Integral Investor

Our use of the AQAL model is what led Tom and me to call ourselves integral investors in the disruption era. We see it as equipping us with the right tools to lay claim to that title, especially within the context of exponential investing through AI, and other exponentially growing technologies. In “6 Tools Entrepreneurs Must Master to Succeed in an Accelerating World,” Peter Diamandis defined “six mindsets and tools that every exponential entrepreneur needs to master” in order to succeed:

- “You must understand exponentials” and the 6Ds (see Chap. 1) by becoming an exponential thinker in a global world rather than a linear thinker in a local world.
- “You see the world as abundant (vs. scarce),” as data from the past 200 years demonstrate.
- “You leverage exponential technologies,” from AI to 3D printing to synthetic biology.
- “You have an MTP [(massively transformative purpose)] and a moonshot” and subscribe to Google’s eight innovation principles.
- “You tap the crowd for expertise, solutions and capital” by maximizing the human and fiscal potential of crowdsourcing options.
- “You launch your vision, experiment and disrupt yourself” by embracing change and new ideas, and following the advice of Reid Hoffman: “If you’re not embarrassed by the first version of your product, you’ve launched too late.”

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142 Money Tree Report by PriceWaterhouseCoopers Q4 2018. Viewed 20 June 2019 at https://tinyurl.com/y4llqyox and 11 March 2020 at https://tinyurl.com/y5bk4my6
143 IDC “Worldwide Artificial Intelligence Spending Guide.” Viewed 12 March 2020 at https://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=IDC_P33198
144 https://tinyurl.com/yxb3vnra
145 https://www.diamandis.com/data?p=data
146 https://tinyurl.com/y9c6lnb
147 https://www.diamandis.com/blog/googles-8-innovation-principles
All six points can be used—and in Chap. 3 I explain how Tom and I apply them—to help you be an exponential investor, someone who invests in exponential entrepreneurs who develop exponential technologies and build exponential organizations (see below). But as integral investors, that is not enough for us. Why? Because we are exponential investors who apply the integral framework to self-actualize and to address the global grand challenges and ensure that humanity thrives within the planetary boundaries (to make transformation feasible). Without an explicit mandate to do that, we believe that regular exponential investors would probably not move fast enough. Why? Because we can only achieve what we focus on and what we measure. If our mind is not set on solving the existential climate problems within the required time frame, for example—that is, before 2030—we will most likely fail. Basically, we must consciously decide what we are aiming to do and give ourselves hard deadlines for doing it.

However, this still may not be enough. Why? Because it would still only be a lower-right, collective-exterior (social and environmental) quadrant view (Fig. 2.10) of the world.

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Fig. 2.10 Quadrant view of the AQAL framework

148Ismail et al. (2014).
As noted earlier, the AQAL quadrants co-arise and cannot be reduced to one another. They must all be applied in order to give a fully comprehensive overview of all the factors that make up a physical or abstract entity. Barrett C. Brown articulates this in a report titled *Four Worlds of Sustainability: Drawing upon Four Universal Perspectives to Support Sustainability Initiatives.*\(^{149}\) The report is based on his application of the lens of Integral Theory to perform an all-quadrant view of eight bestselling books on sustainability.\(^{150}\) In his research, he took an ontological approach without an epistemological interpretation and analyzed every sentence in each book, categorizing the sentences according to the quadrant on which they focused. He examined each sentence to assess whether it was taking (a) an interior or exterior view, and (b) an individual or collective perspective of reality. He determined that the lower-right (LR) quadrant perspective dominated. The following list shows the breakdown by quadrant for each book, listed here in the same order that Brown lists them (UL = Upper Left, LL = Lower Left, UR = Upper Right, and LR = Lower Right) (see Fig. 2.6):

- **Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things**, William McDonough and Michael Braungart: UL: 8%, LL: 9%, UR: 10%, LR: 73%
- **Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution**, Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, and Hunter Lovins: UL: 2%, LL: 7%, UR: 1%, LR: 90%
- **The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability**, Paul Hawken: UL: 4%, LL: 16%, UR: 5%, LR: 75%
- **Walking the Talk: The Business Case for Sustainability**, Charles O. Holliday Jr., Stephan Schmadeiny, and Phillip Watts: UL: 4%, LL: 14%, UR: 3%, LR: 79%
- **The Natural Step for Business: Wealth, Ecology and the Evolutionary Corporation**, Brian Nattrass and Mary Altomare: UL: 11%, LL: 22%, UR: 4%, LR: 63%
- **Plan B 2.0: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble**, Lester Brown: UL: 1%, LL: 2%, UR: 6%, LR: 91%
- **Our Common Future**, World Commission on Environment and Development: UL: 1%, LL: 4%, UR: 1%, LR: 94%
- **Ecovillage Living: Restoring the Earth and Her People**, Hildur Jackson and Karen Svensson (Eds.): UL: 11%, LL: 19%, UR: 6%, LR: 64%

All eight books describe and address reality using a primarily social and environmental/systems view. The interior aspects such as the culture, collective intersubjective, shared values, and vision, as well as the individual interior perspective, individual mindsets, or individual external behaviors and actions were represented in only a very small way. Brown agrees that the lower-right quadrant is the strongest and most powerful influencer for change in society—but he also shows why there is little chance of success if we do not take an integral sustainability approach, one that

\(^{149}\)Brown (20 February 2007, pp. 19–28).

\(^{150}\)Brown LB (2006b); Hawken (1993) & (2017); Hawken et al. (1999); Holliday et al. (2002); Jackson and Svensson (2002); McDonough and Braungart (2002); Nattrass and Altomare (1999); World Commission on Environment and Development (2009/1987).
uses the entire AQAL and not just one particular quadrant. He enumerates successful integral sustainability approaches such as Marilyn Hamilton’s for integral cities, Anne Caspari’s for the Roman waterway rehabilitation program, and Tam Lundy’s integral community development in British Columbia, Canada.  

### 2.5.1 Self-Actualizing Through Investing

As we look around us, Tom and I see more and more investors and company builders like us, people who appear to be self-actualizing through investing. We are aware of more and more peers who are shifting their mindsets toward embracing a more holistic understanding of the world. Investor friends confide in us every day how committed they are to interior development—not to be confused with narcissism, which is concerned only with the ego-self. We see again and again friends who have grown over the years from an egocentric mindset toward a world-centric one and appear to be living a more holistic life—whether they are familiar with Integral Theory or not. In our experience, they are Awakened and have a holistic understanding of reality. They also have a well-developed sense of humor, live joyous lives, and recognize the need for self-care as a premise for caring for others. We do not need to look at formal research to see how people like Whole Foods founder John Mackey, Generation Investment Management founder David Blood and its chairman Al Gore, Salesforce founder Mark Benioff, or Toniic founders Lisa and Charly Kleissner, to name only a few well-known representatives, are obviously committed to making the world a better place by building more progressive investment and company structures. We call this type of investor an integral investor, and we have a theoretical framework for identifying them (Fig. 2.11).

In our definition, integral investors have a value system rooted in a world-centric level of consciousness or later. As a whole, they seem drawn toward holistically sustainable investing models through which they intend to self-actualize while making sure that financial sustainability is inseparable from a strong social, environmental, cultural, and highly ethical outcome. Integral investors intend to fully experience life in all its magnitude by:

- *Creating integrally sustainable wealth* through “actively seeking to balance the need for financial return with the yearning to make life a little better for others, themselves, and the Earth”\(^{152}\)
- *Embracing* “the principles of conscious capitalism, a business approach that emphasizes creating extraordinary outcomes for all stakeholders. We believe

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\(^{151}\)Brown (20 February 2007, pp. 37–41).

\(^{152}\)Brill (2020, p. 1).
conscious businesses are more innovative, less risky, and better positioned for growth \(^{153}\) or

- *Adopting* an “investment process that fully integrates sustainability analysis into our decision-making and is focused on long-term performance”\(^{154}\)

In more succinct terms, they have the ability to balance the needs of people and the planet with financial sustainability, along with their newly detected purpose and passion for life. They also have a massively transformative purpose (MTP), whether they use that term or not.

### 2.5.2 The Massively Transformative Purpose

At the January 2019 conference of Abundance Digital, Peter Diamandis showed a video in which the late Stephen Hawking addressed humanity. His words were truly inspiring and touched me deeply, and I would like to share a few of them with you: “How will we feed an ever-growing population, provide clean water . . . and slow down global climate change? . . . let us work together to make [the] future a place we want to visit. Be brave, be determined . . . It can be done.”\(^{155}\)

Hawking’s call to action should be an inspiration for all of us. We saw earlier that integral investors are mission-driven. Some of them like to refer to their purpose as a

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153\[http://satoricapital.com/\]
154\[https://www.generationim.com/generation-philosophy/\]
155Abundance Digital, 2019 A360 Archive Tribute to Stephen Hawking-Flying into Zero-G.
“massively transformative purpose” (MTP). Your MTP reflects you and your belief system; it is inspiring and connects your heart with your mind. It is independent of technology; it is neither too wide nor too narrow; and you can speak with confidence about what it means and why it is your MTP.

Diamandis’s personal MTP is to “inspire and guide the transformation of humanity on and off the Earth,” and one MTP of PHD Ventures, one of his organizations, is to “empower entrepreneurs to generate extraordinary wealth while creating a world of abundance.” Elon Musk’s personal MTP is to have a positive impact on the future through “sustainable energy, [the] Internet, … making life interplanetary… and AI … and rewriting genetics.” Tesla’s MTP is “to create an entire sustainable energy ecosystem … a unique set of energy solutions … enabling homeowners, businesses, and utilities to manage renewable energy generation, storage, and consumption … [and to] ultimately accelerating the advent of clean transport and clean energy production.”

Google’s MTP is to “organize the world’s information” and TED’s is “ideas worth spreading.” My personal MTP is “to love and to be loved; to inspire and to guide people to awaken to their full potential to serve themselves and the greater good.”

### 2.5.3 The Moonshot

Like many of our Integral Investing peers, Tom and I also have a moonshot. Peter Diamandis cites Astro Teller, head of X, when he explains a moonshot as “going 10X bigger, while the rest of the world is trying to grow 10%.” For Tom and me, our moonshot is the investment turnaround (in German, die Investmentwende): using investing to implement integral sustainability, the next paradigm in investing. This new paradigm is rooted in culture, values, and morals (intrinsic reality) as well as the material world (extrinsic reality). We are using the investment turnaround to counteract current investment, finance, banking, and economic systems, which have brainwashed us into believing that the only measure of success is money and that investing is all about generating a profit, at the expense of and with no regard for people, the planet, or personal joy and happiness. Our moonshot is allowing us to pave the way toward the implementation of the UN SDGs within the planetary boundaries (see Chap. 3). But how do we do that?

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156 [https://www.diamandis.com/blog/transformation-of-humanity](https://www.diamandis.com/blog/transformation-of-humanity)
157 [https://www.diamandis.com/blog/tech-future-of-food](https://www.diamandis.com/blog/tech-future-of-food)
158 Starting with minute 1:34, see YouTube video [https://tinyurl.com/y4744cnj](https://tinyurl.com/y4744cnj), and Musk and Neuralink (16 July 2019).
159 See [https://www.tesla.com/about](https://www.tesla.com/about)
160 [https://peterdiamandis.tumblr.com/post/164961004383/what-is-a-moonshot](https://peterdiamandis.tumblr.com/post/164961004383/what-is-a-moonshot)
2.5.4 Keeping the Wheel of Your Life Balanced

In *AI Superpowers*, Lee explains the terms 995, 996, and 997. They represent the number of hours employees in China would be working when they joined a certain company: 99 refers to 9 am to 9 pm—the hours between which the employees work—and the 5, 6, and 7 represent the number of working days in a week. The three figures are essentially a code that represents how hard Chinese people are willing to work to nurture national economic development. Lee compared this work ethic with the prevailing work ethic in Silicon Valley. He describes rather cynically how difficult it was to find anybody in the Valley who was willing to meet with a visiting Chinese delegation on a weekend. It is understandable that people are willing to work hard to become successful. However, we need to find a balance between work, personal health, and relationships—otherwise known as work–life balance. Tom and I understand that. We work constantly on our personal growth; we take time to relax and to access deeper dimensions of our own being as well as collective wisdom.

In *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, Carol Dweck compares and contrasts two radically different mindsets that she encountered in her research: the fixed mindset, which is characterized mainly by the urgency to prove yourself over and over again, and the growth mindset, which is rooted in the fundamental belief that your basic talents can be cultivated through your own efforts. In other words, we have a choice about whether we grow and become smart or not, which, to my mind, basically means that a mindset is essentially a belief system.

We have adopted a growth mindset and therefore discarded scarcity thinking. We espouse a mentality of abundance with the intention of empowering ourselves and people with whom we work and build companies to act wisely rather than out of fear, which is ultimately destructive.

While it is true that a certain level of financial independence can induce a certain degree of happiness, we have also realized that wealth begins in the head and not in the wallet. Therefore, we have grown to see personal growth as an opportunity to use our skills and talents to address challenges by anticipating them and getting ready to solve them. We have also recognized that, in order to achieve our mission in life, we need a daily routine and regular life practices that help us stay healthy, upbeat, emotionally empowered, and on course. Figure 2.12 shows the integral wheel of life that is at the foundation of our personal growth routine. It was inspired by and derived from Wilber’s AQAL.

The individual wheel of life (Fig. 2.13) represents the eight most important aspects of my own life:

- The interior aspects are psychology, spirituality, and physical health; the collective intersubjective components include relationships, both intimate and extended, as well as cultural activities including political or other types of activism.
- The exterior individual aspects include play and celebration as well as career and finances.
The collective interobjective aspects include my contribution to the environment and society. You will find an example of my personal and professional categories of improvement on my website.\footnote{For my own Personal and Professional Categories see https://tinyurl.com/ycjmocem} For each category, I use a host of details that describe my overall strategy and the tactics that help me achieve my goals. I revise every one of them once a month and adjust them if I veer off track or arrive at a different understanding over time. Describing each and every one of my personal and professional categories in detail from vision to daily tactics is well beyond the scope of this book, so the table shows only the barest outline. When it comes to my physical and emotional health and fitness, for example, I establish the vision I have for my physical and emotional health. I then note my motivation for
implementing this vision and list the roles I see myself playing while taking care of this personal category (for example, weight loss and wellbeing expert and trusted advisor, woman in touch with her femininity, proud marathon runner). To help me achieve my vision, I write down a variety of routines that I follow (for example, eating a mostly vegetarian diet, enjoying five 45-minute cardio workouts per week). And of course, I adhere always to my own code of conduct. Using my integral wheel of life practice, I try to keep all the important aspects of my life well balanced. For example, I meditate from 3:30 am to 5:30 am every day. I follow that with a 40-minute workout, which is accompanied by audio i-can-tations, a self-developed form of affirmations that help me start the day on a positive note. I eat healthily in a mostly vegetarian fashion with sustainably caught fish on occasion. When something bothers me, I meditate and find emotional stability by asking myself essential questions, some of which can be found on my website.\footnote{See my \textit{Power of Questions} poster at https://aqalgroup.com/extra-materials/} Going deeper into my daily integral life practice would go well beyond the scope of this book. However, if you are interested, it is discussed in more detail in my \textit{Diet for a New Life} book.\footnote{Bozesan (2007).}

2.6 Summary of Chapter 2

Drawing on my personal journey from being a young communist to becoming a high-tech investor, I have argued that we are currently witnessing an extraordinary evolution of consciousness within a certain population of investors and businesspeople. Using Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey as a metaphor and Ken Wilber’s Integral Theory, AQAL, as a navigation aid, I have presented research to support my
hypothesis that these individuals appear to have Awakened and evolved to later stages of human evolution and are now challenging the current financial systems and impacting the investing paradigm from that new perspective. They have grown from an egocentric self to a world-centric self and now have multiple and more holistic perspectives on the world.

The studies I cite corroborate neuroscientific research that indicates that such exceptional human experiences can contribute to people achieving higher levels of personal integration and moving on to later stages of ego development. Through their newly acquired value and moral systems, these integrally informed and acting investors—integral investors, as I like to call them—seem drawn toward more sustainable investing and business practices that are now beginning to change the investment, business, and economic paradigms. They seem to want to self-actualize through their investing and business activities and ensure that financial sustainability becomes inseparable from the social, environmental, cultural, and behavioral impact of those activities. Furthermore, they appear to have developed a more world-centric understanding of the world in which they view themselves as global citizens who take care of the planet as well as themselves. Therefore, they are using their wealth and influence to also address our grand global challenges. In fact, they now seem to measure their success in life by their contributions toward the achievement of these criteria by adopting models that also include characteristics such as beauty, individual self-actualization, joy, and happiness. To stay physically and mentally healthy and on track, they continue their journey of transformation through daily routines such as the integral wheel of life practice. And they are achieving all of this without turning their backs on technology. In fact, they have successfully leveraged technology to continue moving forward.

They embody my belief that change is possible and that protecting the planet, self-actualizing, and investing are not mutually exclusive. In Chap. 3, I will demonstrate how to implement all that we have discussed so far in the real world to the shared benefit of people and the planet.

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