



# STAGES International

UNFOLDING THE LIVING MAP OF LIFE



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## The STAGES Matrix Roadmap

A Contemporary Model of Development Perspectives







Introduction .....	1
<b>Foundations of the STAGES Matrix.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Levels of Development: A Lineage .....	5
The DNA of Consciousness.....	6
The STAGES Matrix & the Three Questions .....	7
Elements of the STAGES Matrix .....	8
The Unique Distinctions of the STAGES Matrix.....	11
<b>STAGES Matrix Stage Descriptions .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Repeating Patterns in Life's Tiers.....	13
Definition of Objects at the Concrete Tier .....	14
Concrete STAGES.....	15
Definition of Objects at the Subtle Tier .....	16
Subtle STAGES.....	17
Definition of Objects at the MetAware Tier .....	18
MetAware STAGES.....	19
What's Next: A Speculation .....	20

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## Introduction

We all clearly recognize that babies grow up as we see the obvious changes in them through time. They grow taller and heavier. Babbling turns into speech. They learn to read and write. Often, however, we fail to see our continued growth as adults. The attributes of child development are easily recognizable. But what are the attributes of adult development? How do we know when we are growing and changing as an adult? And what happens when there is trauma as a child? How does that affect adult development?

The STAGES Matrix is an articulation of the variety of attributes that compose the levels of development throughout our lifetime. These stages have been mapped out through rigorous study and research over the past ten years. This paper describes them, including the things that can go wrong along the way and how that creates shadow which also has a developmental level. How can you know what level your shadow is at?

As you go through the description of the Matrix, think about how the various attributes map on to you or if you recognize those behaviors and qualities in others.

Following, is an explanation of the STAGES Matrix from the earliest, 1.0, up to the latest, 6.5. It is important to note, that one STAGE isn't better than another, and that each STAGE is part of normal human development. The purpose of this work is to define the STAGES and then discover through the assessment process, where you measure. Most people will cover a range of levels, because we all have that range within us.





While one STAGE isn't better than another, it's important to know where you are on the map so you can navigate troublesome territory. For example, when you get triggered, you may find yourself operating from an earlier STAGE, where challenges like addiction, interpersonal conflict and ego-driven behaviors can hijack you. We call that a Shadow Crash.

This work not only reveals shadow but provides a roadmap to heal and integrate it.

Typically we try various techniques to resolve this tension. However, we can't be sure the issue won't return, because the source of shadow behavior is often hidden from our view. Along with proper psychological treatment, you can heal and integrate that shadow part, finding the problems you've been struggling with will likely clear up in a very short amount of time.





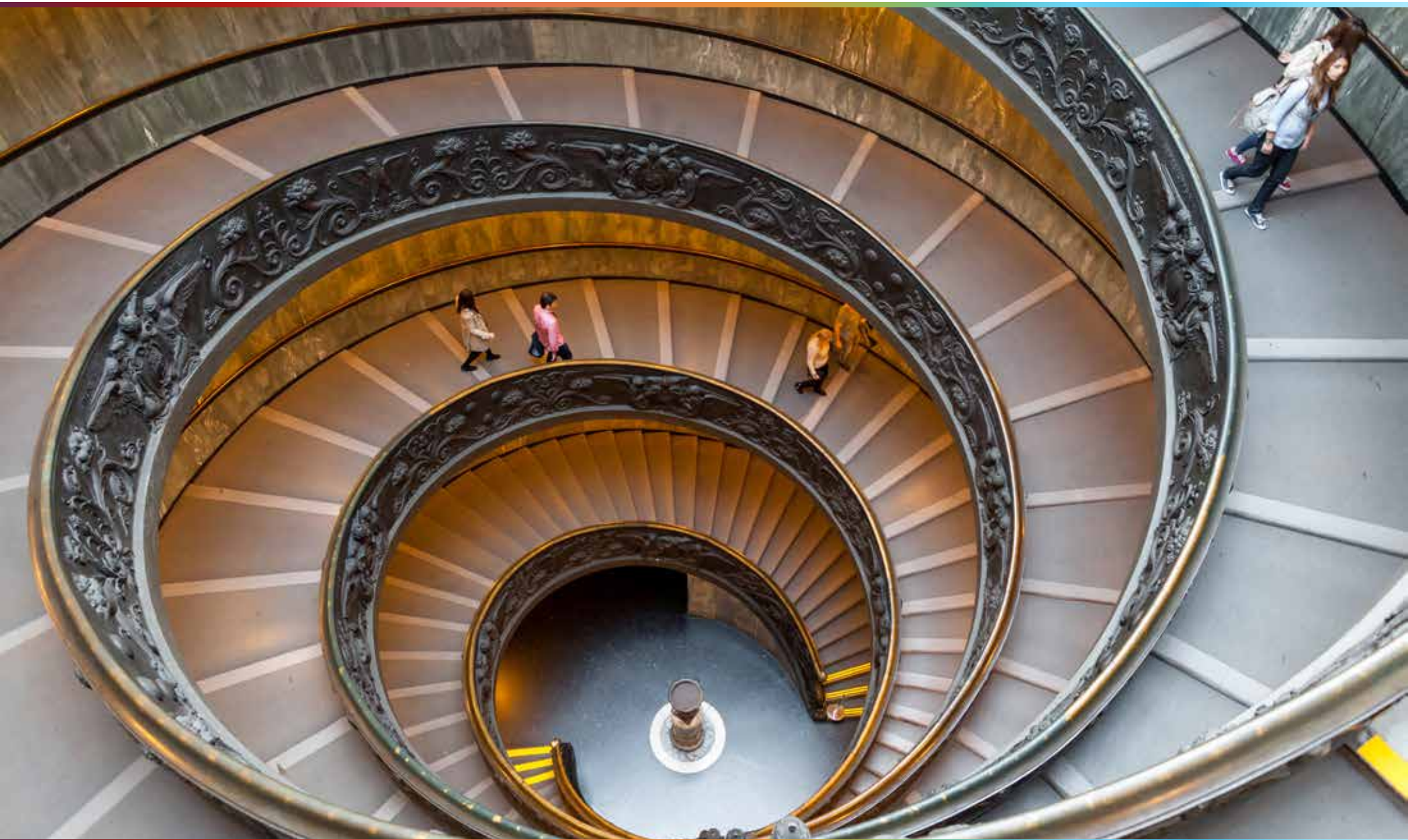
We gaze into the eyes of our newborn with wonder and delight, hardly acknowledging that in a mere 5, 10, 20 years that this helpless infant will be a very different person as they grow and develop. Additionally, in 5, 10, and 20 years, we ourselves will also be very different, have many more perspectives, experiences, and understandings. Through the years, we will also observe our parents' lives and watch them age, perhaps with much wisdom and grace. Their perspectives as well, will have matured. The flow of life through the generations is such a mystery and yet, it is an everyday mystery.

Our changing selves have been an enduring query of personal interest in our own developmental journey of intimacy with our closest friends, our collaboration with colleagues, and a dive into research.

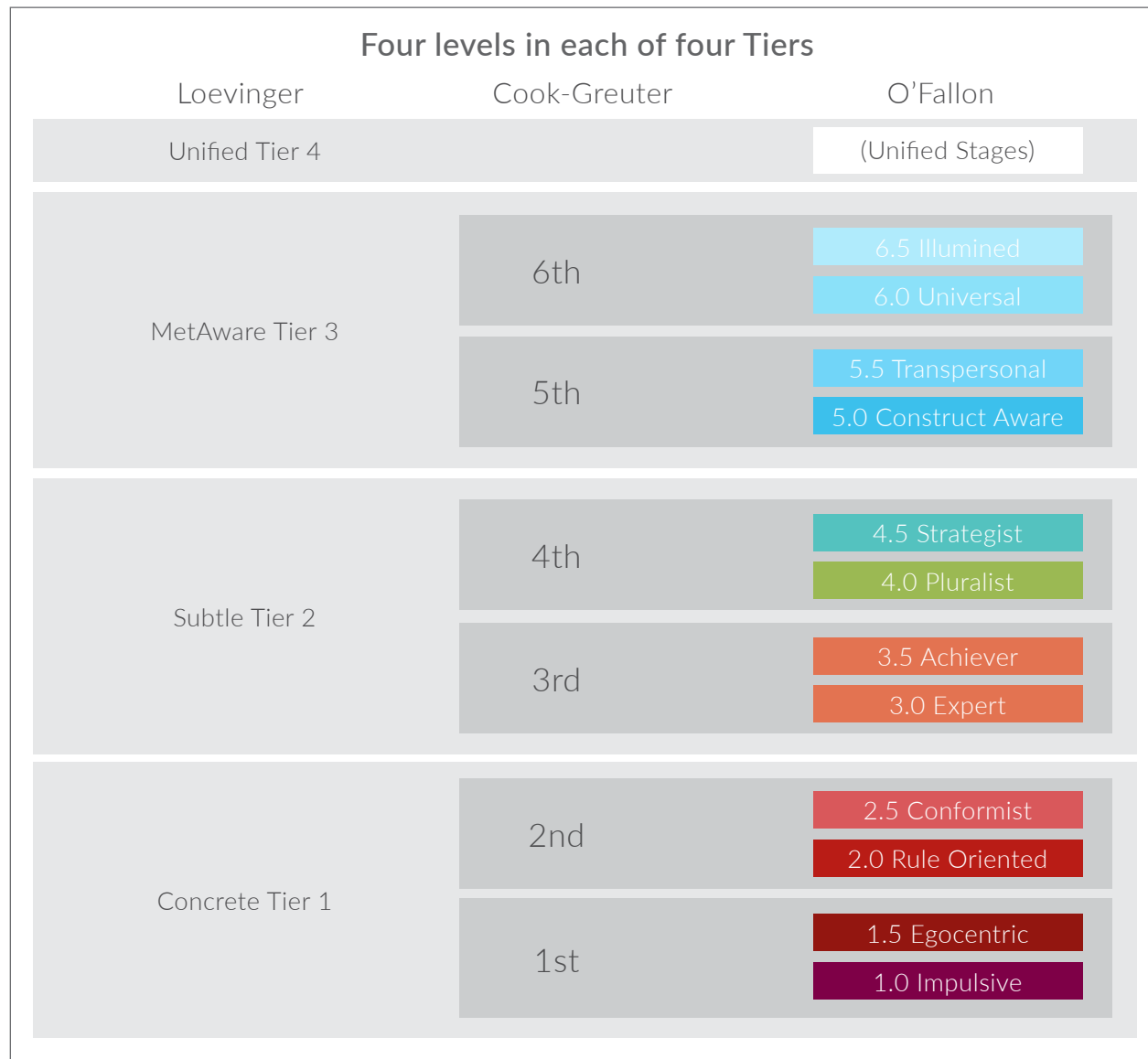
This paper is in two sections. The first section describes the foundations of the STAGES Matrix and the qualities that make it unique. The second section will provide brief descriptions of each developmental level. You will find charts and graphs throughout this PDF, which provide more detailed descriptions, including a model of the repeating attributes at each tier and a map of the lineage that precedes the STAGES matrix.



# Foundations of the STAGES Matrix



## Levels of Development: A Lineage



Loevinger's 1976 ego development system is built on the work of Erik Erickson, and based on research using her Washington University Sentence Completion Test.

Susanne Cook-Greuter then refined the sentence-completion test instrument as well as the level descriptions, adding the distinction of perspectives and two later level stages to Loevinger's work.

In the STAGES model, Terri O'Fallon has since embedded perspectives into a new scoring system, developed underlying repeating parameters, and added two additional later-level STAGES. The addition of parameters allows us to predict more accurately how emerging later-level STAGES might look.



## The DNA of Consciousness

Historically, stages of human development have been identified by interviewing or observing samples of people, recording their responses and organizing these responses into categories. Researchers then sequenced these categories of responses from the earliest to the latest level of maturity. These categories could then be used to identify where a person might be in their developmental journey through life.

The STAGES Matrix is a pioneering, evolutionary model that describes the stages of human perspectives from birth to the latest levels of human development supported by research. One of the innovations of STAGES is the use of parameters for describing developmental stages. Instead of using categories, the STAGES model identifies fundamental, underlying attributes that lead to development in the first place. These attributes, or parameters, turn on and off in different configurations much like DNA turns on and off in different configurations to create unique organisms and their expressions. This “turning on and off” of attributes creates unique configurations of how our consciousness expresses itself. The “DNA of consciousness” is helpful metaphor for understanding the STAGES Model.

The STAGES model identifies 16 documented perspective stages of development. Below is the STAGES MATRIX which shows the sequence of patterning of the parameters of human consciousness.



## The STAGES Matrix & the Three Questions

PP	Question 1: Is the object of awareness <b>Concrete, Subtle,</b> or <b>MetAware</b> ?	Question 2: Is the experience <b>Individual</b> or <b>Collective</b> ?	Question 3: Is the experience <b>Receptive, Active,</b> <b>Reciprocal,</b> or <b>Interpenetrative</b> ?	STAGE NAME
	TIER	SOCIAL PREFERENCE	LEARNING STYLE	
1.0	Concrete	Individual	Receptive	Impulsive
1.5	Concrete	Individual	Active	Egocentric
2.0	Concrete	Collective	Reciprocal	Rule Oriented
2.5	Concrete	Collective	Interpenetrative	Conformist
3.0	Subtle	Individual	Receptive	Expert
3.5	Subtle	Individual	Active	Achiever
4.0	Subtle	Collective	Reciprocal	Pluralist
4.5	Subtle	Collective	Interpenetrative	Strategist
5.0	MetAware	Individual	Receptive	Construct Aware
5.5	MetAware	Individual	Active	Transpersonal
6.0	MetAware	Collective	Reciprocal	Universal
6.5	MetAware	Collective	Interpenetrative	Illumined



## Elements of the STAGES Matrix

Beginning at the far left you see person-perspectives (PP). Person-perspectives are the basis of individual and collective consciousness evolution.

Each row defines the level of person-perspective. For example, 1.0 is the first perspective humans take after they are born. The primary definition of this perspective is:

**Concrete Individual Receptive.**

These are the three parameters of this perspective. Each of the parameters have a very specific definition (see definitions before each of the [STAGES Matrix Stage Descriptions](#)). Once you become familiar with the basic definitions you can combine these parameters into different configurations to define up to 16 different perspectives, 1.0 through 8.5. The chart illustrates the configurations from 1.0 through 6.5. These are the levels we have research on. Because of the repeating patterns, we can hypothesize the configuration of four more stages in a “Unified” tier, from 7.0 through 8.5. We will include them in the STAGES Matrix once we have data to support them.

	Question 1: Is the object of awareness <b>Concrete, Subtle,</b> or <b>MetAware</b> ?	Question 2: Is the experience <b>Individual</b> or <b>Collective</b> ?	Question 3: Is the experience <b>Receptive, Active,</b> <b>Reciprocal,</b> or <b>Interpenetrative</b> ?
PP	TIER	SOCIAL PREFERENCE	LEARNING STYLE
1.0	Concrete		
1.5	Concrete		
2.0	Concrete		
2.5	Concrete		
3.0	Subtle		
3.5	Subtle		
4.0	Subtle		
4.5	Subtle		
5.0	MetAware	Individual	Receptive
5.5	MetAware	Individual	Active
6.0	MetAware	Collective	Reciprocal
6.5	MetAware	Collective	Interpenetrative

The first column, labeled **Question 1**, designates the **Tier**. The **Tier** describes or identifies the content of the mind: the *what* of the mind. This identifies the kinds of objects that the mind can perceive. For example, in the **Concrete Tier**, the objects of perception are concrete, such as a house. The **Subtle Tier** has objects that are subtle, such as assumptions one might make of a house as a home. The **MetAware Tier** hold the capacities to be aware of your awareness of those assumptions.





## Elements of the STAGES Matrix (cont.)

	Question 1: Is the object of awareness <b>Concrete</b> , <b>Subtle</b> , or <b>MetAware</b> ?	Question 2: Is the experience <b>Individual</b> or <b>Collective</b> ?	Question 3: Is the experience <b>Receptive</b> , <b>Active</b> , <b>Reciprocal</b> , or <b>Interpenetrative</b> ?	
PP	TIER	SOCIAL PREFERENCE	LEARNING STYLE	STAGE NAME
1.0	<b>Concrete</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Receptive</b>	Impulsive
<p>The second column, labeled <b>Question 2</b>, identifies the <b>Social Preference</b>. This column describes whether the mind is foregrounding the <b>Individual</b> aspect of ourselves (it's all about <i>me</i>), or foregrounding the <b>Collective</b> aspect of ourselves (it's about <i>we</i>).</p>		<b>Individual</b>	<b>Active</b>	<p>The third column, labeled <b>Question 3</b>, is the preferred <b>Learning Style</b>. This column describes the primary process that we are using to learn. There are four learning styles that repeat:</p> <p><b>Receptive</b> <b>Active</b> <b>Reciprocal</b> <b>Interpenetrative.</b></p> <p>This is a very important parameter for it is the engine of development—the evolutionary process by which we grow.</p>
		<b>Collective</b>	<b>Reciprocal</b>	
		<b>Collective</b>	<b>Interpenetrative</b>	
		<b>Individual</b>	<b>Receptive</b>	
4.5	<b>Subtle</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Active</b>	<p>Universal</p> <p>Illumined</p>
5.0	<b>MetAware</b>	<b>Collective</b>	<b>Reciprocal</b>	
5.5	<b>MetAware</b>	<b>Collective</b>	<b>Interpenetrative</b>	
6.0	<b>MetAware</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Receptive</b>	
6.5	<b>MetAware</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Active</b>	
		<b>Collective</b>	<b>Reciprocal</b>	
		<b>Collective</b>	<b>Interpenetrative</b>	



## Elements of the STAGES Matrix (cont.)

In summary, when we read across each and any row we get the configuration of the perspectives at each developmental level. Each person perspective (PP) configuration defines the stage and describes the attributes of consciousness at that stage. Each stage offers a different configuration. These different configurations define the capacities at that developmental level.

	Question 1: Is the object of awareness <b>Concrete, Subtle,</b> or <b>MetAware?</b>	Question 2: Is the experience <b>Individual</b> or <b>Collective?</b>	Question 3: Is the experience <b>Receptive, Active,</b> <b>Reciprocal,</b> or <b>Interpenetrative?</b>	
PP	TIER	SOCIAL PREFERENCE	LEARNING STYLE	STAGE NAME
1.0	<b>Concrete</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Receptive</b>	Impulsive
1.5	<b>Concrete</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Active</b>	Egocentric
2.0	<b>Concrete</b>	<b>Collective</b>	<b>Reciprocal</b>	Rule Oriented
2.5	<b>Concrete</b>	<b>Collective</b>	<b>Interpenetrative</b>	Conformist
3.0	<b>Subtle</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Receptive</b>	Expert
3.5	<b>Subtle</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Active</b>	Achiever
4.0	<b>Subtle</b>	<b>Collective</b>	<b>Reciprocal</b>	Pluralist
4.5	<b>Subtle</b>	<b>Collective</b>	<b>Interpenetrative</b>	Strategist
5.0	<b>MetAware</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Receptive</b>	Construct Aware
5.5	<b>MetAware</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Active</b>	Transpersonal
6.0	<b>MetAware</b>	<b>Collective</b>	<b>Reciprocal</b>	Universal
6.5	<b>MetAware</b>	<b>Collective</b>	<b>Interpenetrative</b>	Illumined

As you look at the patterns, you can see that from 1.0 - 1.5 only one-parameter shifts:

**Concrete Individual Receptive**  
**Concrete Individual Active.**

As we shall see, one shift makes all the difference in the world in the behavior of the individual.

When we move from 1.5 to 2.0, we see a two-parameter shift. The **Tier, Concrete,** stays the same but both the **Social Preference** and the **Learning Style** change:

**Concrete Individual Active**  
**Concrete Collective, Reciprocal.**

As you might imagine this is a much larger change than a one-parameter shift. We will see a corresponding change in the experience and behavior of any person making this larger shift.

The largest shift of all is a three-parameter shift. This occurs when we move from one **Tier** to the next. For example, when we move from 2.5, the end of the **Concrete Tier**, to 3.0, the beginning of the **Subtle Tier**, the parameters change more drastically:  
**Concrete Collective Interpenetrative**  
**Subtle Individual Receptive.**

The **Tier** developmental shifts are the most difficult ones to make.





## The Unique Distinctions of the STAGES Matrix

The first distinction of the STAGES Matrix is that it identifies fundamental, underlying attributes that lead to development. There are three classes of attributes: **Tier**, **Social Preference**, and **Learning Style**.

Secondly, these attributes occur in different configurations to define a developmental level. By utilizing parameter configurations, we accommodate expressions of ourselves that lie outside of the stereotypical patterns. This unique capacity of the STAGES model honors our own unique journey through the developmental spectrum. In this way, we see how we match others in the common journey through the stages, and we also see how we have our own unique style, our own personal journey dynamic.

Third, these attributes occur in repeating patterns. By understanding the repeating patterns, we can utilize our skills from previous experiences to enhance our experiences at our current level. This allows us to see how developing health at every developmental level provides skillful background for our current developmental challenges.

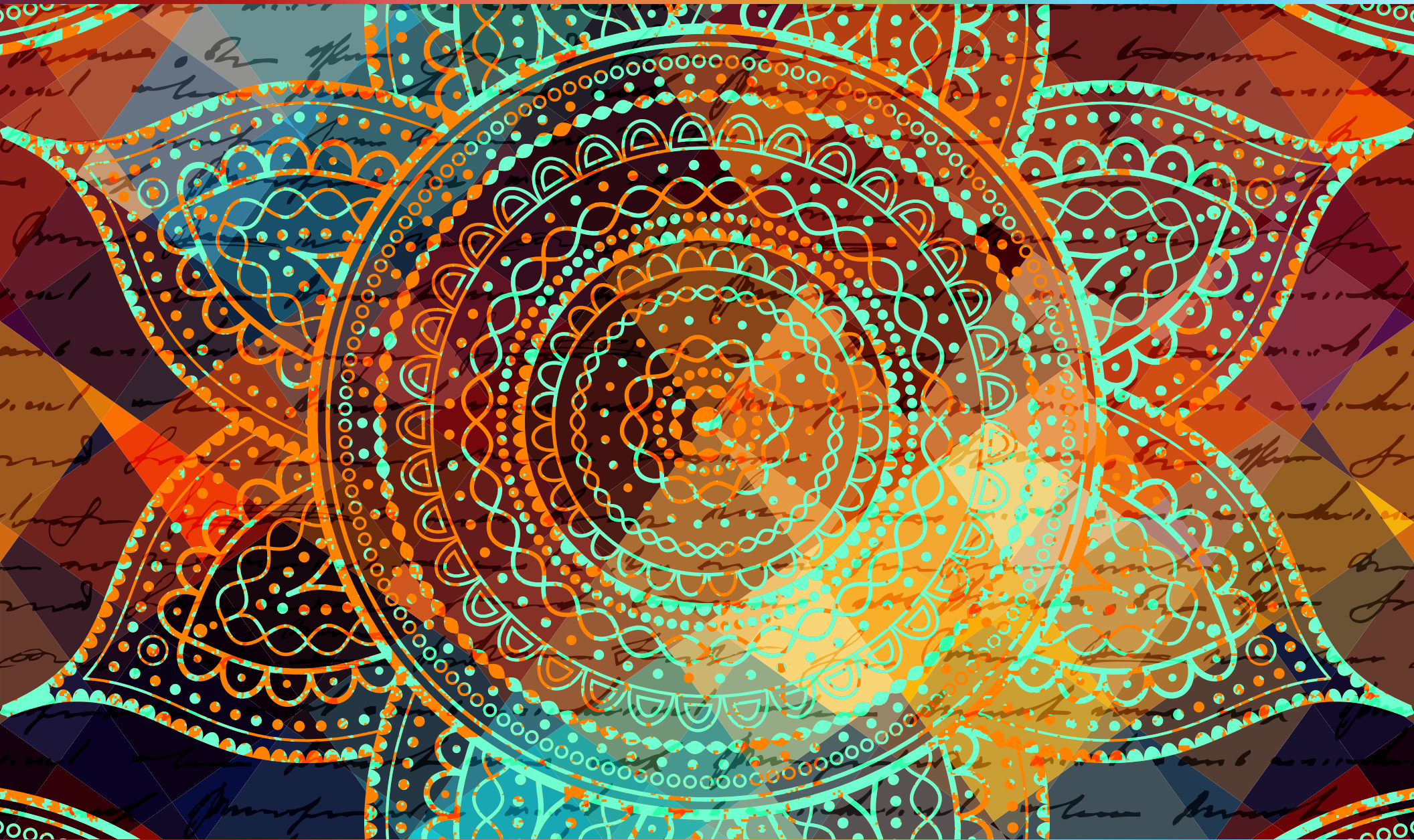
Finally, based upon the repeating patterns of the parameters, the STAGES model can envision possible configurations of the future stages of our consciousness that have not yet evolved. This may give us a glimpse into not just our own personal next stage of development, but the next levels of consciousness the human species might experience.

We will now turn our attention to each developmental level and what this means to us as we move through the spectrum of our development.





# STAGES Matrix Stage Descriptions





## Repeating Patterns in Life's Tiers

Structure Pattern	Receptive New Identity	Active Identity fixes (Sees old ego)	Reciprocal Identity/groups (Ego collectivizes)	Interpenetrative Identity Authenticated (Ego loosens)
	One way seeing Unstable Sees one side	One way seeing Parallel play Agree to disagree	I see you see me Reciprocal relativism	I see you are me Integrated
	Horizontal Individual cause & effect	Hierarchical Individual cause & effect Universalizes	Horizontal Collective cause & effect/ fundamental	Hierarchical Collective cause & effect/ fundamental
	Fuzzy	Focused	Aware	Aware & Focused
	Early <b>Individual</b> STAGE	Late <b>Individual</b> STAGE	Early <b>Collective</b> STAGE	Late <b>Collective</b> STAGE
<b>Concrete Tier</b>				
1.0				
1.5				
2.0				
2.5				
<b>Subtle Tier</b>				
3.0				
3.5				
4.0				
4.5				
<b>MetAware Tier</b>				
5.0				
5.5				
6.0				
6.5				

Before we go to the **Tier** descriptions, we would like to pause for a bit and summarize the repeating patterns. We can see that each **Tier** has its own content—two **Individual** STAGES followed by two **Collective** STAGES. Each **Tier** has four sequential **Learning Styles: Receptive, Active, Reciprocal** and **Interpenetrative**.

We can see repeating pattern configurations as well. For example, 1.0 has the same configuration at 3.0 except 3.0 can see **Subtle** objects that 1.0 cannot. 1.5 has the same configuration as 3.5. 4.0 has the same configuration as 2.0. 4.5 has the same configuration as 2.5.

We call these up-shifts. We are doing the same process, in each **Tier**, except we are up-shifting to new level of objects, or content. This gives us a road map to our current and future consciousness and a blueprint for how to manage our current patterns of growth.



## Definition of Objects at the Concrete Tier

A **Concrete** object is any object you can apprehend through your direct senses or their extensions, like a microscope or telescope.

### Exterior:

**Visual:** sight, house, car

**Auditory:** sound, song, names

**Kinesthetic:** touch, slippery, rough

### Interior:

**Visual:** sight, visualization of a house, car etc.

**Auditory:** interior sounds such as a song, talking to the self about **Concrete** things

**Kinesthetic:** interior feelings that you can see exteriorly such as sad, mad, happy

## Concrete STAGES

### 1.0 Impulsive Parameters: Concrete | Individual | Receptive

We begin at birth at 1.0 with the parameter descriptions, **Concrete**, **Individual**, **Receptive**. This means that the mind is primarily occupied by **Concrete** content, we are focused on our **Individual** self, ("It's all about me!"), and we are learning, and evolving primarily by **Receptivity**.

**Receptive** means the information coming in through the senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, smell and movement. Through these senses, we begin to discover our **Concrete Individual** self. What are the contours of my body? Where do I stop and where does "Not-I" begin? For example, a baby can wave its hand in front of its face not knowing it is its own hand. In time, the senses all start working together and the baby discovers, Aha! That is my hand!

Over the course of 1.0 developmental level, the baby eventually discovers and owns all its **Concrete**, physical parts and distinguishes them from the "Not-I" parts, which is the rest of the world. By the time the baby has all its parts identified and can move them at will, it is growing into the next developmental level of 1.5.

### 1.5 Egocentric Parameters: Concrete | Individual | Active

At 1.5 the only parameter shift is the **Learning Style**, moving from **Receptive** to **Active**. This one little shift does not seem like much, but this one little shift is the difference between a baby laying helplessly on the bed and a toddler pushing a chair up to the counter to get into the cookie jar. It's a revolution of consciousness (and makes for a whole lot more work for the parents!) The child has not just learned to define its physical self, it now knows how to use it.

### 2.0 Rule Oriented Parameters: Concrete | Collective | Reciprocal

At 2.0 the child's consciousness takes another important shift of two parameters. The perspective moves from an **Individual** focus to a **Collective** one, and the **Active** parameter moves to **Reciprocal**. What does it mean to have **Collective** and **Reciprocal**? The child now understands friendship.

It takes a **Reciprocal** understanding to make and keep friends, and it requires an understanding that another person is a full human being, with their own feelings and thoughts (just like me). Thus, this shift ushers in the world of family, friendship, and eventually romance.

At 2.0 we are subject to amazing peer pressure. Whatever enters the social milieu becomes something to be in **Reciprocity** with. Thus, as the group goes so do we. Often this can get us into trouble.

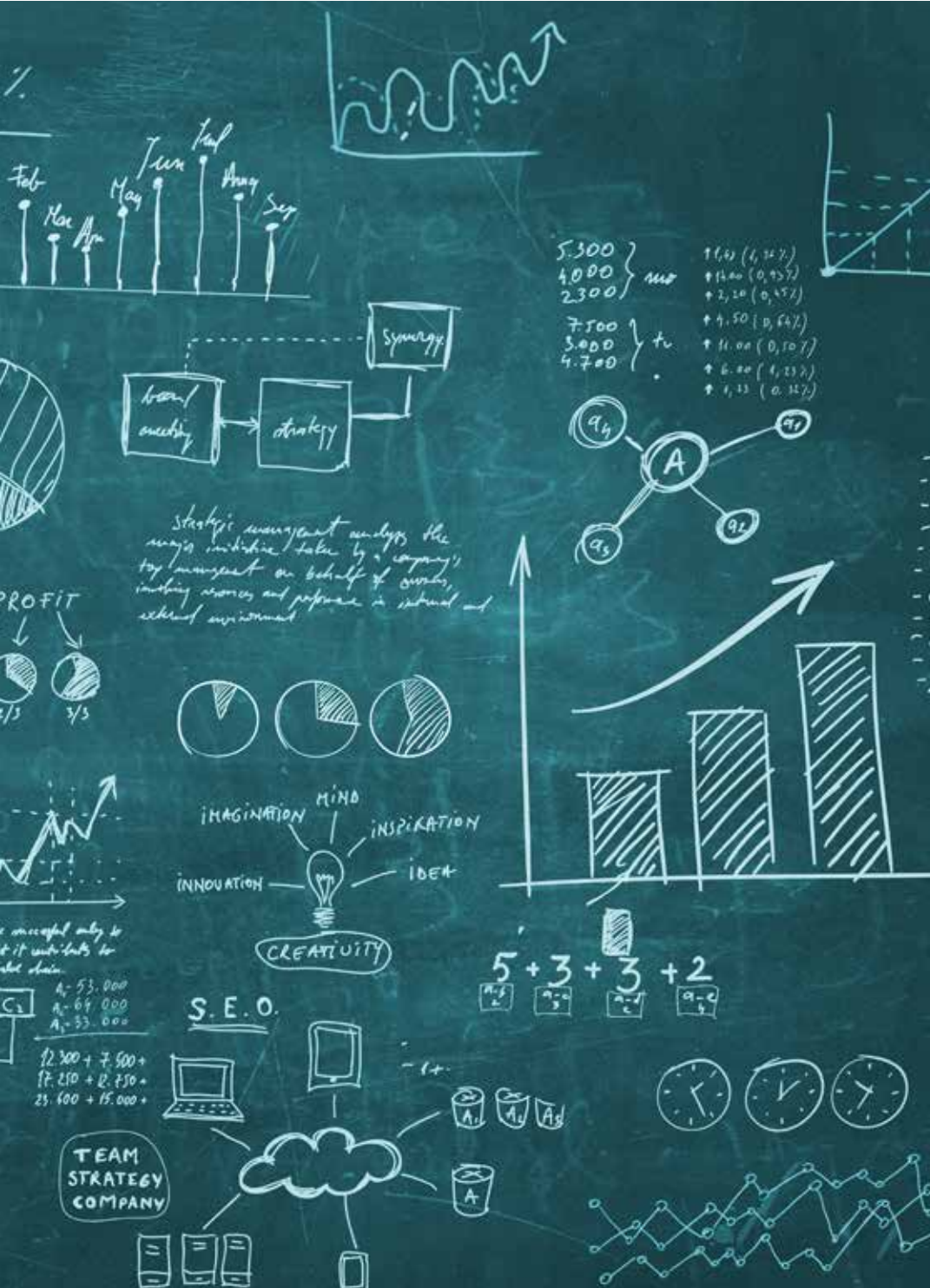
### 2.5 Conformist Parameters: Concrete | Collective | Interpenetrative

The shift from 2.0 to 2.5 only requires one parameter to change. The **Learning Style** shifts from **Reciprocal** to **Interpenetrative**. However, the impact upon our consciousness is no small matter.

The shift to **Interpenetration** means we become one with our principles. By standing on our principles we are no longer at the beck and call of the group dynamic and can stand on what's right regardless of what is happening around us. This allows for stable relationships, stable religions, stable governments and ushers in a personal sense of safety and stability.







## Definition of Objects at the Subtle Tier

A **Subtle** object is an object that you can't detect with your **Concrete** senses or put a fence around.

**Exterior:**

**Visual:** equations, engineering symbols, systems

**Auditory:** thinking about thinking, or talking to yourself about/reflecting on what you are thinking about

**Kinesthetic:** Subtle energy

**Interior:**

**Visual:** witnessing

**Auditory:** assumption, judgment

**Kinesthetic:** compassion, frustration, presence



## Subtle STAGES

### 3.0 Expert Parameters: Subtle | Individual | Receptive

The 3.0 level is the first level in the **Subtle Tier**. As we move from 2.5 **Concrete Tier** into the 3.0 **Subtle Tier**, we see that there is a three parameter change. The **Tier** grows from **Concrete** to **Subtle**; the **Social Preference** moves from **Collective** back to **Individual** and the **Learning Style** changes from the **Interpenetrative** parameter back to the **Receptive** parameter.

While there is a three parameter change from 2.5 to 3.0, only one parameter changes from the first STAGE in the **Concrete Tier** (1.0) to 3.0: the **Tier** parameter. The whole parameter set is the same except the **Tier**. The **Tier** changes from **Concrete** to **Subtle**. We are entering a whole new world, and so we will go through the same **Social Preference** patterns and the same **Learning Style** patterns to master the **Subtle Tier**. We will repeat the same sequence we did in the **Concrete Tier**.

What this means for our consciousness is we are now beginning to perceive the **Subtle** world of objects. So instead of seeing a tree, or visualizing a tree (thinking about **Concrete** objects) we can now reflect on our thoughts. Instead of just having thoughts, and feelings, we step back and can observe the thoughts and feelings. This shift to the **Subtle Tier** allows for fascination with philosophy, theology, advanced mathematics—in other words, relating to how our mind operates. There are so many new ways of discovering the world around us and those new ways of discovery help us to realize the world is often quite different from, and larger than what we had previously believed. Just like the baby is learning the contours of its own physical body, at 3.0 we are learning the contours of our mind.

### 3.5 Achiever Parameters: Subtle | Individual | Active

At 3.5, one parameter changes. The **Learning Style** shifts from **Receptive** to **Active**. This one shift allows us to move beyond expanding our understanding of the mind to learning how to actually operate it. 3.5 is a **Tier** up-shift from the 1.5 stage, so just like a 1.5 child learns to be **Active** with their body a 3.5 individual starts learning how to be **Active** with their thinking and feeling: thinking about their thinking, thinking about their feeling, feeling about their thinking, and feeling about their feeling.

As a result, they begin to shift the building blocks of their mind into new configurations that work better. What new thoughts will I create in my own mind that will help me succeed better? What new feelings do I need to create so I function better? Since we can now produce any new **Subtle** thoughts, we begin to project these creations into the **Subtle** future with increasing precision. We make plans and create sophisticated ways of making those plans come to fruition in real life.

### 4.0 Pluralist Parameters: Subtle | Collective | Reciprocal

At 4.0 there is a two parameter shift from **Individual** to **Collective**. We also shift the **Learning Style** from **Active** to **Reciprocal**. This is an up-shift from the 2.0 perspective in the **Concrete Tier**. If you look at 2.0 you will see the same pattern, the only difference is the **Tier** shift from **Concrete** to **Subtle**.

In 4.0 we want to dive into the co-creative world of the **Collective**. We want to discover our deeper more authentic self—to see ourselves as others see us and to drop into the deeper intimacy that the depth of **Subtle Reciprocity** provides. Just like playing with toys takes a background to creating friendships in the shift from 1.5 to 2.0, so too do we background our individual goals and strivings for the deeper experience of **Subtle** intimacy with others.

While we find this intimacy on the outside with others, we also find it on the inside with our interior selves. There is a whole interior **Collective** we discover within. This interior **Collective** is made up of many voices, personas or “ego states” each with their own passions, desires, thoughts, impulses and motivations. We seek to be intimate with each of these interior selves just like we seek to be intimate with others in the outside world. By developing intimacy with each of these personas and having each persona develop intimacy with each other our life becomes more whole, happy and meaningful.

### 4.5 Strategist Parameters: Subtle | Collective | Interpenetrative

At 4.5 we make a one parameter shift. We shift the **Learning Style** from **Reciprocal** to **Interpenetrative**. As a result, our consciousness includes getting to know others, our interior voices, and many cultures as in 4.0; but in addition, we can create systems that allow for the greater good to occur for everyone involved.

How can we organize our own mini-culture to create the best experiences for those around us? How can we best design an interior mini-culture for all our interior voices? How can we use our understanding of our own interior to make a better exterior world, and how can we use the understanding of the exterior world to make a better interior life? We see all the social, contextual, cultural, and psychological feedback loops and begin to adjust them so they will create the best outcomes for everyone.







## Definition of Objects at the MetAware Tier

A **MetAware** object is being aware of your own awareness and of very **Subtle** objects

**Exterior:**

**Visual:** hall of mirrors representing repeating patterns

**Auditory:** multiple contingencies, word salad

**Kinesthetic:** the vibratory

**Interior:**

**Visual:** witnessing awareness, timeless, spaceless

**Auditory:** constructed concepts, belief systems

**Kinesthetic:** bliss and love without an object



# MetAware STAGES

## 5.0 Construct Aware Parameters: MetAware | Individual | Receptive

At 5.0 we enter the **MetAware Tier**. This is a three parameter shift from 4.5 to 5.0. The **Tier** shifts from **Subtle** to **MetAware**, the **Social Preference** shifts from **Collective** to **Individual** and the **Learning Style** shifts from **Interpenetrative** to **Receptive**.

As you can see, this is an up-shift from 1.0 and 3.0. It has the same configuration. The only difference is the object of our awareness. The new object of our awareness is awareness itself. Now that awareness itself is an object, we begin to watch it and become more familiar with what the world of awareness means.

In this stage, we are discovering the contours of our own individual awareness. Just like the baby discovered the contours of its body and the early adult discovered the contours of its mind, at 5.0 we begin to discover there are contours of our own individual awareness. This allows us to experience the very nuanced differences of word meaning and individual definition of boundaries that are unique to us. Once we bring awareness to our own word meaning and boundary configuration we begin to see that this is true of everyone. We receive the understanding that the structure of words and boundaries in and of themselves are without meaning—we construct that meaning in our own minds. This puts us on the journey of a new identity. We up-shift from the 1.0 entry identity of our **Concrete** self to the 3.0 entry identity of our **Subtle** self, to the 5.0 entry identity of our aware self that we are beginning to become aware of; thus, the term, **MetAware**.

This shift into meta-awareness has profound implications. Awareness begins to transcend thought as the dominant way of understanding the world. As a result, the world of thought, conceptualization, and belief gradually fades into the background and individual awareness itself moves into the foregrounded edge of experience. The move into awareness as the “self”, allows for the exploration of a whole new world—a whole new way of experiencing life.

## 5.5 Transpersonal Parameters: MetAware | Individual | Active

5.5 has a one parameter shift. The **Learning Style** shifts from **Receptive** to **Active**. At this point our individual awareness takes on a life of its own and actively plays with its awareness of all the **Concrete** and **Subtle** objects, and the shifting meaning and boundaries. Like the toddler who becomes **Active** with their body and the 3.5 adult becomes **Active** with their thoughts, feelings, planning and aspirations, 5.5 awareness becomes actively creative with awareness itself.

This includes all of what has come before, using its capacities to redefine, reconfigure and reify these new creative processes. And it moves beyond that as well. Eventually, this **Active** exploration of awareness and what it can do with meaning and meaninglessness, boundaries and the boundary-less, ushers them into the world of the timeless and the boundless.

## 6.0 Universal Parameters: Subtle | Collective | Reciprocal

6.0 involves a two parameter shift from 5.5. The **Social Preference** shifts from **Individual** to **Collective** and our Learning style shifts from **Active** to **Reciprocal**.

Just like the 1.5 shifts from toys to friendships as it moves into 2.0, and the 3.5 shifts from personal goals to the 4.0 deep authentic relationships with others, so too does the 5.5 **Individual** awareness enter the vast inter-connected space of the **MetAware Collective**. The **MetAware Collective** expands into all objects of manifestation in an interconnected whole.

The experience of this massive interconnected whole in **Reciprocity** with awareness provides a unique, deeper and broader intimacy than ever before. It offers a garden for the interconnection between the timeless local and nonlocal fields of awareness with the intimate experience of the whole eternity and infinity of the universe. While astoundingly vast, it is equally deeply connected and intimate.

## 6.5 Illumined Parameters: Subtle | Collective | Interpenetrative

6.5 provides a one parameter shift. The **Learning Style** shifts from **Reciprocal** to **Interpenetrative**. **Interpenetrative** stages see trajectories. Like the 2.5 can see the physical developmental trajectory from birth to death, and the 4.5 level can see the psychological developmental trajectory of humans, the 6.5 level opens to the embodied understanding of the developmental trajectories that occur from the beginning of the universe (fullness) and also of timeless awareness (emptiness).

As well as 2.5 and 4.5, 6.5 begins a process of **Interpenetration** which prepares the movement to the next **Tier**. At 2.5, one **Interpenetrates** with their principles upon reflection; at the 4.5 level one sees the **Interpenetration** of self with other through their projections, upon reflection, and here at the 6.5 level, the fullness of all manifestation from the beginning of the universe and the emptiness of all levels of awareness **Interpenetrates** and is seen upon reflection.



## What's Next: A Speculation

The next **Tier** is the **Unified Tier**. If the patterns repeat then 7.0 would see **Unified Individual Receptive** parameters. If 7.5 repeats the previous **Tier** patterns we would see **Unified Individual Active**. 8.0 would have the parameters of **Unified Collective Reciprocal** and 8.5's parameters would be **Unified, Collective, Interpenetrative**. We don't know if the patterns will repeat, and are excited to see what happens as research evolves to include people at the latest STAGES of development in the **Unified Tier**.

In Summary, the STAGES model is an innovative tool for understanding the developmental trajectory of human consciousness. It has statistical support with ongoing research using an evolutionary research methodology that continuously clarifies and adjusts findings as new information is discovered.

It offers capacities that allow us to understand our evolving personhood as well as evolving collectives. This provides an understanding of the importance and effectiveness of rocking back and forth between self-discovery and collective connections. It allows space for our unique expressions that stereotypes cannot compute and unique collectives that stereotypes cannot configure.

The repeating patterns offer us a road map to our future and provide understanding of how to draw on past experiences to help this future unfold in graceful manner. Rather than striving for height, we can discover health at every developmental level and resolve shadow at each stage. By living a healthy life each step of the way, we naturally shift to later levels of development. In this way, through the STAGES model we see a natural unfolding of Being. We welcome you to the journey!

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