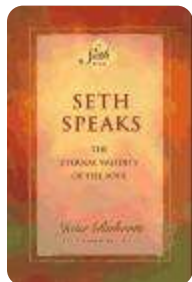




Integral Conscious Creation: Rocket Science for the Soul
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I first read *Seth Speaks* in May 1976 and, like so many, was instantly blown away. Since then, my life's journey continued through the arts, science education, and more recently, spirituality. I became involved with Sethnet Int'l and its founders – Lynda Dahl and Stan Ulkowski – in the mid-1990s. By September of 1998 I became the moderator of the Sethnet email list. It started out slowly, but by Spring 2003 has grown to over eleven hundred subscribers from more than thirty countries. During that time I also created the NewWorldView Community Forums, now home to over four hundred and seventy folks. These are only two of over a dozen Seth and conscious creation-related online forums. So the Seth material continues to inspire new and old readers alike.

As you might imagine, participants range from novices to seasoned folks, and teenagers to seniors. The topics of conversation, debate, and gossip cover just about everything: relationships, finances, war, peace, health, death, humor, avant-garde science, and philosophy – you name it. After monitoring five years of discussions I've discerned a center of gravity to describe the “average” Seth reader: they've read the most popular Seth books, perhaps five to ten, though often little of Jane's fiction, Aspect Psychology, or poetry. They're also widely read in other spiritual, New Age, scientific, and artistic areas. The main focus, by far and away, has been on the ideas of Seth “the expert” as opposed to Jane's excellent writings (these are only generalizations and not a description of any single individual).

During this time *The Early Sessions* were published (3,162 new pages, thanks to the tireless efforts of Jane's husband, Robert F. Butts, and former student Rick Stack) raising the total to thirty-six books. And there are even more on the horizon (i.e. *The Personal Sessions*). As people shared interpretations, personal stories, and read the new books, new insights emerged. It became clearer to me that my own understanding of the Seth material was still incomplete, and that the nineteen books of Seth material even *taken as a whole* were an incomplete body of work. In other words, there can never be a *complete* translation of “the Truth” into the molds of language, not even the Seth material. Therefore, the books are *always snapshots*. Spoken languages don't have the precision of mathematics, and even if they did, they'd produce only more refined snapshots.

In a similar light, Seth said in session 47, April 24, 1964 that,

“Truth contains no distortions, and this material with all my best efforts, and with yours, of necessity must contain distortions merely in order to make itself exist at all on your plane. I will never condone an attitude in which either you [Rob] or [Jane] maintain that you hold undiluted truth through these sessions.

“Any material, to exist on your plane, must to some extent don the attire of your plane, and in the very entry to your plane it must be somewhat distorted. I must use phrases with which your minds are somewhat familiar. I must use [Jane's] subconscious to some degree. If I did not take advantage of your own camouflage system, then you would not be able to understand the material at this time.

“Inner data, even this, must make its entry through some distortion. We must always work together, but you must never consider me as an infallible source. This material is more valid than any material possible on your plane, but it is nevertheless to some degree conditioned by the camouflage attributes of the plane.

“... I want to make it plain that we are certainly not setting up a new dogma.” (1)

And, yes, when dictated in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s this material may have been “more valid” than any other *in its domain* and may still be, but it is not infallible, perfect, or complete. This is a very important distinction to make because it opens the door, in 2003, to explore other sources – scientific, artistic, and spiritual – that can help us mine new ideas found in this growing body of work.

That is, the Seth material doesn’t exist in a vacuum but nested within a cultural framework – *a continually changing collective worldview* in which it finds its deeper meaning and relevance. To ignore other points of view is to create a box of limiting belief systems. Now, I’m not suggesting that Seth/Jane/Rob’s work is thus somehow inferior. Nothing could be further from my intent. As we’ll see, I’m simply proposing a new method to break out of the box that says we can get a complete or “best” picture of the Seth material from only the Seth material. That view often results in Sethism – the dogmatic adherence to Seth’s words and persona as “the Truth.”

I’m proposing a new multidisciplinary strategy that may eventually help bring the work of Seth, Jane, and Rob into the mainstream.

Time and again, someone on Sethnet or NewWorldView would ask about good ways to introduce the Seth material to spouses, friends, co-workers, or kids. While people in the forums would recommend this book or that, one approach or another, I realized that Seth, Jane, and Rob had spent over twenty years laying down a conceptual foundation that was not contained in any single book. In other words, while the New Age axiom *you create your own reality* is traceable to *The Nature of Personal Reality* (1974), it covers *only* a snapshot of how conscious creation actually works.

So the question kept bouncing around in my head, “What’s a good way to introduce the work of Jane Roberts to new folks as well as provide long-time readers with new ‘eyes’ to ‘see’ even further?”

Seth made a bold statement, “We have never told anybody to do anything, except to face up to the abilities of consciousness.” (2) And since “the abilities of consciousness” include change and growth, this implies that the Seth material is innately designed to promote personal and collective growth. Therefore, the primary focus of this strategy is a new method in which to help folks “see” conscious creation in a new light, one that keeps the books and personalities secondary because *it promotes personal transformation first*.

And though the process has taken several years, I’ve formulated the outlines of a viable approach that I’m calling *Integral Conscious Creation*. It:

- Promotes multiple perspectives and makes no claim to have the final say or one true interpretation.
- Includes exercises and other practical applications to promote personal transformation.
- Includes a thorough overview of the core ideas in the Seth material.
- Outlines a scalable methodology that *anyone* can use to mine new insights from existing and emerging knowledge domains.
- Helps demystify the channeling phenomenon – one of the thorniest issues in the mainstream coming to terms with the Seth material.
- Shows how all the above fits into a wider organizing principle – emerging new worldviews – that affects *all* people globally, and doesn’t privilege genders, races, or special interest groups.
- Is done in a way that doesn’t reek of scientism, New Age religious woo-woo, or Sethism. (No small task, indeed!)

For the past six years I've been researching "evolutionary" theory, psychology, philosophy, theology, and other channeled information that greatly expanded my understanding and appreciation of the Seth material. It was in the work of American philosopher Ken Wilber and his "integral approach" that I finally found a method to tie it all together, one that includes the first viable postmodern theory of consciousness. I also believe that the integral approach *forms a critical methodological stepping-stone* with the potential to create authentic dream-art sciences (3) down the road.

The integral approach is like a hip-hop song that gets "sampled" from lots of different sources. That is, it seeks out the best "grooves" and assembles them in a unique new song. For example, the drumbeats may come from a James Brown record, brass stabs from an Earth, Wind, and Fire song, and a bass guitar riff from a David Bowie CD. All are mixed with original lyrics and additional sounds. Together, these different samples form a unique, derivative work in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In the same way the integral approach "samples" from a variety of research methods and knowledge domains to provide a more complete approach while also acknowledging its own shortcomings. But this "song" is so thorough that it begins to sound more like a "symphony" of Kosmic proportions!

In a nutshell, then, the first "samples" in our integral "symphony" begin with German sociologist Max Weber's "big three" that define the primary knowledge domains of the modern era. They are considered primary because we can't reduce one to the other, and each relies on the unique perspectives inherent in most languages (in parentheses):

- Science (It, Its)
- Art (I)
- Morals (We)

Next, we add the *three ways to "see truth"* from the perennial philosophy (e.g., St. Bonaventure):

- Eye of Flesh (empiricism, outer senses)
- Eye of Mind (rationalism, thought processes)
- Eye of Spirit (mysticism, inner senses)

Then, we add the *developmental stages and states* mapped by the premodern, modern, and postmodern philosophers/psychologists (e.g., Patanjali, Shankara, Nagarjuna, Plotinus, Aurobindo, Freud, Jung, Piaget, Wilber, etc.) and cast them within Jane Roberts's Cosmology:

- Framework 1 (Physical Field):
 - Physical Objects (quantum fields)
 - Physical Bodies
 - Physical Minds (Waking State)
- Framework 2, 3, 4... (Subtle Field):
 - Subtle "Objects" (EEs/electromagnetic energy units)
 - Subtle "Bodies"
 - Subtle Minds (Dreaming State)
- Pyramid Energy Gestalts (Causal Field):
 - Causal "Objects" (CUs/consciousness units)
 - Causal "Bodies"
 - Causal Mind (Deep Dreamless State)
- All-That-Is (Physical, Subtle, Causal Fields):
 - all the above nested together

Next, we add the *developmental intelligences* mapped by the cognitive, developmental, transpersonal, and integral psychologists (e.g., Piaget, Maslow, Gardner, Graves, Grof, Kohlberg, Gilligan, Loevinger, Beck, Kegan, Wilber, etc.). Examples of the over two dozen mapped to date include:

- Cognition
- Worldviews (i.e., belief systems)
- Emotional
- Musical
- Mathematical
- Linguistic
- Moral
- Spiritual

Next, we add *typologies* to cover additional personality aspects. Examples include:

- Genders (Male/Female)
- Myers-Briggs
- The Enneagram (Gurdjieff)
- Families of Consciousness (Roberts)
- Orientations (Ennis)
- Thought-Emotional-Political-Religious Focus (Ennis)

Finally, we map all of the above onto a matrix of essential *perspectives* and related *validity claims* from German social philosopher Habermas (in parentheses):

1. Outer / singular / It / behavior (propositional truth) in relation to...
2. Inner / singular / I / intention (personal integrity, sincerity) in relation to...
3. Inner / plural / We / culture (justness, intersubjective mesh, mutual understanding) in relation to...
4. Outer / plural / Its / social structures (functional fit).

To summarize, the integral approach provides a new method to explore the:

- Science of Conscious Creation as body, mind, and spirit unfold-in-time/no-time.
- Art of Conscious Creation as body, mind, and spirit unfold-in-time/no-time.
- Morals of Conscious Creation as body, mind, and spirit unfold-in-time/no-time.

Therefore, in its simplest expression the integral approach explores:

- Science, art, and morals in body, mind, and spirit.

Though it sounds complex, it's just another roadmap, but one that includes a synthesis of premodern, modern, and postmodern roadmaps. It integrates the greatest number of truths from the *greatest number of knowledge domains*. The integral approach purposefully makes no claim to be absolute or final and is thus intentionally open-ended. But it provides an exciting new way to interpret any body of work, not just the Seth material. So *anyone* can apply this method to *any* knowledge domain. Therefore, the idea is to interpret the creative genius of Seth, Jane, and Rob through the "eyes" of the scientific, artistic, and moral domains of body, mind, and spirit from the past three thousand years. For example, through the lenses of Leibniz, Einstein, Heisenberg, Bohm, Hawking, Beethoven, Stravinsky, Picasso, Dali, Plato, Plotinus, Nagarjuna, Aurobindo, Wilber to name a few.

This approach also helps combat the fact that to date many interpretations of Seth/Jane focus heavily on the second perspective (Inner / singular / I) to the exclusion of *all* others. That is, perspectives 1, 3, and 4 above get reduced to the narrower perspective 2. This often results in beliefs such as:

- You are me.
- We are me.
- It is me.

Taken to this extreme, conscious creation tilts towards a solipsistic perspective. For example, my outer ego consciously creates All-That-Is = Nothing Exists But Me. And while those beliefs suit the narcissistic, self-absorbed Me Generation, e.g. Wilber's *Boomeritis* (2002), conscious creation gets reduced to an inflated outer ego with an arrested realization of deep interrelationship to other outer egos, the environment, and inner selves, much less All-That-Is.

While there's no accurate way to present how this all works in a single article, I am writing a book called *Integral Conscious Creation* that fleshes it out. My intent is to raise more questions than provide pat answers. And this is very much in the spirit of how Seth, Jane, and Rob approached their own experience and developed their theories. Therefore, my inquiry is intended to plant new seeds that stimulate further speculation and constructive dialogue about the practical applications of their work through new, expanded "eyes."

In summary, an integral conscious creation paradigm is a stepping-stone toward the realization of Seth's dream-art science. Its starting point consists of:

- *Integral approach* (i.e., science, art, and morals in body, mind, and spirit).
- "*Roadmaps*" found in the Seth Material (e.g., All-That-Is / frameworks of consciousness / triune psyche / consciousness units, etc.).
- *Practices* (exercises found in the Seth Material).

Though it will eventually use different words and formulations, it is clear that Seth is talking about an authentic transpersonal science within a community of practice. Thus, in order to formulate and implement dream-art science, we *first* need to work out the bugs in Wilber's integral methodology, theory of consciousness, and begin to map the personal transformation of consciousness researchers alike. Take it or leave it, but make no mistake – the path toward an authentic dream-art science goes *through* Wilber's model and critical theory. (4) Therefore, this is a foundational area for leading edge research agendas in consciousness studies to flesh out in the decades ahead.

Now, Seth made another bold statement that someday,

"This material will take its place in the conceptual and emotional life of Western civilization, and finally will make its way throughout the world. New ideas are not accepted easily. When they take fire however, they literally sweep through the universe."

(5)

Was this the beer talking – the grandiose ramblings of an inflated outer ego, the musings of an authentic "prophet," or something in between? It is still too early to tell. However, notice that Seth said, "take its place." That implies it won't transgress, subvert, or deconstruct previous *or* subsequent knowledge sources, but that it has the potential to become a legitimized contribution to the overall knowledge quest.

My goal is to contribute toward the realization of that probable future. If you find it useful, consider how you might add your own contribution. If you can improve upon it, feel free to do so. My formulation is in no way the final answer or intended for everyone. But it is intended to stimulate the further creation of first-rate exegetical (i.e. interpretive) works that promote personal transformation, self-realization, and holistic growth during this time of accelerating change. In the mean time, you can check the online forums below for further previews.

Endnotes:

(1) Jane Roberts, *The Early Sessions: Book 2 of the Seth Material*, New Awareness Network, Manhasset, NY, session 47, p. 41.

(2) Jane Roberts, *The Individual and the Nature of Mass Events*, Amber Allen, San Raphael, CA, 1995, p. ix.

(3) For more info on Seth's dream-art science, see sessions 700-704 in *The "Unknown" Reality*, Vol. 1 (1996), p. 181-214. Exemplars include the true dream-art scientist, true mental physicist, and complete physician.

(4) Wilber's Critical Theory: A Summary

- First, identify orienting generalizations – the partial truths in symbolic form called metaphors – in a given field or body of work. For the moment, simply assume they are indeed true.
- Second, arrange these metaphoric truths into chains or networks of interlocking conclusions. Pose the following question to all of the orienting generalizations: What coherent system would in fact incorporate the greatest number of these truths?
- Third, once we've identified the overall scheme that incorporates the greatest number of orienting generalizations, use that scheme to criticize the partiality of narrower approaches, even though we've included the basic truths from those approaches. Criticize not their truths, but their partial nature.

The following is by Jack Crittenden:

"... In working in any field, Wilber simply backs up to a level of abstraction at which the various conflicting approaches actually agree with one another. Take, for example, the world's great religious traditions: Do they all agree that Jesus is God? No. So we must jettison that. Do they all agree that there is a God? That depends on the meaning of 'God.' Do they all agree on God, if by 'God' we mean a Spirit that is in any ways unqualifiable, from the Buddhist's Emptiness to the Jewish mystery of the Divine [or Jane Roberts's All-That-Is]? Yes, that works as a generalization – what Wilber calls an 'orienting generalization' or 'sturdy conclusion.'

"Wilber likewise approaches all the other fields of human knowledge: art to poetry, empiricism to hermeneutics, psychoanalysis to meditation, evolutionary theory to idealism. In every case he assembles as series of sturdy and reliable, not to say irrefutable, orienting generalizations. He is not worried, nor should his readers be, about whether other fields would accept the conclusions of any given field; in short, don't worry, for example, if empiricist conclusions do not match religious conclusions. Instead, simply assemble all the orienting conclusions as if each field had incredibly important truths to tell us. This is exactly Wilber's first step in his integrative methods – a type of phenomenology of all human knowledge conducted at the level of orienting generalizations. In other words, assemble all of the truths that each field believes it has to offer humanity. For the moment, simply assume they are indeed true.

"Wilber then arranges these truths into chains or networks of interlocking conclusions. At this point Wilber veers sharply from a method of mere eclecticism and into a systematic vision. For the second step in Wilber's method is to take all of the truths or orienting generalizations assembled in the first step and then pose this question: What coherent system would in fact incorporate the greatest number of these truths?

"The system presented in *Sex, Ecology, and Spirituality* ... is, Wilber claims, the system that incorporates the greatest number of orienting generalizations from the greatest number of fields of human inquiry. Thus, if it holds up, Wilber's vision incorporates and honors, it integrates, more truth than any other system in history.

"The general idea is straightforward. It is not which theorist is right and which is wrong. His idea is that everyone is basically right, and he wants to figure out how that can be so. 'I don't believe,' Wilber says, 'that any human mind is capable of 100

percent error. So instead of asking which approach is right and which is wrong, we assume each approach is true but partial, and then try to figure out how to fit these partial truth together, how to integrate them – not how to pick one and get rid of the others.’

“The third step in Wilber’s overall approach is the development of a new type of critical theory. Once Wilber has the overall scheme that incorporates the greatest number of orienting generalizations, he then uses that scheme to criticize the partiality of narrower approaches, even though he has included the basic truths from those approaches. He criticizes not their truths, but their partial nature.

“... I asked Wilber how he himself thought of his work. ‘I’d like to think of it as one of the first believable world philosophies, a genuine embrace of East and West, North and South.’ Which is interesting, inasmuch as Huston Smith (author of *The World’s Religions* and subject of Bill Moyers’ highly acclaimed television series *The Wisdom of Faith*) recently stated, ‘No one – not even Jung – has done as much as Wilber to open Western psychology to the durable insights of the world’s wisdom traditions. Slowly but surely, book by book, Ken Wilber is laying the foundations for a genuine East/West psychology.’

“At the same time, Ken adds, ‘People shouldn’t take it too seriously. It’s just orienting generalizations. It leaves all the details to be filled in any way you like.’ In short, Wilber is not offering a conceptual straightjacket. Indeed, it is just the opposite: ‘I hope I’m showing that there is more room in the Kosmos than you might have suspected.’” [Foreword to *The Eye of Spirit*, 1997, p.ix-xi.]

(5) Op. cit., session 82, p. 314.