

Foreword by **KEN WILBER**, founder *The Integral Vision*



Global Unitive Healing

Integral Skills for Personal
and Collective Transformation

ELENA MUSTAKOVA

Afterword by **CLAUDIA WELSS**, Chairman, Institute of Noetic Sciences

Global Unitive Healing

Integral Skills for Personal
and Collective Transformation

ELENA MUSTAKOVA



Copyright © 2021

All rights reserved.

This book or part thereof may not be reproduced in any form, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means-electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise without prior written permission of the publisher, except as provided by United States of America copyright law.

The information provided in this book is designed to provide helpful information on the subjects discussed. This book is not meant to be used, nor should it be used, to diagnose or treat any medical condition. The author and publisher are not responsible for any specific health needs that may require medical supervision and are not liable for any damages or negative consequences from any treatment, action, application, or preparation, to any person reading or following the information in this book.

References are provided for information purposes only and do not constitute endorsement of any websites or other sources. In the event you use any of the information in this book for yourself, the author and the publisher assume no responsibility for your actions.

Books may be purchased through booksellers or by contacting Sacred Stories Publishing.

Interior Art: Ksenia Gray

Global Unitive Healing: Integral Skills for Personal and Collective Transformation

Elena Mustakova

Tradepaper ISBN: 978-1-945026-76-8

Electronic ISBN: 978-1-945026-77-5

Library of Congress Control Number: 2021940053

Published by Light on Light Press

An imprint of Sacred Stories Publishing, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Printed in the United States of America

Table of Contents

Foreword by Ken Wilber.....	i
Prologue: What Ails Us.....	xv
Introduction.....	xxiii

PART ONE: Awakening from Our Daze and Leaving Home

Chapter 1: The Ancient Art of Deep Listening: Who Are We?.....	3
Our Modern Predicament.....	4
Mindfulness.....	8
What We Hear When We Listen.....	11
What Grounds and Stabilizes the Human Psyche.....	16
Chapter 2: Discerning Engagement and the Integrated Life.....	19
A Search for Truth Cut Short.....	20
Discernment: Recognizing Soul.....	22
From Individualism to Spiritual Awakening.....	33
A Mystical Perspective on Choice, Free Will and Character.....	37
Chapter 3: What is Mind?.....	45
What is Mind?.....	46
The Choice to Become Conscious.....	52
With Awareness and Mental Balance, What Next?.....	65
The Role of Faith in the Healthy Development of Mind.....	68
Chapter 4: Love: The Gift of a Spacious and Receptive Heart.....	75
Connection and Intuitive Knowing.....	76
The Role of Heart in the Integration of Mind.....	81
Heart-Mind Epistemology.....	89
The Role of Spiritual Love in Integral Healing.....	95

PART TWO: The Perilous Journey to Common Ground

Chapter 5: Awakening to the Healing Power of Language	111
Maps of Reality: How Social Structures Become Thought	114

A Journey to a Language that Heals.....	117
Integral Spiritual Language That Fosters Constructive Resilience and Harmony	121
Unitive Healing and Our Relationship to the Whole	128
Chapter 6: A New Universal Spiritual Language for the Way of Unity	131
An Integral Understanding with Skills for The Way of Unity	133
Individual, Interpersonal, and Social Growth Beyond Disunity	144
Unitive Healing in the 20 th Century and Beyond.....	155
Living into a Unitive Vision of Reality	158
PART THREE: Resolution and Finding New Ground through Constructive Collective Action	
Chapter 7:	
Embodying the Soul of a Nation: The U.S. as Laboratory of the World... 167	
The Bald Eagle: The Soaring Aspiration of a Youthful Nation	168
The Power of Language and the U.S. Crisis of Legitimacy	173
Unity in Diversity: Psycho-Social and Spiritual Dimensions of The Path Forward	177
Building Unity in Our Diversity Through National Consultation	185
Chapter 8: A New Creation: Planetary Horizons of Unitive Healing..... 189	
The Forces of Our Time.....	190
The Rational Soul as an Active Participant in the Social Order.....	191
Beyond Discouragement: Working with the Dynamics of Historical Change.....	199
From Adolescent Spontaneity to Mature Methodology: New Collective Centers.....	203
Afterword by Claudia Welss.....	211
Appendix	217
Acknowledgements	247
Notes	249
Bibliography	279
Index	297
About the Author	309

Introduction

*That the horizons of the hearts...may be illumined with
the light of concord and attain real peace and tranquility.⁹*

This book is a response to the massive search for ways to find wellbeing and purpose under conditions of deepening crises and uncertain global transformations—some that have been a long time coming, others exacerbated and brought to light as COVID-19 swept the continents. It was written in 2020, an historic year that has changed virtually everything. The dramatic intensity of this moment—in which a global pandemic has collided with widespread poverty and corruption, coupled with environmental degradation and rapid climate change, and further complicated by waves of massive radicalization and extremism—is the gripping reality we continue to face. Not only are we on shaky ground, we can't seem to find ground at all.

The book offers a path to ground ourselves in practical understanding and psychological, social and spiritual skills which empower hearts and minds to negotiate a post-COVID world. I draw on case studies of lives from Europe to Africa, from the United States and South America, to the Middle East and as far East as China and Australia. Each chapter offers vignettes of clients navigating the full range of human suffering—including loneliness, alienation, religious and ethnic persecution, social oppression, anxiety and

relational distress, addictions and eating disorders, depression, personality and attention deficit disorders, and more severe mental illness. The specific names and circumstances have been modified to preserve confidentiality, but each life helps the cross-cultural reader see how past, present and future weave together.

When people struggle with disparate parts of their personal, social and cultural reality, they heal and become whole as they grasp the underlying wholeness of their experiences and see a path forward with fellow human beings. The book describes this wholeness as an evolutionary perspective that unites science and spirituality into *the way of unity*—a path of constructive resilience and consultative, empowered, systematic responses, both individual and collective, to the complexities of a post-COVID world.

Humanity has always loved stories because some of the best ones tell of the arduous journey of our evolution through hardship into becoming wiser, more mature, kinder, better humans capable of always prospering anew. Therefore, the book is organized in three acts that emulate the classic hero's journey described by Joseph Campbell in his study of world mythology and culture: leaving home, the perilous journey, resolution and finding new ground.

Awakening from Our Daze and Leaving Home

The quintessential hero's journey parallels the personal journey that landed me into writing this book. Like many of the lives that have inspired me, I, too, had to leave home. I grew up amidst the social experiment of European socialist totalitarianism. I remember school classrooms plastered with slogans promising a bright future ahead, while we all knew, even as children, that the system was perverted and repressive; but it was dangerous to speak out.

After travels through Europe and some time living in Africa, I came to the United States as a young woman and it became my second homeland. To my surprise, Americans in this land of freedom seemed culturally lulled by the promise of a better, happier life through consumerism. The more things

you buy, the “better off” you are. My doctoral studies focused on how people in every part of the world develop an empowered, discerning and morally coherent consciousness in different cultural and social contexts. Little did I know that my research on the evolution of critical moral consciousness in the individual lifespan¹⁰ would, three decades later, turn out to be a critical understanding necessary to face an unraveling world.

Much has been written about all the tensions of our globalizing world—economic, racial, religious, environmental, political. Yet the biggest tension centers around the fundamental fact that our current dominant worldview and motivation, our culture wars and ways of living, have come to a crashing point and need to be transformed. We have arrived collectively at “Our Moment of Choice,” as captured in the new anthology by that title.¹¹

We were already suspecting the unsustainability of globalizing greed and corruption in pre-COVID-19 times. We felt its corrosive impact on our societies. We witnessed millions of people uprooted from their native lands by proxy wars of clashing ideological and economic interests that sowed poverty, by ethnic and religious conflicts, and by environmental disasters.

We were experiencing the loss of credibility of traditional institutions and centers of authority. And we were grappling with a rising pandemic of diverse and dark addictions, anxiety and depression, while the porn industry thrives on global misery.

We ignored the accelerating climate crisis and its pending ramifications as well as the unsustainability of a global economy based on endless financial speculation, greed and debt. In 2018, scientists warned us that we have 12 years to reconsider the myth of unlimited economic growth and to reverse the course of climate change and global warming, after which there can be no return.¹² But people kept going, as though in a daze, despite the accelerating tide of change, trying to maintain normalcy of life—focusing their worldview on earning a living, raising families, finding ways to belong. In the face of rapidly eroding meaning and values, we managed to distract ourselves from the deepening

contradictions and growing uncertainty, aided by our smart devices and a thriving entertainment industry.

Then, suddenly, the COVID-19 pandemic brought the world to a halt. Millions lost their jobs and as the coronavirus spread across boundaries, we were suddenly awakened to our intricate and unavoidable interdependence.

This new reality calls on ordinary people to rise to new levels of agency and mindful choice. Maps are needed. Practical strategies, accessible to people from every walk of life, have to emerge as we all learn how to move toward *constructive resilience and collaboration* to address the shifting ground of our lives.

Leaders at the level of the United Nations have recognized this as a watershed moment.¹³ *We are clearly all leaving home as we knew it to be and our present ways cannot see us through to a new destination.* Notwithstanding the many positive historical trends seen over recent decades,¹⁴ *our collective relationship to meaning is broken ...*

Life Meaning, Worldview and Ideology

For most of human history, life meaning and purpose were defined by participation in a particular cultural tradition and language. Since the 19th century, we have been questioning and deconstructing many of these traditions, both personal family traditions, as well as cultural and religious traditions as interpreted by clergy. The unexpected effect of that liberating process can be compared to the Biblical Tower of Babel¹⁵—the emergence of so many mutually incoherent, compartmentalized, contradictory, piecemeal discourses that they fail to help us see our place in a rapidly changing world.

In an age of global education, democratization, information and know-how, this deepening cacophony has, ironically, facilitated everything from child and human trafficking to genocides to violent supremacist ideologies and the conscious depletion of planetary resources on a perilous scale. Basic

human standards of decency no longer hold. Patriotic civic ideals of the past are not enough to counter the massive corruption in every society nor the tide of fabricated “news” and conspiracy theories.

What *is* the meaning and purpose of our lives in a highly commodified, technological, sped-up, crisis-ridden and interdependent world where vastly different cultural groups and worldviews intermingle and clash?

How do we move beyond ideological conflicts and the enormous stress and loss of life they cause? Can we see how these ideologies are insufficient and different than a worldview that can reliably carry us forward?

A *worldview* is an internally coherent way of making sense of life—an essential aspect of personality and culture. *Ideology*, in contrast, has the fundamentally antagonistic purpose of *cultivating* a complex structure of affect, cognition and action aimed at reproducing social relations of *domination* over other worldviews or ideologies.¹⁶ Unlike a worldview, an ideology cannot be examined critically from within, without that being perceived as a threat.

The 20th century gave rise to ideologies—such as capitalism, Marxism, communism, Nazism, scientific materialism, religious fundamentalism, New Atheism, neoliberalism. They promote ready-made worldviews that are uncritically accepted as a direct path to inclusion into communities of power. Some of these ideologies have now mutated into subversive and militant operations undermining the very foundation of democratic processes worldwide. They prey on human greed, hopelessness and prejudice and destroy the foundations of civilization, creating the illusion of empowerment in the midst of current large-scale, global convulsions. Ideologically narrow meanings and the spread of consumerism have blunted the critical faculty in people and societies. Despite universal education, the trend has been toward a general escape into mass consciousness and virtual realities.¹⁷

The opposite process has also been under way throughout the 20th century: a search for integrative solutions that offer a new path of cultural and social evolution and bring us forward together—the human rights and women’s

rights movements, consciousness studies, the interfaith and interspirituality movement,¹⁸ and the rise of a global ethic,¹⁹ the integral and holistic understanding of development²⁰ and the deep ecology movement. Since the 1990s, a growing body of publications have recognized *both* the remarkable progressive leaps in human civilization and the evident untenability of the myth of unlimited economic growth as a driver of civilization.²¹ There have been many intelligent and thoughtful warnings that the challenges humanity faces are reaching a critical mass; that ecological disruption, population growth and poverty require significant social restructuring to forestall global chaos.²² The movement toward worldwide transformative change has been rapidly gaining momentum.²³ Now it is not just thought leaders but ordinary people from every walk of life who intuit that, much as we may wish to return to things as we knew them, we cannot. And we are scared of what lies ahead.

The Perilous Journey Ahead to Common Ground

Faced with the staggering ramifications of a world not coordinated enough to reliably address its paralyzing global challenges and torn by divisive extremist movements, the majority find themselves with no context or vision of how life can return to “normal.” It has become apparent that we cannot thrive while the world as we have known it for generations—its organizing principles, boundaries and institutions—are becoming rapidly obsolete. Modern civilization is struggling to preserve the best of its rich and diverse history and to develop it into a sustainable foundation for the future.

The healing ahead is collective and ontological, not a single trick. It involves a transformation in the way we think about who we are, what life is, and what ultimately matters.²⁴ It also involves a transformation in how we work together.

In describing this perilous transformation, I strive to inspire ordinary lives with the horizons of adult development now possible for every one of us—horizons which, in past centuries, were only known to an esoteric few. From

the point of entry into adulthood, our sense of self can continue to deepen and expand with growing understanding of the context of our lives. Adult development advances toward an increasing grasp of principles. Mature adult consciousness manifests as a principled, prosocial worldview, which allows us to heal and transform our lives toward wholeness. From a social-cognitive developmental perspective, this is not the automatic product of age, but is acquired through the evolution of a principled understanding of life, often transcending culturally inherited beliefs.

This book guides the reader to awaken to core evolutionary principles, which can be thought of metaphorically as an “alphabet.” Using this alphabet, we have the opportunity, individually and collectively, to grow up and create a new language that works for *all* in a planetary society, because it honors the soul of humanity and guides the creation of a more sustainable world grounded in justice and wholeness.

This book has gestated through decades of scholarship and clinical work with individuals and families struggling with fear, bewilderment, disillusionment and chaos that upended their familiar constructs, constituted existential threats to their realities and required them to step into the unknown. Bearing witness to these journeys, I have realized that the evolutionary journey of humanity is the developmental journey of a single human writ large.

Developmental psychology views the individual lifespan as a double helix in which the cycle of empowering self-formation is followed by a cycle of liberating self-transcendence. In the first cycle, we painstakingly construct a sense of identity around values and individual calling, and we establish a place in the social commons. We both seek and fear freedom. We negotiate internal and external oppression. We find our voices. We learn how to thrive as ego-formation mutates more and more into ego-transcendence. This process is both liberating and confusing as we begin to realize the limits and limitations of our accomplishments and seek a greater love, a greater cause beyond our wants, desires and fears. That is the nexus of the emergence of mature adulthood. To

navigate it well, *we need to see how our individual trajectories fit organically within a larger picture.*

Collective history reveals an evolutionary pattern that parallels individual development: the broadening of cultural allegiances from families and clans, to city states and nations, to even geopolitical strategic alliances. Now all sectors of our societies are in disarray and in need of the next level of evolutionary transformation toward a complex, globally-coordinated, social system.

My guiding premise is that the social and historical macro reality of a turbulent and globalizing world that lacks maps for the transformation it is undergoing is *woven*, like a Moebius strip,²⁵ *into every micro moment of our lives.* If we cannot understand the evolutionary dynamics of the times, we fail to grasp what our encounters and experiences call for, and we are left perplexed. This book *weaves together the macro reality of this unique time on our planet with our micro experience of moment by moment living* so that an integrated perspective can emerge for every person on our *passage into healing and wellbeing amidst the new story we are living.*²⁶

What understanding, and what corresponding practices can stabilize our experience of living amidst such unprecedented times?

All life is motion, the motion of becoming, in which new paradigms emerge.²⁷ Yet developmental shifts are always perilous and painstaking. A healthy holding environment is essential to successful development. It fulfills three important functions: 1) It supports the developing person, 2) it provides meaningful challenges, and 3) it remains in place during the arduous process of transformation.²⁸ Amidst our collective uncertainty, the global interfaith and interspiritual movement, as well as the scientific understanding of cultural evolution toward greater prosociality,²⁹ provide an emergent holding environment as people negotiate the necessary changes in worldview. Further help comes through practical efforts to identify innovative action steps from United Nations declarations and documents as well as organizations around the world.³⁰

Now we have to grasp what it looks like for an ordinary life to become infused by these macro perspectives and to evolve into *maturation of mind, body, soul and spirit and authentic and empowered engagement with self, community, and one's socio-historical and planetary context*. Each chapter explores a particular facet of restructuring as a Moebius strip of interdependent inner and outer, individual and collective rethinking and reorganizing toward more authentic relationships at a higher level of unity in our diversity.

Resolution and Finding New Ground Through Constructive Collective Action

The biggest discovery of the new millennium has been the awareness of our interdependence. As evolutionary biologist David Sloan Wilson points out, “Once life is seen as a vast interconnected system, certain ethical conclusions follow.”³¹ In a world arguably governed more by the worldwide web than by governments, where the global impact of viruses and extreme climate events spreads immediately, no person can fully heal alone or protect just their own family or community. We clearly need new collective centers of illumination and guidance—ones that can serve the needs of the whole planet. Such collective centers can steer us toward resolution and new ground to the extent that they integrate Enlightenment ideals of reason, science and humanism³² with the profound contemplative insights of world religions that have the power to purify and elevate human motivation. In other words, *resolution is on the way as we embrace the complementarity of true science and true spirituality and act consultatively to create governing bodies and processes that reflect both*.

What language can frame these new choices and mindsets toward sustainable wellbeing for all?

Integral Evolutionary Language

An *integral evolutionary language of united vision and action* has been emerging across religious, indigenous, scientific and ecological perspectives. It encompasses both spiritual and scientific understanding of the unitary nature of reality. It seeks to articulate the relationship between the individual soul and life and human community. This language offers a historical synthesis and a comprehensive *methodology* for the restructuring of a globalizing world toward greater peace and wellbeing. I explore it as *the way of unity*.

Without a universal spiritual language and understanding that honors all our diverse traditions, is harmonious with science, and points to a tenable collective way forward, we cannot resolve the moral crisis of our planet. That has been well understood by critical thinkers in the 20th century. One of them, the great psychiatrist Erich Fromm, put it in these words:

... For those who see in the monotheistic religions only one of the stations in the evolution of the human race, it is not too far-fetched to believe that a new religion will develop which corresponds to the development of the human race. The most important feature of such a religion will be its universalistic character, corresponding to the unification of mankind which is taking place in this epoch; it would embrace the humanistic teaching common to all the great religions of the East and of the West; its doctrines would not contradict the rational insight of mankind today, and its emphasis would be on the practice of life, rather than on doctrinal beliefs. Religion can, of course, not be invented. It will come into existence with the appearance of a new great teacher, just as they have appeared in previous centuries when the time was ripe. In the meantime, those who believe in God should express their faith by

living it; those who do not believe, by living the precepts of love and justice – and waiting.³³

The genius of Fromm identified a spiritual phenomenon that had already emerged by the time he wrote these words. The mid-19th century saw the emergence of the Bahá'í integral spiritual paradigm which fused the great religions of the East and West into an evolutionary perspective on human consciousness and community-building. It pointed to a trajectory of collective evolution culminating in a peaceful global civilization. It has been described as “a stream of unitive evolutionary wisdom that has been ahead of the curve for a long time,”³⁴ and its integral premises were masterfully synthesized conceptually in the 21st century in Ken Wilber’s *Integral Spirituality* and *The Religion of Tomorrow*. Yet this unitive spiritual wisdom continues to be largely absent from comprehensive overviews of the consciousness shift under way.³⁵ It marked the beginning of the contemporary interspiritual age and, in many ways, still remains undiscovered in terms of the evolutionary methodological insights it offers to an age of perplexity. This perspective informs my work.

Every time religious languages have been studied for the insights and tools they bring to human life, meaningful psychological understanding has emerged and eventually became helpful to millions. From Hinduism, modern humanity has learned what Andrew Harvey calls *the way of presence*,³⁶ a pure state of consciousness which, when cultivated through meditation, allows people to step beyond the daily anguish of their personal narratives and live with calm, fearlessness and selfless love for all life. From Buddhism, which Harvey calls *the way of clarity*, psychology has derived a depth analysis of human pain and freedom and the micro-dynamics of our emergence from the many prisons of self. This understanding has given rise to a rich field of mindfulness studies and to self-help classics such as Michael Singer’s *The Untethered Soul*. The Jewish mystical understanding of all life as holy and sacred, and of human history as “imbued with divine meaning and divine purpose,”³⁷—*the way of holiness*—,

has emphasized the psychological significance of justice and righteousness in human relations. Lawrence Kohlberg captured it in the lifespan development of moral reasoning. Christianity, which Harvey calls *the way of love in action*, has shed a wealth of understanding on how a life ultimately becomes rich when love and devotion are expressed in “transformation of reality through service.”³⁸ The Christian language has given birth to mystical gems such as Hannah Hurnard’s *Hind’s Feet on High Places*, a moving and insightful allegorical novel about how responding to the call of love overcomes the fears that paralyze us. Islam, which Harvey describes as *the way of passion*, explores the path of direct experience of the living presence of God and “the peace that comes when one’s entire being and life are surrendered”³⁹ to the Ultimate. This mystic love for the Beloved has enriched our grasp of the human experience with the paradoxical depths of Rumi and Ibn Arabi.

The depth and richness of these past religious languages still inspire millions of hearts and minds amidst the turbulence of the new era, as religious people are actively exploring their faith traditions for spiritual answers that can speak meaningfully to these shaky times. There is an intense tension amongst these quests and the unavoidable fact that religions, which have historically answered the search for meaning, typically also require an unquestioned allegiance to constructs that have created irreconcilable divisions among human communities. In the words of a 19th-century prophet Bahá’u’lláh “those priests of error who have hindered the progress of the people in past dispensations”⁴⁰ now stand between people and their deepest unconscious longing—the longing for a spiritual understanding that speaks to an interdependent humanity.

In response to these longings and alongside these wisdom traditions, the 19th-century Bahá’í evolutionary spiritual paradigm represents the first and still little-understood contemporary articulation of the integral *way of unity*. It spelled out a comprehensive evolutionary holistic approach to history and consciousness, significantly before the field of integral studies and the evolutionary worldview emerged. This new Revelation proclaimed the unity of

religion and *combined the mystical with the social and the global into a concrete and revolutionary methodology of collective illumination and transformation.* This book examines that integral approach to healing as a forerunner of contemporary integral evolutionary studies and as a methodology that holds unexplored possibilities for collaborative and effective world governance for people of every class, educational background, and philosophical or religious conviction.

In the rich soil of Islam in ancient Persia (modern Iran), the Twin Founders of this new paradigm, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, stripped the understanding of faith of dogmatic religious distinctions and redefined it as a universal “divine foundation,” “the cause of love in human hearts.”⁴¹ They revealed an evolutionary language and set of metaphors that frame the path of faith as a moment-by-moment integration of body, mind, soul and spirit in an awakened, engaged relationship to oneself, to the advancement of society, and to the historical evolution of human civilization.⁴² Their teachings became embodied at the turn of the 20th century in the unique figure of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.⁴³ His contributions as the first global peace ambassador and a visionary teacher of reconciliation among all religions and races, and between religion and science, have yet to be fully discovered. These teachings about the coming of age of the human race and the deliberate movement toward a united planetary civilization quickly drew both the attention of foremost thinkers such as Tolstoy⁴⁴ and Gandhi,⁴⁵ as well as persecution by the Muslim clergy. They introduced the concept of *progressive revelation*, which removes existing barriers between different religious and wisdom traditions and views them all as part of a continuum of unfolding spiritual understanding that guides the evolution of human civilization. This perspective prepared the ground for the contemporary interfaith and interspirituality movements. It emphasizes the complementarity of scientific and contemplative inquiry, also paving the ground for 20th-century integral philosophy and for the revolutionary discoveries of quantum physicists.

Compare this 1944 statement by the father of quantum theory Max Planck—“All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force. We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent Mind”⁴⁶—to the following statement by Bahá’u’lláh from about 1891: “A mighty force, a consummate power lieth concealed in the world of being ... Fix your gaze upon it and upon its unifying influence, and not upon the differences which appear from it.”⁴⁷ This evolutionary spiritual paradigm pointed to an individual and collective horizon of unitive healing. Whether one accepts its appearance as a significant historical event or not, it seems important to understand how it empowers hearts to overcome polarization and to work collaboratively through the shift toward sustainable, collective wellbeing in an inevitably global society.

Collective Leap of Consciousness

The collective leap of consciousness we find ourselves in the midst of is a shift in how we understand reality and how we work with it. The preponderance of a strictly physicalist understanding of reality has proved to be a dead end for civilization, as the chapters ahead will explore. We are steadily awakening to the essentially spiritual and interdependent evolutionary nature of reality and to what it means to align our individual physical lives and collective governance with the laws that govern this reality. In the words of one of the most significant theoretical physicists of the 20th century, David Bohm:

The essential quality of the infinite is its subtlety, its intangibility. This quality is conveyed in the word spirit, whose root meaning is “wind” or “breath.” That which is truly alive is the energy of spirit, and this is never born and never dies.⁴⁸

The emergent evolutionary language discussed in this book allows us to simultaneously grasp the practical and the scientific, the mystical and the social

in our lives from a depth perspective, coherent with a conscious, boundless and interdependent universe. It helps the reader see how we can recognize the mystical dimension in our daily lives *and in society*⁴⁹ and how it is aligned with a scientific perspective.

My integral clinical approach is grounded in my research on the dimensions and dynamics of the development of critical moral consciousness—a study of optimal lives which integrate the personal with the social, the environmental with the cultural and the historical, into engaged participation in the forward motion of all the value spheres of human civilization. This book strives to help us progress from previous norms of local traditions and nation-building to a “new vision of a global community being built by citizens of the world.”⁵⁰

Due to the complexity of the task—to address aspects and levels of healing from the perspective of both the internal lived human experience and from a systemic collective perspective—the style of writing negotiates the complementarity of objective, rational scientific, as well as experiential and mystical intuitive perspectives and uses of language. It is my hope that you will take this by-definition incomplete effort further as we collectively evolve a language that speaks non-dichotomously to the unitary experience of living in a world struggling to come together.

Book Structure

Part One, *Awakening from Our Daze and Leaving Home*, establishes the main “protagonists” in the process of radical healing, so to speak. These are the ingredients of what has been called Waking Up to our divine nature, our full moral capacity.⁵¹ Part One concludes with the catalyst that propels a change, after which things can never return to the way they were.

Chapter 1 begins with the ancient art of deep listening as the fundamental approach to any healing. It confronts us with the central questions of a well-lived life: Who am I? Who are we? What is life really about amidst the accelerating

velocity and uncertainty of the current context? It looks at the role of mental pace in our ability to become aware of what is driving us to find ground, to self-regulate and to choose mindfully and deliberately. It offers a way to reflect on our depth motivation, take stock and begin to separate that which ultimately holds from that which does not.

Chapter 2 focuses on what we begin to hear when we deep listen: the call of the inner Self, of our higher nature longing to be fulfilled through this embodied life despite all of life's threats and limitations. It offers a comprehensive developmental horizon of the integrated life.

Chapter 3 explores a conscious and healthy relationship to the gift of human mind, both in our moment-to-moment experience of living and in our relationship to reality.

Chapter 4 rethinks the role of heart in human understanding and thriving. It points to emergent integral ways of knowing and being, which are the catalyst for the consciousness shift occurring amidst the overwhelming uncertainty of our current lives.

Part Two, *The Perilous Journey Ahead to Common Ground*, depicts the “rising action”—the challenge not just before leaders but before each one of us in every country: to come out of our partitioned and divisive identities, out of our inertia, to purify our motivation and to open the door to collaborative transformative action across our diversity. This process has been described as Growing Up and Cleaning Up—healing and reconciliation, shadow work. I examine the key role of language and metaphor in conscious evolution. I also look at how *the way of unity* grew and expanded throughout the 20th century, broadening immensely our scientific and spiritual horizons of possibility. This latter process has been described as Linking Up—creating cooperative and synergized work together, and Lifting Up—co-energizing and co-inspiring.⁵²

Chapter 5 awakens us to the formative power of language as the first psychic layer at which macro-cultural values and beliefs are woven into the experience of each moment and into the ways we understand our embodied lives. We look

at how prevalent and unconsciously used socio-cultural languages reproduce historically entrenched limited developmental perspectives and keep people stuck in anachronistic attitudes, unresponsive to the needs and realities of a global age. We also look at how a shift of language can profoundly reframe the soul's journey toward authentic consciousness and point to an integrated life, holding a clear horizon of potentiality that focuses and elevates a person's vision.

Chapter 6 explores the emergence of a universal evolutionary language that corresponds to—and supports the shift to—authentic individual and collective consciousness and planetary restructuring. Described as *the way of unity*, this universal language that embraces the fullness of human cultural diversity holds the promise of guiding an age of turbulent transformation. It creates capacity in people to become agents of their own lives, to draw together on the power of spirit and spiritual attitudes beyond the prison of self, as well as on scientific understanding, and to birth, through a collective consultative process, a sustainably restructured planetary organization of life.

Part Three, *Resolution and Finding New Ground Through Constructive Collective Action*, explores efforts to resolve the current limbo at two levels of complexity: the level of a nation and the global level. It looks at how the universal evolutionary principles of *the way of unity* can translate into new forms of governance. This process (described as Showing Up through sacred activism and speaking Truth to power⁵³) works to create new collective centers capable of navigating this historic turning point of existential planetary conflict. It leads us into breaking through old habits and mindsets and transcending collectively into a new creation.

Chapter 7 revisits our relationship to our embodiment in the context of the structural organization of communities and a nation. It focuses on U.S. society as a unique laboratory of global processes, challenges and opportunities—both due to its composition from generations of immigrants from all over the world and also due to its unique aspiration to create equal opportunities for all. What

have been the crises and advancements of this society? What are the lessons and where do they point to now?

Chapter 8 looks at the dimensions of collective planetary restructuring that are the backdrop of our individual lives in a post-COVID world, which has to reorganize for the severe climate change and global disruption ahead. Since collective human institutions provide the backbone of society, our ability to grasp and purposefully participate in the creation of morally coherent structures for local and global governance is critical to overcoming the current crisis and establishing healthy lives. What do we need to learn and how must we change?

The Appendix suggests contemplative practices and spiritual readings relevant to each chapter as well as further resources. It opens space to reflect on personal and collective horizons of transformation. It is best to attempt these practices after reading each chapter and before proceeding to the next one.

END OF EXCERPT