

The Integral approach suggests that every sentient being has, at a minimum, four fundamental, simultaneous perspectives that must all be taken into account for a deeper and more integral understanding.



We can look 'at' something from the four quadrants; this is called quadrivia.

And we can also become aware of these perspectives as foundational to our being in the world.



The lower two quadrants, represent the collective or inter-relational perspectives.

We often do not consider the social, cultural or systems perspectives, the embeddedness, of issues that seem only personal. While valid, this is a limited and very partial view.

The upper two quadrants, represent the individual perspective.

Observing one's own experience or some object without addressing context or interconnections.



Again, valid, but partial... only half the story.

The left side represents the interior, subjective perspectives.

meaning + intent

At times, people preference their feelings about things much more than the exterior facts.





The right side represents the exterior or objective. The facts.

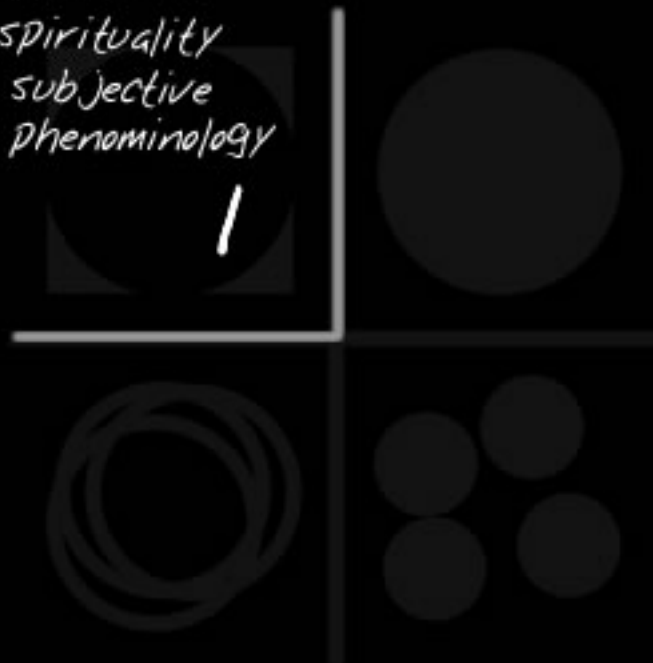
Some rigorously believe that if you can't measure it, then it is not real. This preference is often called "Flatland" as all interior depth is denied.


Upper Left Quadrant

The interior - individual

what I feel
purpose
introspection
awareness
mysticism

intentions
spirituality
subjective
phenomenology





Lower Left Quadrant

The interior - collective

cultural

morals

worldview

values

intersubjective

shared meaning

mutual understanding

politics

we-space

WE



ITS Lower Right Quadrant

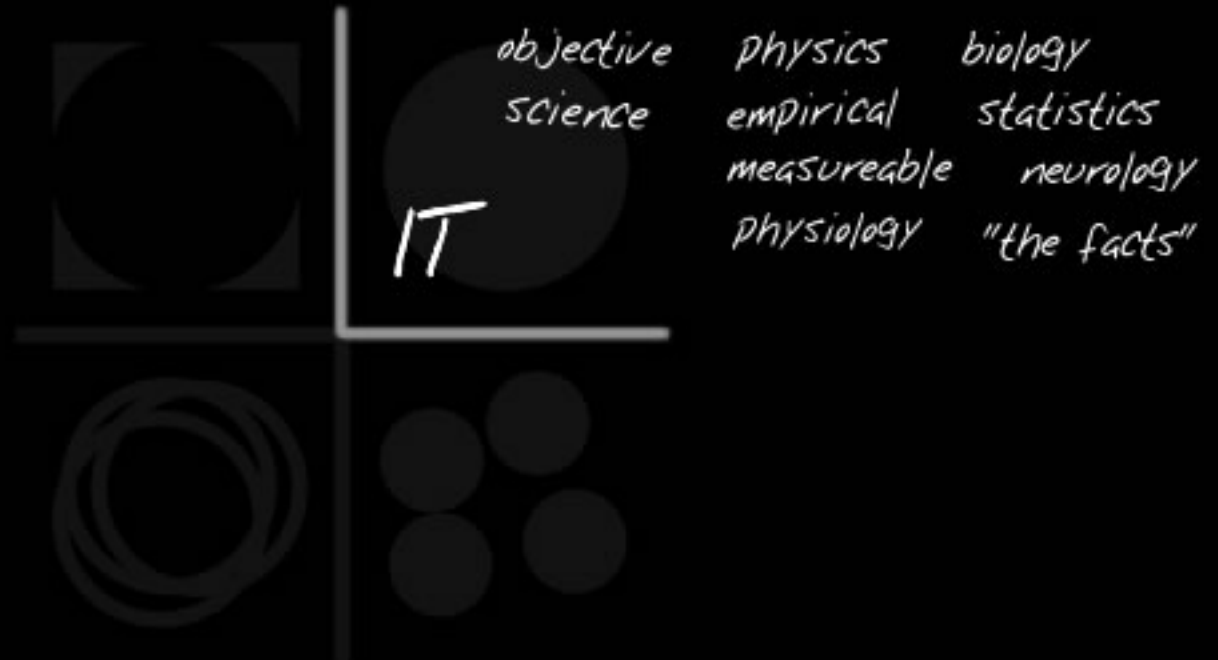
The exterior collective - social

systems economics mesh
interobjective autopoiesis ecology
chaos theory population networks

Complex and interdependent
relationships between discrete parts.

Upper Right Quadrant

The exterior - individual - behavioral



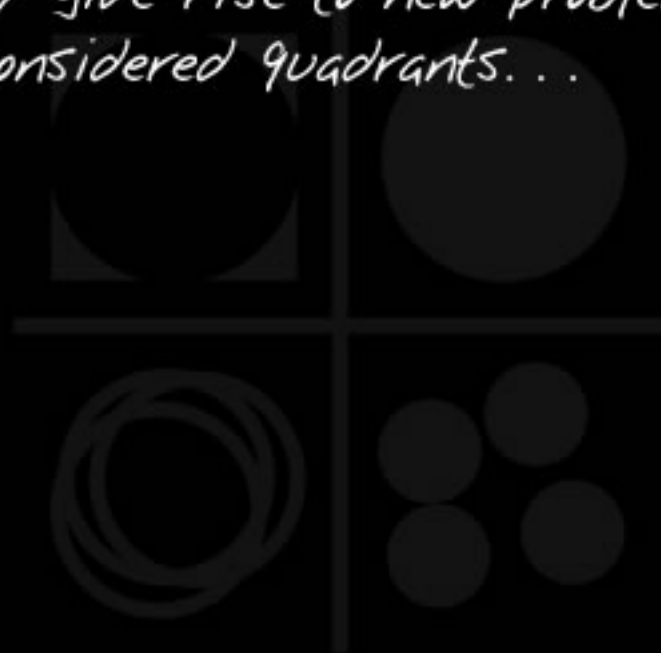


Okay... But so what?



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Solutions frequently give rise to new problems, that occur in the previously unconsidered quadrants. . .



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- Bring in rabbits for the elite to hunt in Australia (solving a cultural, lower left quad issue) and shortly thereafter the rabbits overrun the country and devastate crops (an ecological, lower right quad issue). This gives rise to a new solution, a 1800km long wire barrier, the "rabbit-proof fence." Guess how that turned out?

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- To use up low level nuclear waste, armor piercing depleted uranium bullets were created. . . partly solving economic issues (lower right quad). The new problem: mysterious illnesses for those exposed to the dust from bullet impact (upper right quad). This also generates a major social issue: Gulf War Syndrome (lower left quad).

Or from a personal perspective...

say I want to build a new House...

how would I feel living in it?

is it the process or result I want?

Do I enjoy making 1000s of decisions?

how is my identity expressed
in this project?

what size? How many rooms?

architect & engineer needed?

orientation? soil analysis?

strawbale? Adobe? Solar?

I it

community design needs?

what style design harmonizes?

relations with contractor & subs

permitting process

neighborhood relations

design for social gatherings?

we its

overall energy consumption

effects on investments & taxes

interfaces: water, power, net, roads...

impact on the local natural environment

what new relationships are needed?

Considering all the perspectives upfront allows for a more informed decision-making process. It also surfaces issues we might not normally consider, until a crisis emerges...

what about evolution v. intelligent design?

One's inner yearning for meaning
subjective spiritual experiences

inner truths are valid only within the
domain of phenomenology.

"the feelings"

I

it

belongingness... Group opinions

Religion is a cultural domain of meaning.

morality is judged socio-culturally.

intelligent design is a cultural belief.

we

its

the methods of science return
empirical truths... evidence for evolution

These truths are valid within the
domain of the measurable.

decades of proven scientific assertions
about evolution... "the facts".

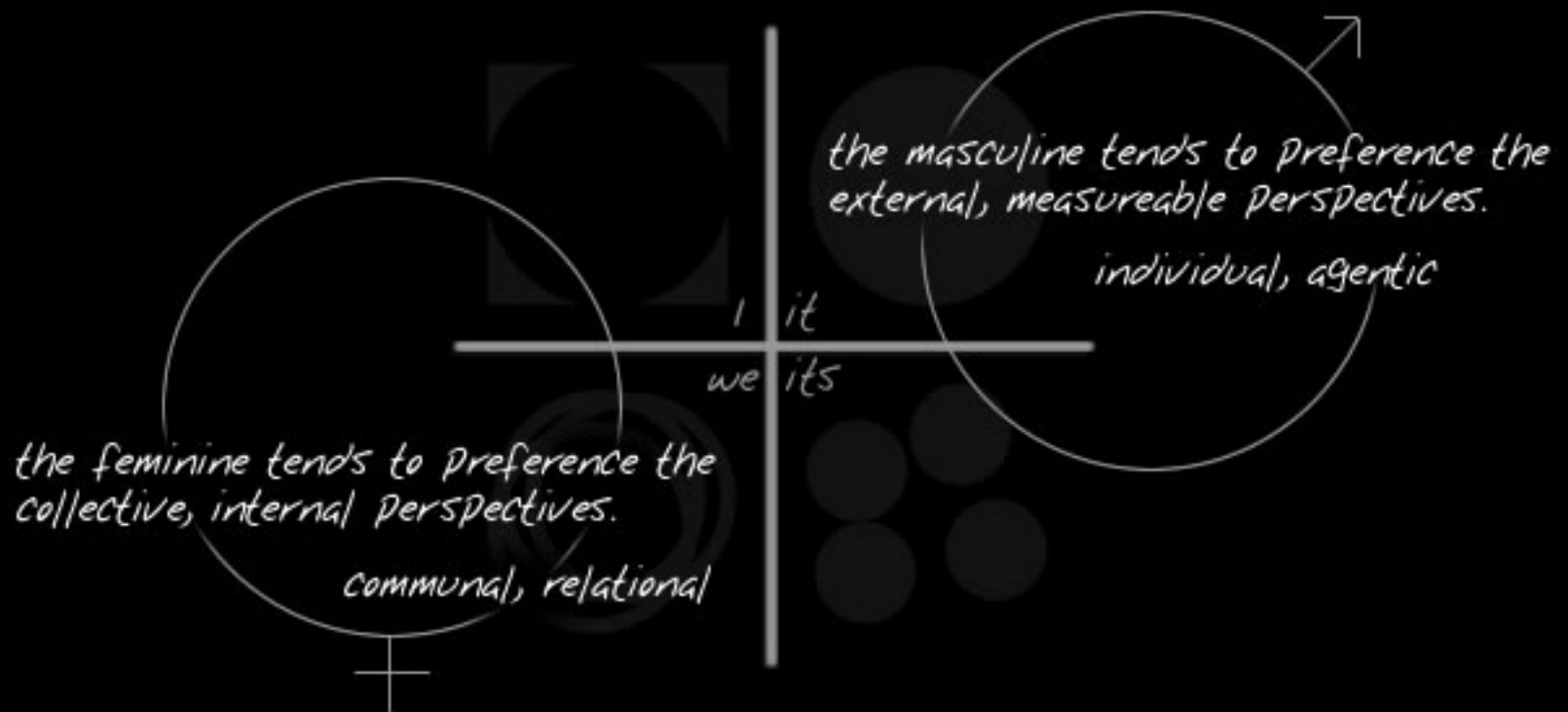
intelligent design cannot be measured,
proven or disproven - its not empirical

further evidence for evolution from
punctuated equilibrium, complexity
theory and eco-systems theory.

Truth from science (upper right) cannot be used to prove or disprove truths from spirituality (upper and lower left). They are independent domains of knowing, each with its own set of injunctions and evidence. Without devoting years to the authentic study of either paradigm, one cannot speak about each's revealed truths with any credibility.

masculine and feminine types

men (and women) have varying degrees of masculinity and femininity, though on average men tend to have more masculinity than women (and vice versa). These are qualitative distinctions, not genetically determined gender.



like any generalization, there are lots of exceptions. This isn't categorizing groups, it's thinking in broad strokes with soft edges. . . Useful in recognizing polarity in ourselves and our relationships. An integral approach would ask us to take both into account, to respect both perspectives. While at the same time respecting our own and other's natural tendencies.

Integral Methodological Pluralism (yikes!)

Each perspective can be viewed from inside and outside. . . I can look at what I feel from inside, my inner experience, or I can be "objective" about myself.

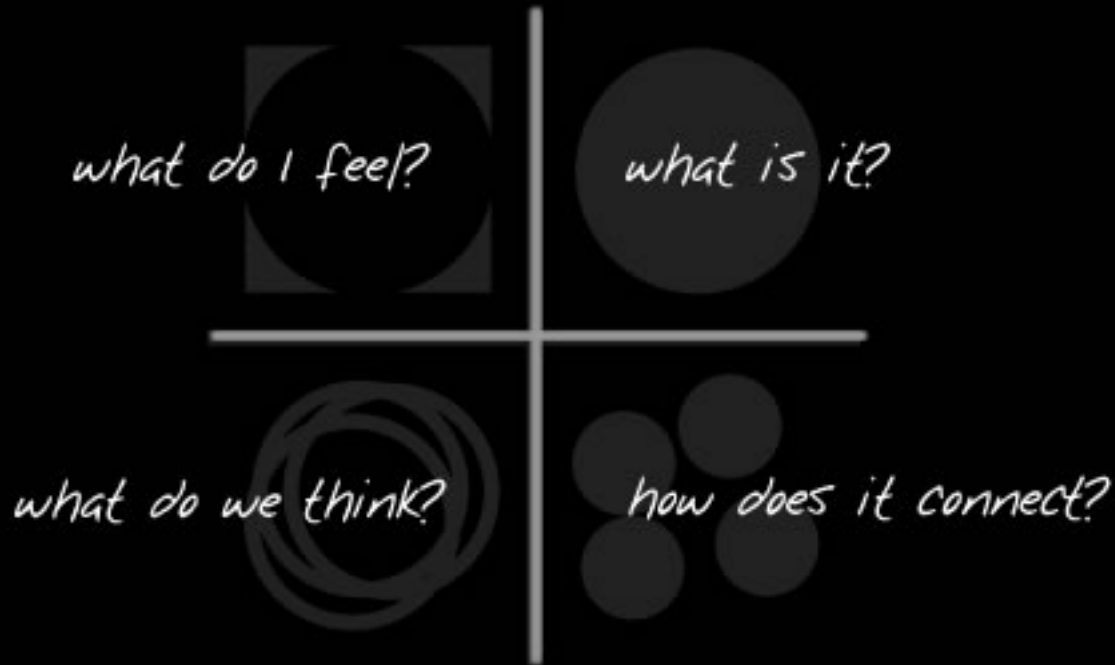
"I" from inside is introspection or phenomenology, "I" from outside is structuralism; Spiral Dynamics is an example of this view.



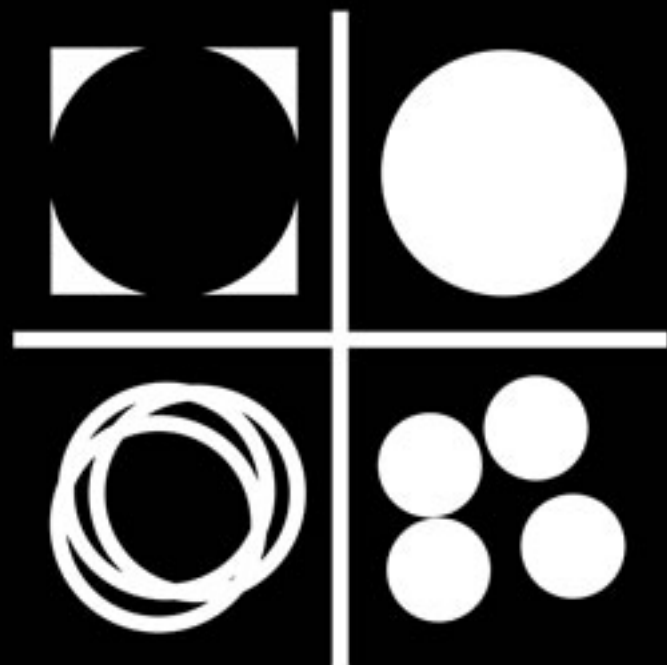
This further complication is useful in that it accounts for the difference between methods of inquiry like the contemplative traditions and spiral dynamics. Two very different perspectives on the felt "I" experience, the upper left quadrant.

This gives us 8 fundamental perspectives encompassing all human knowledge.

So, it all boils down to...



now that's pretty easy to remember...



*credit to Ken Wilber, integral sensei.
and creds to the Durango Integral Salon.
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