

Introduction to the Dialectical Thought Form Framework DTF

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The Textbook

<http://www.interdevelopmentals.org/publications-idm-press.php>

- The textbook for this Introduction is Measuring Hidden Dimensions of Human Systems (2008), referred to as “volume 2.”
- We focus on chapters 6-7, 11-12, and the Manual of Dialectical Thought Forms.
- Chapter 6 deals with the Quadrants of Dialectic
- Chapter 7 clarifies the four classes of thought forms representing the Quadrants in human thinking and offers a phasic theory of the development of dialectical thinking.
- Chapter 11 presents the scoring of cognitive interviews
- Chapter 12 discusses interview scoring
- The Manual’s Introduction puts dialectical thinking in historical perspective
- In four sections, the Manual then deals separately with each of the four classes of thought forms, giving 3 examples for each.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the nature of holistic and systemic thinking
- Understand the structure of logical in contrast to dialectical thinking
- Understand the Quadrants of Dialectic as something working in the real world (“ontologically”)
- Understand classes of *thought forms* (TF) as a tool for approaching the real world, social and physical, in a holistic and systemic way (“epistemologically”)
- Understand thought forms as embedded in human speech
- Understand thought forms as a tool for promoting innovation
- Understand thought forms as a tool for upgrading business process, strategy design, culture building, creating value in the future (rather than only the present)
- SKILLS
 - Practice cognitive interviewing in the Three Houses
 - Practice interview evaluation (scoring) through TF selection
 - Practice to interpret cognitive scores and give feedback on them to clients

Preamble

This Course is About Your Own Thinking

- Have you ever marveled at your own thinking?
- If not, begin to do so now!
- This course will open up new avenues of reflecting on your own thinking and that of others.
- The course will make more precise what you “think” and know about others’ “thinking”.
- The course is essentially about you, since what you can’t ‘think’ you won’t be able to see in your clients’ thinking either, nor in the world at large.
- So then, let’s reflect together on the structure of adult thought, learning to distinguish between its content and its underlying patterns.

Some Practice Reflections to Start Out With

- How, up to now, have you dealt with clients' – others' -- thinking in terms of its structure, rather than content?
- What measures have you used to evaluate development of thinking?
- How do you go about “looking at” your own thinking?
- Have you used “meditation” to “dis-embed” from your own thinking?
- Would you be helped by getting to know ways of assessing nature and complexity of thinking developed in the social sciences?
- What, in your view, are:
 - ways of knowing?
 - thought forms?
 - systemic thought forms?
 - holistic thought forms?
 - transformational thought forms?

Situating DTF Dialectical Thinking Historically

- **Between 1978 and 1993 two major developments in philosophy and the sciences paved the way for a contemporary renewal of dialectical thinking:**
 - **M. Basseches’ empirical research on dialectical thinking (1984)**
 - **R. Bhaskar’s systematic review of the Western dialectical tradition (1993).**
- Both researches were integrated with each other by O. Laske in his 2008 book “Measuring Hidden Dimensions”, volume 2.
- Uniting Basseches’ and Bhaskar’s insights led to DTF, the Dialectical Thought Form Framework, a methodology and assessment tool for schooling and evaluating dialectical thinking
- DTF dialectic, taught here, has the following characteristics:
 - It is empirical, focused on human speech
 - It is revelatory, focused on what is “absent,” “hidden”, “lied about”, “repressed”, “undervalued”
 - It emphasizes human agency, but knows it is a double-edged sword: controlling nature beyond certain limits will backfire on human society.
 - It “explodes personal experience”, in the sense that it shows its limits, points to its common ground with society, discourages reduction of knowledge to individual insight, shows it to be mediated by the social mind at large.

Research in Cognitive Development

- When looking for new tools for understanding one's own and clients' thinking, a lot of help can be gotten from research that has been done in how human thinking develops.
- In this course, we rely on the following traditions:
 - the dialectical tradition in philosophy (Bhaskar, 1993; Adorno, 1966 (1999))
 - research in stages of reflective judgment (King & Kitchener, 1994)
 - research in dialectical thinking and adult development (Basseches, 1984)
 - research in organizational stratification (levels of work complexity) based on cognitive- developmental level (Jaques, 1998).

SECTION 1:

Developmental Theory of Thinking

What is “Thinking”?

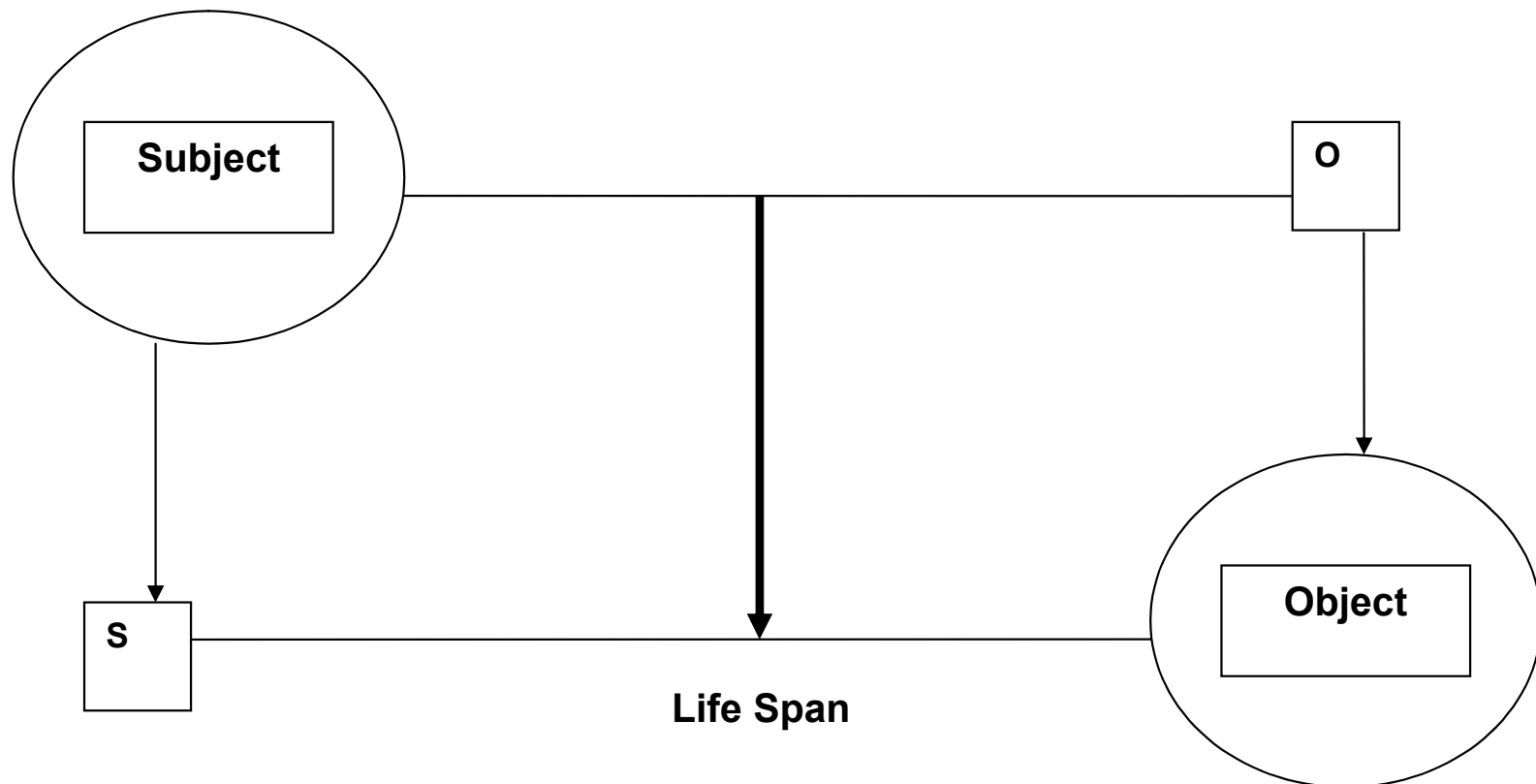
- *Thinking* has two essential ingredients:
 - Stance
 - Tools

“Stance” is determined social-emotionally and “epistemically” (in terms of stages of reflective judgment).

“Tools” are thought patterns, whether logical or dialectical.

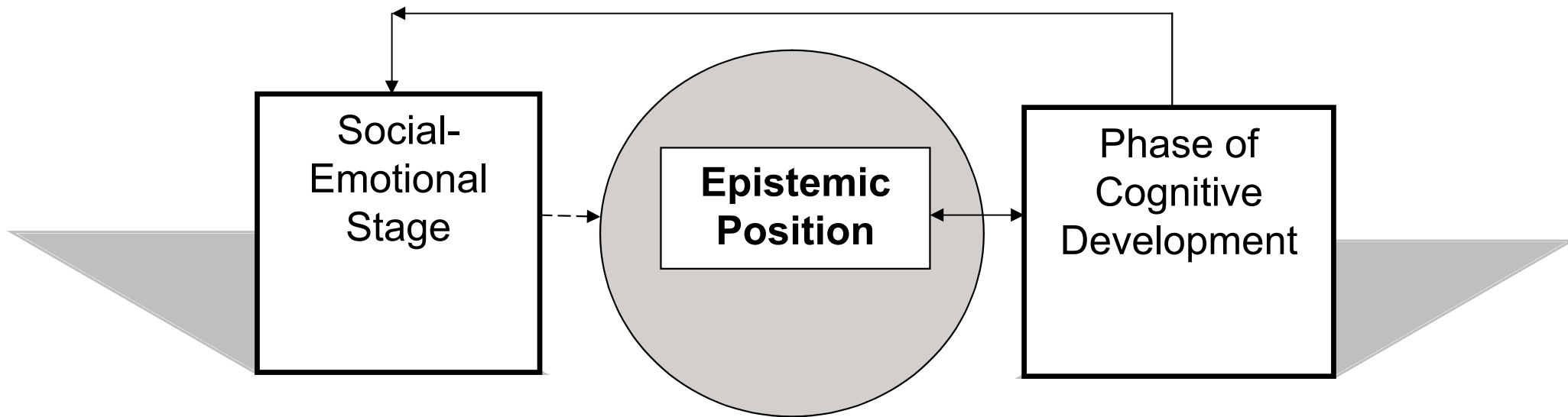
Both Stance and Tools are an adult-developmental achievement; they are acquired only gradually in the course of life.

Thinking Matures with Increasing Loss of Ego-Centricity



As we move to a larger object over the life span, systemic thinking increases.

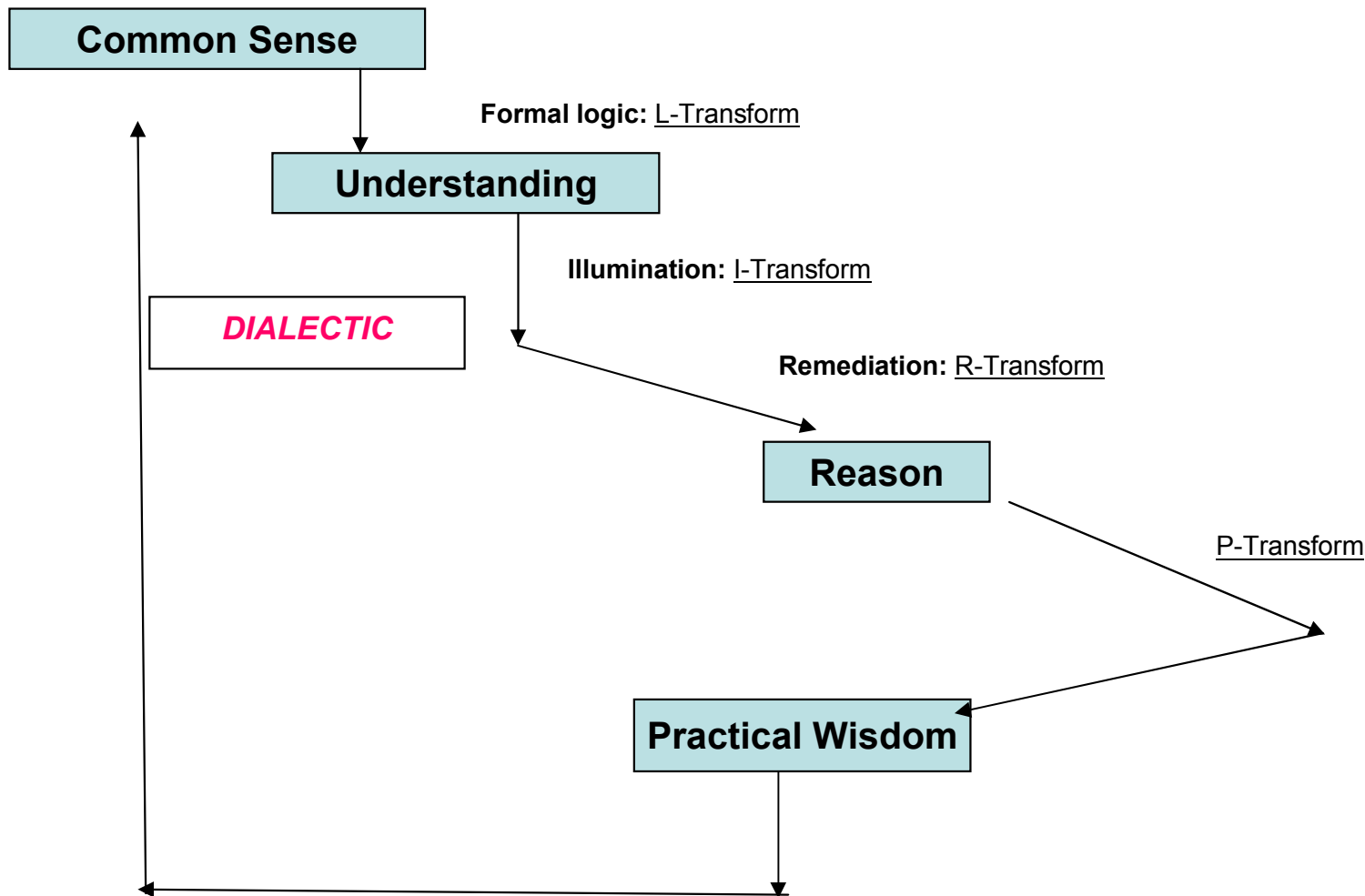
Cognitive Development Influences Social-Emotional Development



Cognitively, social-emotional stage is reflected in stage of reflective judgment or 'epistemic position' which determines one's concept of the nature of knowledge and truth, and thereby one's openness to acknowledging the uncertainty of truth.

Depending on one's take on what truth is, one engages different cognitive sets of tools, or Transforms, which then feeds back into social-emotional development.

Four Eras of Cognitive Development over the Lifespan



Thinking Depends on Epistemic Position

- Whether you think logically or dialectically, you take a position toward what, for you, is the nature of truth.
- We can think of ways of knowing the ‘truth’ in terms of the certainty/uncertainty ascribed to it, but also our own efforts required to ascertain it.
- Over life, epistemic position develops from truth as absolutely *certain* to being highly *uncertain* and needing to be justified. Accordingly, human efforts increase.
- Higher epistemic positions underlie both logical and dialectical thinking; they do not force but enable dialectic.
- Systemic thinking based on dialectic materializes only on the higher epistemic positions, from 5 to 7.

Seven Epistemic Positions

| Epistemic Position or [Stage of Reflective Judgment] | Assumptions about Knowledge and Truth [King & Kitchener, 1994] |
|---|---|
| 1 <u>Common Sense</u> | Knowledge equals belief and is absolutely certain. |
| 2 | Somebody in charge will know. |
| 3 | Not any longer sure of what is true. |
| 4 <u>Understanding</u> <i>Phase 1 of Dialectical Thinking [Stratum I,II]</i> | Truth is a function of personal knowledge systems and thus at time uncertain. |
| 5 <i>Phase 2 of Dialectical Thinking [Stratum III-IV]</i> | <i>Truth is distributed over different domains one needs to compare, mapping from one domain to another</i> |
| 6 <u>Reason</u> <i>Phase 3 of Dialectical Thinking [Stratum V-VI]</i> | <i>Truth and knowledge are individually constructed; acquisition of internalized categories of evaluation.</i> |
| 7 <i>Phase 4 of Dialectical Thinking [Stratum VII & VIII]</i> | Truth and knowledge are based on hypothesis testing and require thinking in terms of a ‘big picture’ that is unceasingly transforming itself. |

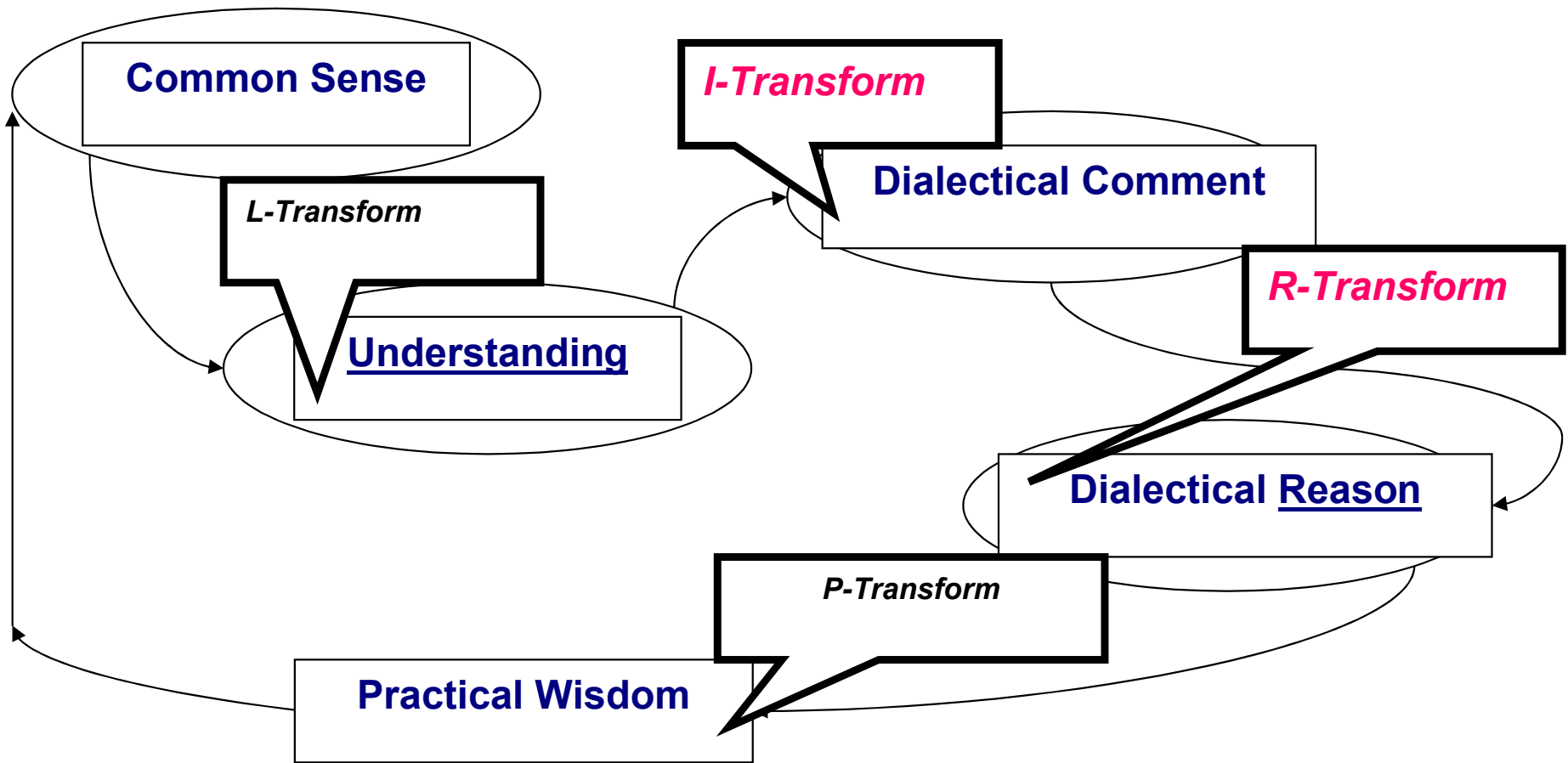
Dialectical Thinking Develops in Phases, Aligned with Epistemic Position

In the *Constructive Developmental Framework* we hypothesize that epistemic position is aligned with phases of the development of dialectical thinking (in terms of cognitive fluidity in using thought forms). This is a useful hypothesis for further empirical research, not an absolute truth.

| Dialectical Phase | Cognitive Fluidity | Epistemic Position |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Phase 4 [dialectical or meta-systemic] | > 50 | 7 |
| Phase 3 [assimilating or systemic] | < 50 | 6 |
| Phase 2 [transitional] | <30 | 5 |
| Phase 1 [accommodating] | < 10 | 4 |

Thinking Requires Tools

Commensurate with the four eras of cognitive development, we can distinguish four 'sets of tools' or Transforms. They 'transform' one way of thinking into another. In dialectics we speak of the 'illumination' and 'remediation' transform.



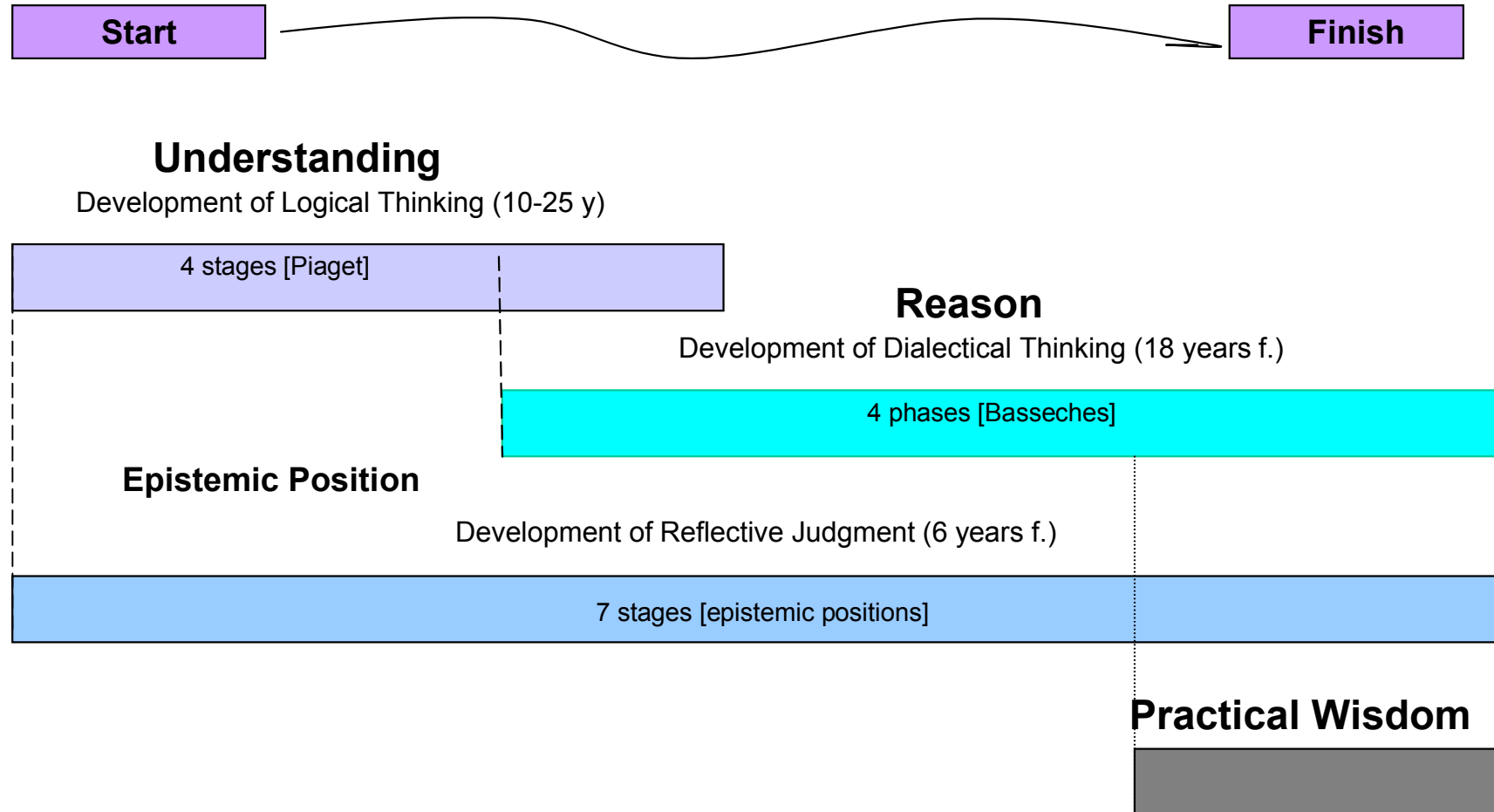
L=Logic, I=Illumination, R=Remediation, P=Practical-Wisdom

Development of the Logic Transform Up to Age 25 (Piaget)

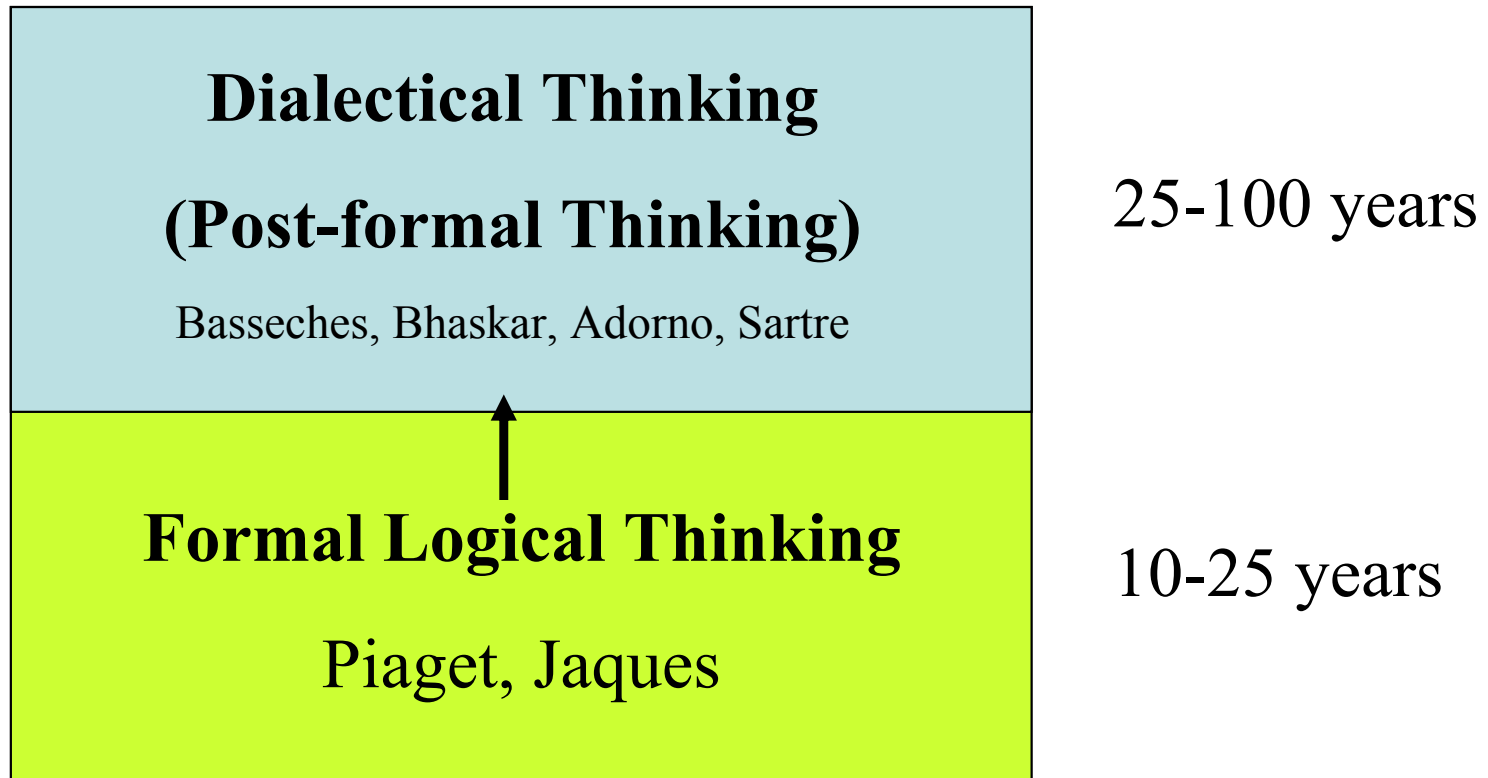
The Logic-Transform operates a revolution in human life in that it transitions people from Common Sense – which knows of no contradictions – to Understanding in the form of formal logic where contradictions are “false.” Dialectic has an enlarged notion of contradiction, seeing in it the “negativity” that drives transformation.

| Stage | Age | Description |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Sensorimotor | Age: 0-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reflex base · Coordinate Reflexes |
| Preoperational | Age: 2-6 or 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Self-oriented · Egocentric |
| Concrete operations | Age: 6 or 7-11 or 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · More than one viewpoint · No abstract problems · Consider some outcomes |
| Formal operations | Age: 11 or 12 up (to 25) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Think abstractly · Reason theoretically · Not all people reach this stage |

From Early Adulthood On, Logical and Dialectic Thinking Overlap



Two Dimensions of Logical Thought



Steps Toward “Post-formal” or Dialectical Thinking

Dialectic is all about “seeing/acknowledging contradiction” and using contradiction to further one’s insight into some subject matter. We speak of “preservative negation” since what is seen as contradictory or antithetical is not dismissed as false but is “preserved” in our memory store to help obtain clarity about what is being contradicted. This happens in three domains: Process (P), Context (C), and Relationship (R).

Post-formal/Dialectical Logic (Systems Thinking)

Systems in Transformation (T)

Process (P)

Context (C)

Relationship (R)

Formal Logic

25-100 years

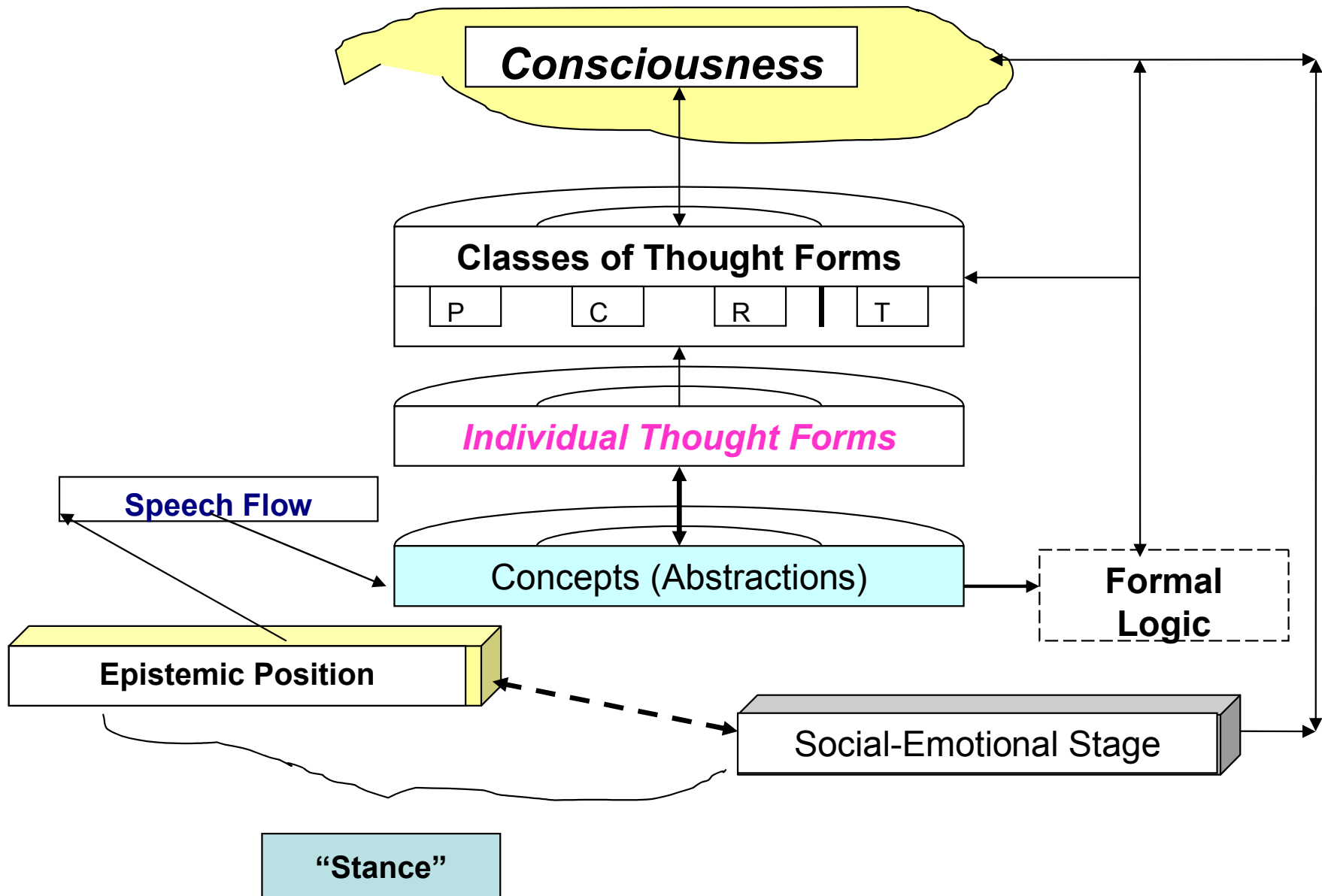
10-25 years



SECTION 2:

Introduction to the Quadrants of Dialectic and Thought Forms Representing Them

At Higher Epistemic Positions, Dialectical Thinking Begins to Outstrip Formal Logic



Systemic Thinking

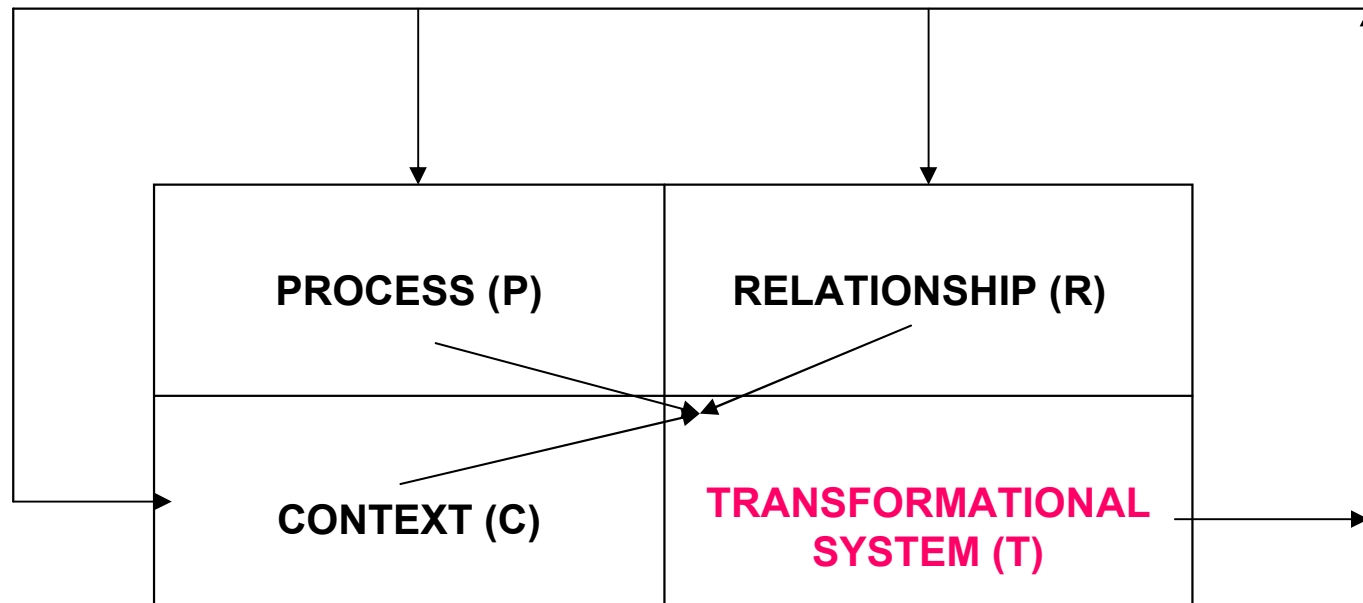
- Systemic thinking is an adult achievement that requires viewing “reality” as transformational, “alive”.
- This ability develops in phases once logical thinking has been mastered (early adulthood).
- In process consultation, we strive to assist others in learning to think transformationally.
- As consultants, we hold up a mirror to client’s thinking, by evaluating ‘how they think’ based on the THOUGHT FORMS they use in conceptualizing ‘reality’.
- Through a cognitive interview, we can evaluate clients’ cognitive profile and give them feedback on it.

Dialectic as a Tool of Systemic Thinking

- Taking multiple perspectives is easier to understand and to do when we can orient ourselves based on the Four Quadrants of Dialectic.
- Like Wilber's quadrants, the quadrants of dialectic form an organized whole in that the four aspects of reality they represent are separate but inseparable in the world as well as in the mind.
- It is useful to distinguish between Quadrants of Dialectic (as *ontological*) and classes of thought forms (as *epistemological*). The latter "reflect" the former as far as human thinking can "reach" reality.
- We can distinguish four aspects of reality as well as of human thinking about it:
 - Things emerging or in motion (Process)
 - Things making up a 'big picture' (Context)
 - Things sharing common ground (Relationship)
 - Things viewed as systems in transformation, that is, mutually intertwined and dependent upon each other.

The Four Quadrants

To “know” what is real we need to consider three dimensions: motion (process), big picture (context), and relationship. If we coordinate these, we are able to think in terms of transformation.



Legend:

Upper quadrants: critical.

Lower quadrants: constructive.

Each Quadrant Focuses on a Particular Aspect of Reality

- Based on classes of thought forms, we can view any subject matter in terms of four different perspectives:
 - its **emergence** and vanishing in time (Process class of TFs)
 - its being part of a **bigger picture** together with other things variously differentiated from each other (Context class of TFs)
 - its sharing **common ground** with other things and thus being “related” to them (Relationship class of TFs)
 - its representing a **system in transformation** which emerges and vanishes at the same time that it maintains itself in a changed form – like any living organism does (Transformation class of TFs).

There is an order to these four aspects. First, things have to exist (C). They can then be seen as undergoing change (P) and being related to each other (R). Transformational systems (T) ‘pre-suppose’ this sequence: C, P, R. The presupposition sequence of the four quadrants thus is: C>P>R>T.

Main Aspects of the Context Quadrant

Things exist independently of human thinking. They are constellated in a variety of ways: dimensions, layers, strata, structures, functions, existing in equilibrium.

Dialectical image: *'big picture' in the sense of a whole encompassing parts and strata*

Figure: what appears as a stable, well-balanced form.

Ground: unified by the category of differentiation that introduces variety and depth into what is real making it alterable.

Relationship to System: pre-figuration of a system in a static form.

Scope: equilibrium of what exists.

Theme: multiplicity of entities and thoughts partaking in a common frame of reference.

Dialectics: parts of a whole shifting their balance, stratification, generative mechanisms.

Main Aspects of the Process Quadrant

Things are 'forms': they do not stay the same. They are constantly emerging from, and vanishing into, the void, including human life.

Dialectical image: *emergence (from a void)*

Figure: what is “not there” but is emerging through unceasing change

Ground: unified by the category of absence from which the whole circuit of the four quadrants derives

Relationship to System: always embedded in system

Scope: spanning negation, contradiction, critique

Theme: the presence of the past and future; motion in thought and reality

Dialectics: process, transition, interaction, opposition (including reversal).

Main Aspects of the Relationship Quadrant

As forms, things share common space and are rooted in common ground. This ground makes up their Totality. Forms are ‘related’ because they share common ground, sometimes to the point of existing only on account of common ground.

Dialectical image: *common ground (totality)*

Figure: what is “not there” other than as held within a totality of (possibly oppositional) links and connections

Ground: unified by the category of totality, thus of holistic causality

Relationship to System: living core of any system

Scope: all parts of a whole, however split and split off; center to periphery

Theme: unity in diversity, internal relatedness, illicit separation and fission, fixation on unrelated (isolated) elements and multiples

Dialectics: reciprocal, intrinsic, based on constitutive relationship (logically preceding parts of a whole) based on common ground.

Main Aspects of the Transformational Quadrant

Because what exists (C) is in a state of emergence with all forms related based on sharing common ground, reality is a transformational system. Thinking such a system requires 'thought forms' of class C, P, and R.

Dialectical image: *organism and/or beehive*

Figure: what is in constant transformation seeking equilibrium, through mental growth, shift, sudden reversal, collapse, breakdown, pain

Ground: unified by the social category of transformative praxis or agency

Relationship to System: itself under constant transformation

Scope: all of reality

Theme: stability through developmental movement, attention to problems of coordination and change in a developmental direction, multiplicity of perspective, acknowledgement of human agency as intentional causality in the cosmos

Dialectics: special affinity with Process as social change.

From Quadrants to Classes of Thought Forms

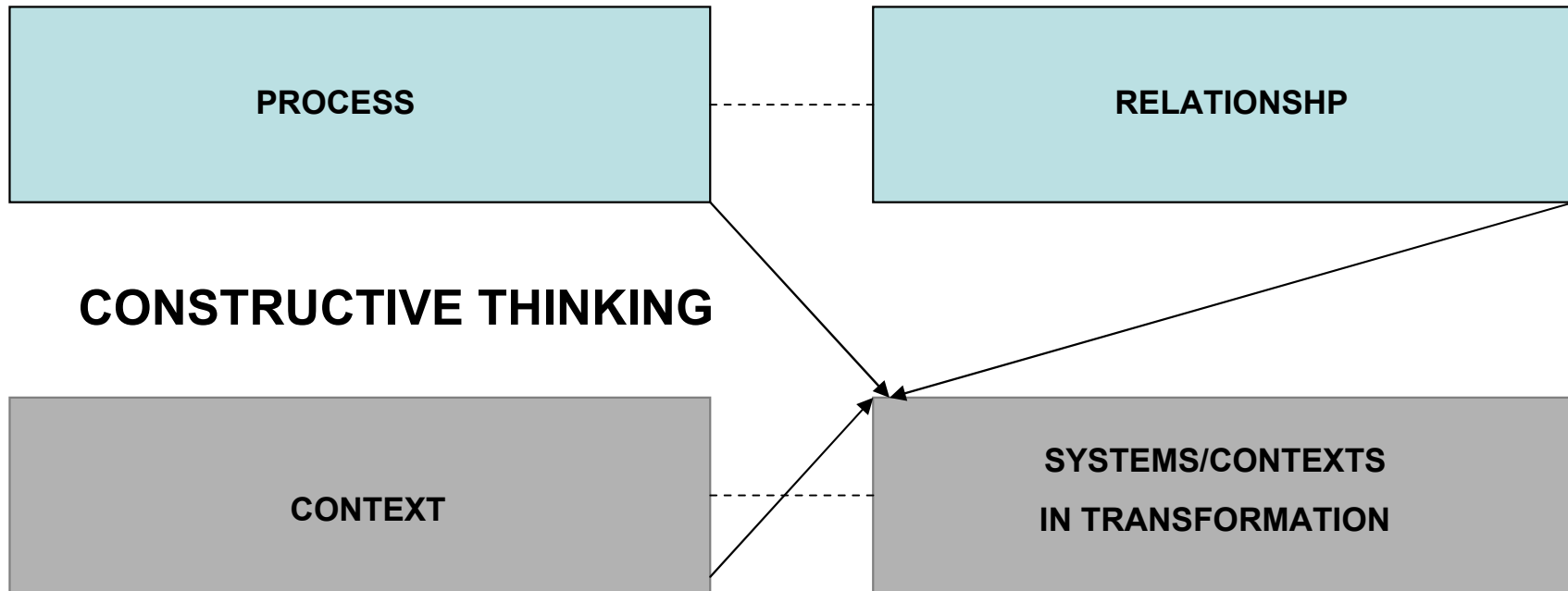
- The best way to think of thought forms is to conceive of them as tools humans use to 'reason' about the dialectical nature of reality.
- Accordingly, thought forms 'reflect' the quadrants of dialectic.
- Therefore, they can be grouped into four classes reflecting each individual quadrant of dialectic.
- Classes of thought forms have the purpose to study the development of human thinking *empirically*, and are thus a methodological expedient.
- Consequently, the number of thought forms is somewhat variable.
- In CDF, we use $7 \times 4 = 28$ thought forms. (Basseches used 24).
- It is thus less the thought forms *per se* that need to be learned, but the quadrants that need to be grasped. The thought forms are more or less optimal expressions of the quadrants of dialectic.

Critical and Constructive Thinking

- **We can think of the “upper quadrants” (P, R) as grounding ‘critical,’ and the “lower quadrants” (C, T) as grounding constructive thinking.**
 - Critical thinking makes us aware of ways in which reality is in constant change, cannot be ‘pinned down,’ and is largely based on relationships between forms and processes (rather than simple cause-effect links)
 - Constructive thinking builds contexts and more stable configurations that withstand motion and change because of their structural, functional, historical, or developmental nature; they give the illusion of permanence and sameness. .
- **These kinds of dialectical thinking are complementary.**
- **However, in the thinking of a particular individual, their use may be imbalanced, favoring one quadrant over another.**
- **We then speak of *Cognitive Imbalance* (see details below).**
- **Imbalance means that the individual thinker turns a ‘deaf ear’ to one aspect of reality, and is therefore unable to grasp reality in systemic terms.**

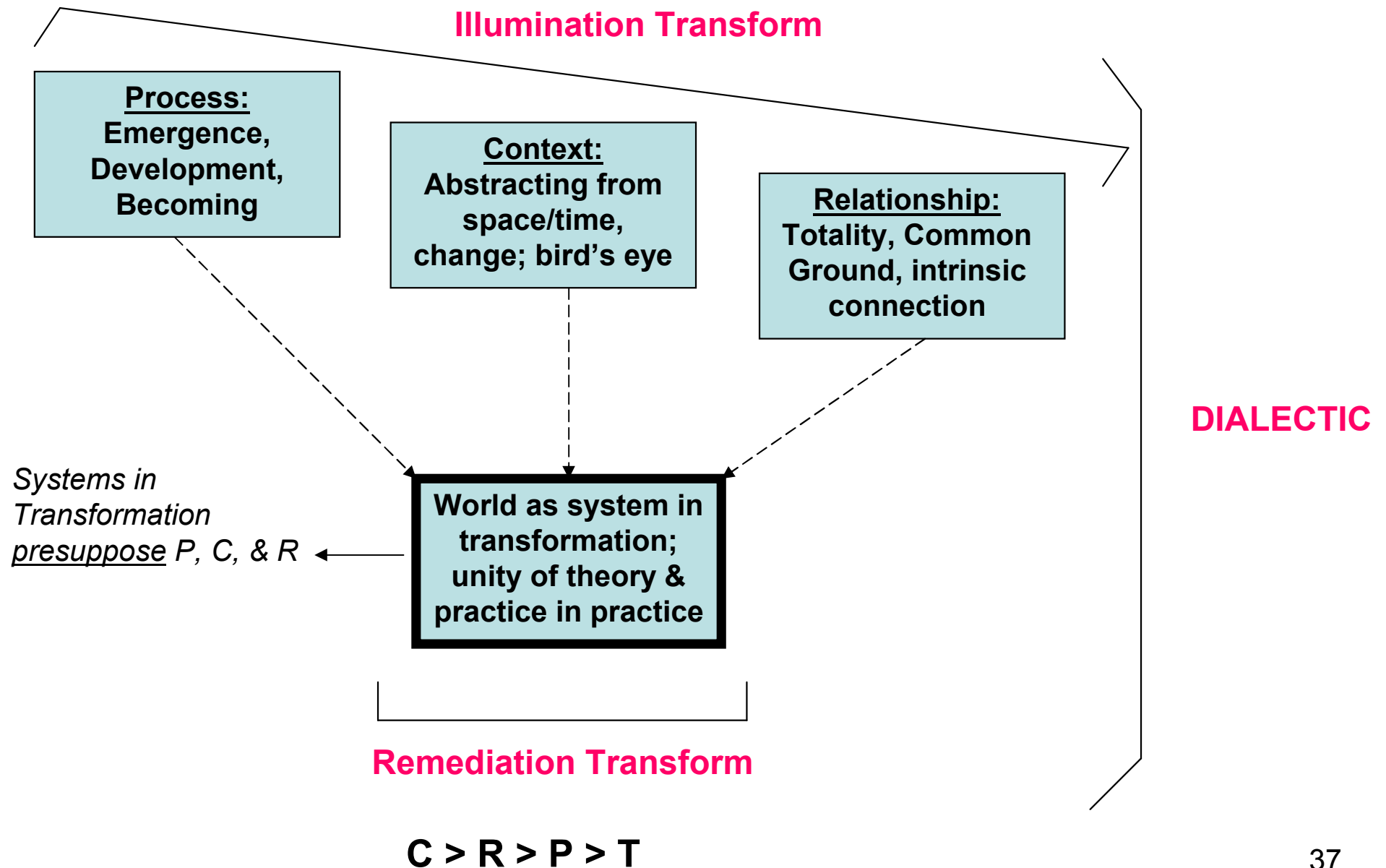
Relationship Between Classes of Thought Forms

CRITICAL THINKING



**Process and Relationship TFs enhance *critical thinking*,
Context and Systems in Transformation TFs help *construct reality*
as a living system.**

Thinking Transformationally Presupposes Process, Context, and Relationship



Overview of Thought Forms

(Thought Form numbers in brackets)

Process – everything is in unceasing motion

- Preserving fluidity in thought (3, 5)
- Attention to actual or potential processes of change (1, 4, 6-7)
- Describing movement as occurring via opposites (2)

Context– larger contexts remain stable across change

- Attention to organized and patterned wholes (8-9,14)
- Recognizing & describing systems as systems (10-13)

Relationship – intrinsic and external links hold things together

- Attention to relationships (15-18)
- Describing relationships as interactive and constitutive (19-21)

Transformational System (t)—systems reorganize through change

- Attention to the limits of stability of systems (change potential) (22)
- Describing transformation from one system to another (23, 27)
- Describing relationships among systems (25-26, 28)
- Describing the potential of systems to emerge (24)

Logical Progression within the Four Classes

| Thought Form | Procedural Emphasis* |
|--------------|--|
| #1-3 | Pointing to process |
| #4-7 | Addressing and describing process |
| #8-9 | Pointing to context |
| #10-12 | Addressing and describing context |
| #13-14 | Moving toward relatedness |
| #15-16 | Pointing to relationships |
| #17 | Evaluating relationships |
| #18-21 | Evaluative description of relationships |
| #22 | Pointing to limits of separation of elements |
| #23-25 | Evaluating systems and their emergence |
| #26-28 | Explicating and explaining systems |

* In short, there is a general progression from “pointing to” to “making explicit.”

Thought Forms Articulating PROCESS

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 Focus on unceasing movement, hidden dimensions, negativity | Expression/awareness of unceasing change, past/future in present, hidden dimensions |
| 2. Use of preservative negation (inclusion of antithesis or ‘other’) | Seeing change as canceling, including, and transcending what is, leading to differentiation of events through inclusion of what they exclude, thereby broadening conceptual space. |
| 3. Focus on composition by interpenetrating opposites, correlates | Emergence of something new from an interchange of (opposite) energies or ideas. Figure and ground. |
| 4. Focus on ongoing interaction creating patterns of movement | Patterns of motion in interactive relationships. Processes of ‘give and take’ bringing about a shift. |
| 5. Focus on the active, practical nature of knowledge | Practical, interactive character of knowledge as always under construction, never absolute. |
| 6. Critique of arresting motion and process [reification] | Assertion of the relevance of movement, and critique of attempts to deny, hide, disavow change. What exists is a form, not a thing. |
| 7. Focus on embeddedness in process, movement | Focus on the fact that what happens is embedded in an ongoing process, on past and future as an aspect of the present. |

Thought Forms Articulating CONTEXT

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>8. Focus on contextualizing a part within a whole; emphasis on part</p> | <p>Attention to organized wholes of which something is a part or element.</p> |
| <p>9. Focus on equilibrium of whole; emphasis on whole</p> | <p>Attention on the balance of a larger whole; the way it forms a Gestalt. Holistic perspective.</p> |
| <p>10 Focus on structures, functions, layers defining social systems</p> | <p>System descriptions in historical, functional, structural, mechanical, or in terms of strata or levels composing a whole</p> |
| <p>11. Focus on the hierarchical nature of structures and layers systems comprise</p> | <p>Description of the nature of hierarchy in systems or lack thereof. Emphasis on inclusion and transcendence of lower levels.</p> |
| <p>12. Focus on stability of system functioning</p> | <p>Describing or explaining the smooth functioning of a system with focus on its stability.</p> |
| <p>13. Focus on intellectual systems: frames of reference</p> | <p>Describing the larger philosophical or ideological environment of assumptions, ideas, principles, paradigms.</p> |
| <p>14. Focus on multiplicity of contexts (non-transformational)</p> | <p>Attention to a variety of contexts or dimensions in which events, situations, individuals are embedded (without stressing their relationship or transformation).</p> |

Thought Forms Articulating RELATIONSHIP

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>15. Limits of separation. Focus on existence and value of relationship.</p> | <p>Assertion of the existence of relationship(s), pointing to common ground and the difficulty of separating things from each other beyond certain limits.</p> |
| <p>16. Focus on value of bringing into relationship.</p> | <p>Assertion of the value of seeing a relationship between things or forms otherwise seen as separate.</p> |
| <p>17. Critique of reductionism, unrelated discretes, and de-totalization; neglecting common ground</p> | <p>Critique of de-totalizing reality by neglecting relationships between opinions, assumptions, ideas leading to a reduction of complexity, overlooking underlying shared frameworks, thus common ground. Critique of absence of holistic thinking.</p> |
| <p>18. Focus on relatedness of different value and judgment systems</p> | <p>Assertion of the relatedness of seemingly different, even opposed values, judgments, ideas, principles, stressing cultural commonalities.</p> |
| <p>19. Focus on describing relationships in structural terms</p> | <p>Focusing on what is the formal structure of a relationship (or relationships) in order to locate the essence of how things are related.</p> |
| <p>20. Focus on describing patterns of interaction in relationships</p> | <p>Describing a pattern of interaction and influence in a relationship, emphasizing the pattern(s) of interaction between the elements that are in relationship.</p> |
| <p>21. Focus on describing the constitutive relationship that determines the nature of what is in relationship.</p> | <p>Describing a relationship as 'constitutive' or making the parts it relates be what they are. Emphasis on the logical priority of the relationship over the elements it relates.</p> |

Thought Forms Articulating TRANSFORMATION

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>22. Focus on limits of stability, harmony, and durability</p> | <p>Pointing to limits of stability, balance, and durability without making their causes explicit. (Emphasis is on the 'negative' aspect of negativity which also has a positive aspect, that of emergence.)</p> |
| <p>23. Value of conflict leading in a developmental direction</p> | <p>Value of the conflict itself and the resolution of conflict in a developmental or transformative direction, leading to dissolution of older forms and systems.</p> |
| <p>24. Value of developmental potential leading to higher levels of functioning, integration and social change</p> | <p>Value of developmental movement (with or without conflict) for the sake of transformation, establishing a new balance, greater inclusiveness.</p> |
| <p>25. Evaluative comparison of systems in transformation</p> | <p>Holding systems side by side as forms, and evaluating them as to effectiveness, usefulness, adaptability, and as mutually sustaining.</p> |
| <p>26. Focus on process of coordinating system</p> | <p>Attention to the process of coordinating two (or more) systems with each other for the sake of bringing them into balance.</p> |
| <p>27. Description of open, self transforming systems</p> | <p>Emphasizing the equilibrium and ability of a living system to remain 'itself' based on unceasing transformation; pointing to a formal aspect of identity-in-transformation.</p> |
| <p>28. Integration of multiple perspectives in order to define complex realities; critique of formalistic thinking.</p> | <p>Critiquing the one-sidedness of abstractions; preserving concreteness and realism by juxtaposing one or more perspectives on the same subject matter.</p> |

Illustrations: “The Three Managers”

The three examples give an inkling of what is involved in gaining fluidity of thinking. They describe one and the same situation in different, increasingly more dialectical terms.

Manager A

“When we bought Acme’s service business, it was clear that if we didn’t build efficiency into the combined network, we’d fail. Efficiency means reduced overall costs, more revenue from our customer base, and less work overlap. Now we can price our products more competitively, knowing we can continue to build our revenue stream through service contracts. And providing that service will keep us close to our customers for equipment lifecycle planning and utilization analyses. If we can keep our eyes focused on managing costs and delivering quality, the results will be there.”

Manager B

“When we bought Acme’s service business, it was clear one of the immediate advantages would be in building a more efficient network. By integrating product and service sales, we become a more complete operation, and customers will see us in a new light. However, we also become more vulnerable to a lack of integration until we can define that new business model, and manage re-training and re-directing our sales force. Even then, perhaps customers may feel we’re not as focused on our huge new service operation as was Acme. And Engineering is committed to reducing maintenance and Manufacturing to driving up quality; that may mean we’ll have to branch out to include servicing competitors’ products to justify the new service infrastructure and manage the overhead. Would customers see that as a dilution of our commitment to our own products? We’re juggling many more things than before, and risk over-extending ourselves. How we balance customer perceptions, cost efficiencies, and product development will be a challenge, but we can succeed if we plan carefully and give it our best shot.”

Manager C

Once we decided to buy Acme's service business, we knew that there were a lot of ramifications to consider that could only incompletely be foreseen right away. We knew that in many ways we had considerably complicated not only our in-house way of working, but also the market environment in which we would have to function. While on the one hand, we were clearly striving to become a more complete operation, we had previously been on safer ground since our business model had been thoroughly tested and validated, and we had a reasonably clear view of who our customers were and what they expected of us. But once we integrated Acme's service business, we had to rethink almost everything we had learned to take more or less for granted. There were questions of attunement of our workers to the company's new mission, but also of customers to the broader agenda we now came to be identified with. We were also introducing new goals for our internal business process, and put in jeopardy the balance of the parts of our operation which had already been quite complex when focusing on product sales alone. So, there now was a multiplicity of contexts to consider that were only partly known to us initially. Essentially, the effect of this was that we became much more sensitive to relationships, not only between parts of our operation, but to relationships between product and services, work force and customers, business process and financial process, not to speak of systemic interactions that tested the limits of stability and harmony of our operations. We now had to coordinate a larger number of subsystems, and these subsystems tended to transform in a way that was not initially foreseen or even foreseeable. As a result, we felt we would lose out if we did not succeed in developing multiple perspectives on almost every aspect of our organization.

How Managers A and B Differ

A very brief qualitative analysis:

Manager A argues primarily in terms of facts and static circumstances, thinking along a conjunctive path without paying much attention to cause and effect beyond the immediate surface. A clear and focused goal and overall strategy is offered, and a compelling presentation demonstrating clear business knowledge and personal motivation is made, but how will this person perform in the long term if conflicts around goals arise?

Manager B is the more systemic thinker, acting from a higher complexity awareness level, more sensitive to the intricacies of coordinating different systems and the limits of stability in systems. S/he is also a more parallel thinker, keeping different lines of argument going compared to Manager A, and recognizing greater levels of complexity in managing the many goals and systems involved in this example - factors that may determine greater long-term success in this effort.

Manager B is therefore able to work at a higher organizational stratum [in a larger sized role] than Manager A, who has a smaller size of person.

What About Manager C?

- In your own terms, describe how Manager C differs from B:
 - in terms of overall fluidity of thought (Fluidity Index)
 - in terms of approximate epistemic position
[assumptions about the nature of knowledge and truth]
 - in terms of use of the balance between the four quadrants of dialectic (P, C, R, T)
 - in terms of coordination of thought forms of Process, Context, and Relationship (level of systems thinking)

SECTION 3:

Cognitive Interviewing

“Structured Interviewing” provides a way of “dis-embedding” from one’s habitual thought patterns, and also help others to do so.

In this way it functions similarly to meditation in the sense of mindfulness.

Procedures of cognitive interviewing beneficially transfer to coaching and consulting conversations.

Using dialectical thought form classes and their individual thought forms makes thinking and speaking more structured and precise; it also promotes more careful listening to oneself and others.

“Interviewing”– Structured Conversations

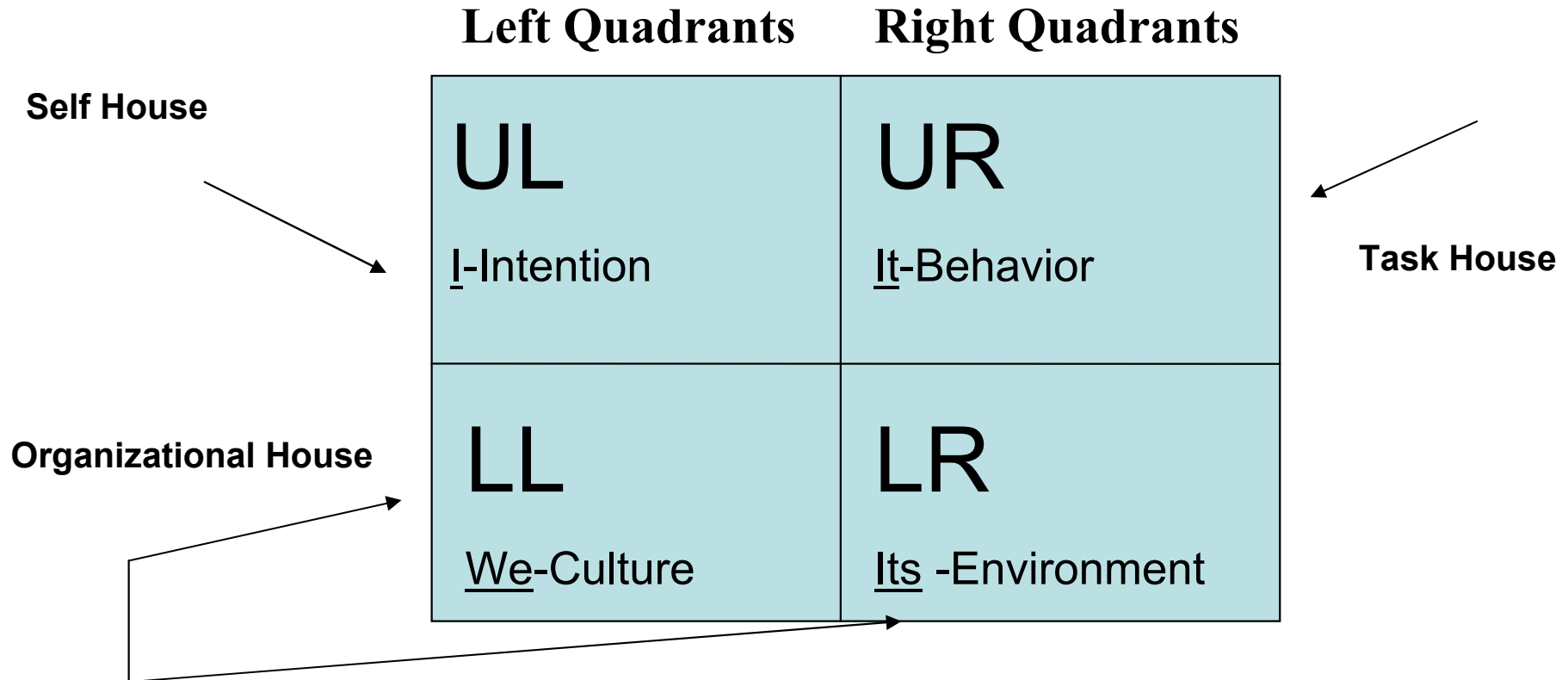
- While “interviewing” in the sense of leading a structured and focused conversation is a practice deriving from developmental research, its implications for learning dialectical thinking are very much linked to communication generally.
- Cognitive, in contrast to social-emotional, interviewing, is the art of “disembedding” both oneself and another individual from his or her habitual mental world, for the purpose of gauging the phase of cognitive development the individual is presently in.
- This requires a “methodology” which equally “disembeds” the interviewer from his/her habitual way of asking questions and making comments, by adopting the DTF framework.
- Since interviews can be recorded and transcribed – turned into texts – they can be evaluated or “scored” for assessment purposes.
- In this way, dis-embedding from one’s habitual constraints and evaluation in the sense of assessment of another’s person thinking go together.

Approaches to Cognitive Interviewing

- **Piaget, Basseches, Jaques all developed a particular kind of “cognitive interview”, depending on their specific purpose.**
- **Since DTF is focused on thinking in organizations (that is, thinking as a social activity), it works with the notion of the Three Houses (Laske, 1999): Task House, Organizational House, and Self-House.**
- **Other ways of structuring the cognitive interview are conceivable (e.g., using Wilber’s quadrants), as long as the structure is good enough to disembed from habitual functioning.**
- **Disembedding gives rise to opening one’s own and others’ mind and, in addition, to evaluating or “scoring” the phase of cognitive development a person is in.**
- **At IDM, we use the Three Houses metaphor to guide individuals in their disembedding from self-imposed constraints, as shown on the next slide.**

The Three House

in relation to Wilber's quadrants

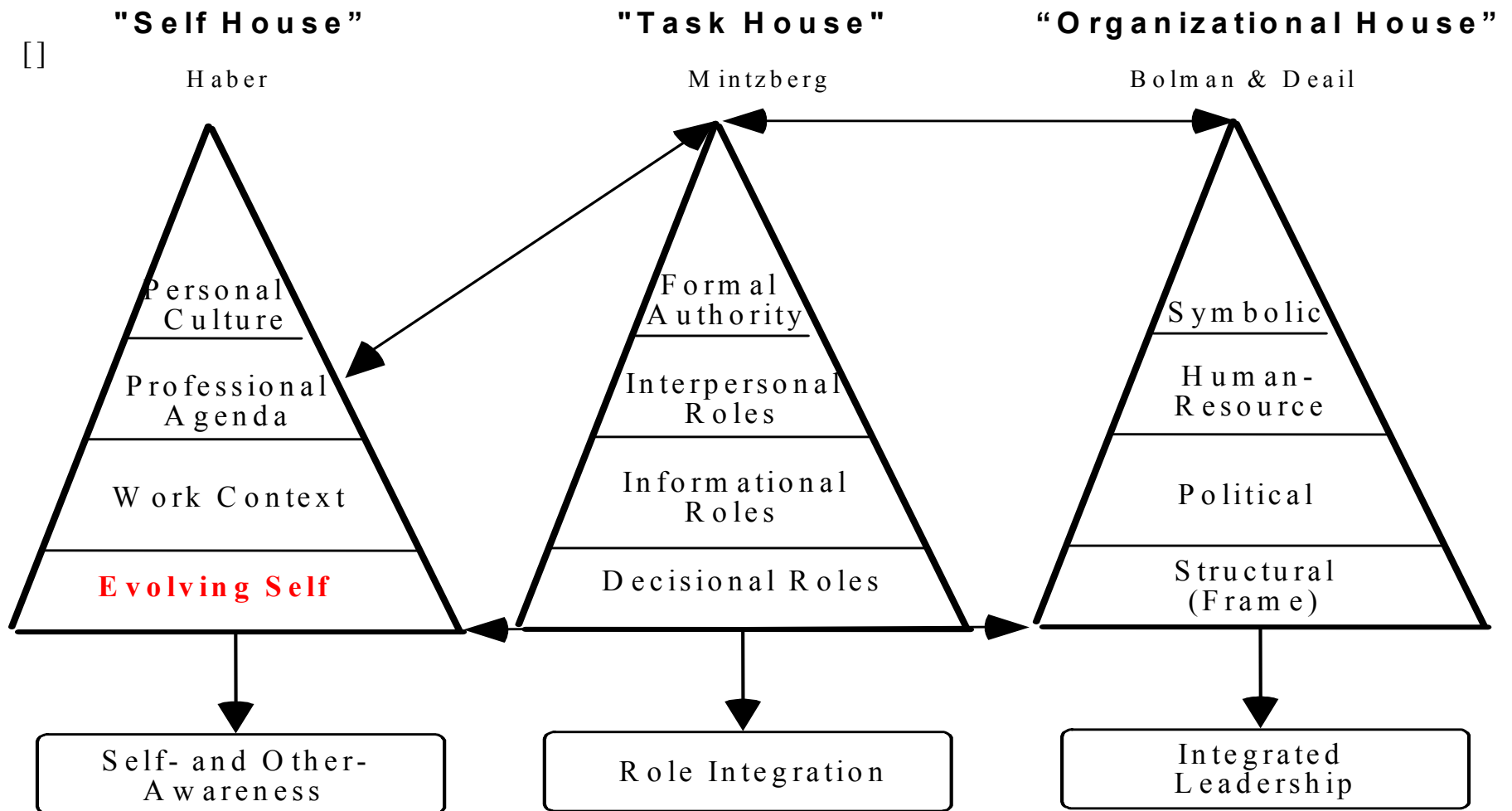


Legend: UL = upper left; LL = lower left; UR = upper right; LR = lower right

Cognition Occurs in a Mental Space

- For any kind of process consultation, as well as for evaluating a client's level of cognitive development, we need to access all four quadrants of dialectic as they are represented by classes of thought forms.
- Doing so will show us how far each quadrant has been developed in an individual's thinking, and therefore, what balance between classes of thought forms presently exists in the individual's mind.
- We structure the interview in terms of three HOUSES, each of which references one or more quadrants.
- The Three Houses Metaphor focuses interviews on the world of Work.
- With Jaques, we define WORK as *the exercise of reflective judgment and discretion within defined time limits.*

The Three Houses



The mental space of coaching activity.

The Mental Space of Work

- We divide the mental space of work (and of coaching) into three domains or Houses: **Self House, Task House, Organizational (Environmental) House.**
- Each House has a unique **THEME** and comprises several **FLOORS** and **ROOMS** that are variously open or closed to the client.
- **Consultant (coach) and client both reside in each of the Houses, but in different ways:**
 - the **Self House** is the **Professional House** where both parties reside in terms of their professional intentions and personal uniqueness;
 - the **Task House** differs for both client and coach and can be objectively described in terms of role played, goals, factual situations, etc.;
 - the **Organizational House** is complex because it comprises both the lower left and right quadrant, merging 'subjective' and 'objective' realities.
- **There is no preordained relationship between Houses and classes of thought forms; all Houses can be described in terms of C, P, R, T.**

See O. Laske, An integrated model of developmental coaching (1999), reprinted from Consulting Psychology Journal in R. Kilburg & C. Diedrich, The Wisdom of Coaching, APA, 217-236, 2007.

The Relationship between the Houses

- We can view the Houses as *internal partitions of the client's **internal workplace** which is projected into the external physical one.*
- People essentially 'go to work' in the inner, not the outer, workplace.
- From the perspective of each House, the environment we work in, organization or not, looks different.
- Since the Houses represent Wilber's quadrants (Self House = UL; Task House = UR; Organizational House = LL&LR), we need to think about them 'systemically', as interconnected.
- In the cognitive interview, therefore, we gauge the phase of a client's thinking in the workplace by investigating how far s(he) can use formal logic tools for purposes of thinking systemically.
- This will determine how complexly an individual can articulate his/her movement within and between the Houses, an indication of the complexity of their Inquiring System.

The Professional Agenda Interview

- Structured coaching conversations follow the model used in the Cognitive Interview.
- The cognitive interview focuses on the structure of the client's thinking, **in terms of classes of thought forms** (P, C, R; T).
- In terms of content, it focuses on the client's Professional Agenda: what s(he) does and wants to do, and how s(he) views her career.
- Logistically, the interview begins in the Task House (UR) which is the most 'neutral' in social-emotional terms, and lends itself to logically consistent descriptions.
- From the Task House, the interviewer moves on to the Organizational and Self Houses, announcing departure from and motion into another House.
- **There is time to spend 15-20 minutes in each House.**
- The mandate of the interviewer is to "let the client shine", leading him/her to *their best possible thinking on a chosen topic*.

Logistics of the Cognitive Interview

- The coach interacts with the client in a way informed by the structure of the Three Houses; there are two kinds of cognitive questions:

- **Guide questions**
- **Probe questions**

- **Guide questions** are specific to the House or Floor (e.g.):
 - what is your present authority and status in this company?
 - how would you describe your professional agenda?
- **Probe questions** are *specific to the Class of Thought Form the interviewer is probing for, e.g.:*
 - considered over time, how stable, would you say, has your department been over the years? (P)
 - how would you define your agenda of working in this organization? (C)

Houses Are Composed of Floors

- **The floors of the Houses are meant to help the interviewer define GUIDE QUESTIONS, that is questions that “disembed” the interviewee from his/her habitual way of thinking.**
- **For this purpose, it is useful to restrict the conversation to *a few salient issues at a time*.**
- **In the Self House, the floors name three different but interrelated issues which, conjunctively, give a picture of the client’s professional self: professional agenda, work context, personal values.**
- **In the Task House, the floors name two major issues, authority and roles. The roles are typically strongly interrelated and are explored together. Roles determine tasks which can be outlined in detail.**
- **In the Organizational House, the floors define a set of multiple perspectives on the organization that encourage thinking “in parallel.” Here, the focus is on the client’s ability to see one and the same situation/event from multiple points of view, thus to think systemically.**

Central Task of the Interviewer/Listener

- In social-emotional coaching, we encountered the issue of separating content from structure.
- Here, the structure aimed for is the client's "way of knowing," thus the *set of Thought Forms* most frequently and emphatically used by him or her.
- Only to the extent that you yourself master the Thought Forms can you recognize them in clients' speech.
- Use the Tables in volume 2, 589 f., to learn the table of thought forms and get into the habit of thinking in terms of them [this will take time ...]
- As a first step, begin to "listen between the lines" in terms of *classes* of thought forms when interacting with others; you will be able to focus on *individual* thought forms only gradually.

Interview Guide Questions

- **Task House:** Can you please elaborate on your present status and authority (in the company), and the roles that derive from them?
- **Organizational House:** If you were to think about how you see the organization (environment) you work in from a 'bird's eye' perspective, what would be most striking for you? What perspective, would you say, you are predominantly taking on it:
 - a structural perspective
 - a political perspective
 - a human resource perspective
 - a cultural perspective
- **Self House:** Please tell me a little bit about how you see your present work context and the professional agenda that grows out of it. (E.g., how does this occupation fit your background and personal culture?)

Interview Probe Questions

- Probe questions have the purpose of gauging the structure of the client's thinking; they do so to the extent that the interviewer can “disembed” the interviewee from habitual ways of thinking.
- Keeping close to the “train of thought” of the client, the interviewer chooses questions that are focused around a particular class of thought forms; s(he) reinforces thought form classes chosen by the client (P, C, R; T).

See volume 2, Appendix, for available tools for leading structured cognitive conversations.

Cognitive Behavior Graph (CBG)

- The outcome of a cognitive interview is a cognitive behavior graph.
- The CBG is a visual representation of the sequence of thought forms used in a 1-hr cognitive interview or conversation.
- The graph gives an overview of how the interviewee conceptualizes his/her internal workplace in terms of the Three Houses.
- The interviewee's internal workplace is seen as a reflection of how the person sees the world at large, and thus of his/her Inquiring System at the present time.
- The CBG shows the number and kind of thought forms used in each of the four classes of thought forms relative to the three Houses in the course of time.
- It facilitates the computation of a "Fluidity Index" of an interview or conversation.
- The Fluidity Index is the basis of computing a person's Cognitive Score which gives insight into the balance or imbalance of the four classes of thought forms in the person mind at the present time.

Understanding the Structure of your Client's Thinking by Way of the CBG [volume 2, p. 620]

| Process | Context | Relationship | Transformational System |
|--------------|---------|--------------|-------------------------|
| | 9* | | |
| | | 15 | |
| | 10 | | |
| | | | 22 |
| 3 | | | |
| | 14 | | |
| | | | |
| TOTAL | | | |
| 4 | 12 | 5 | 3 |

Fluidity Index = 24
 Systems Thinking Index = 3
 Discrepancy Index = 7:15
 Phase 2 of Dialectical Thinking

* Numbers indicate thought forms.

See the next slide for a complete CBG.

| House | Process | Context | Relationship | Transformation |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Task House | | 8 | | |
| | | | 16 | |
| | | 12 | | |
| | 7 | | | |
| | | 10[2] | | |
| | 4 | | | |
| | | | | 24 |
| | | 8 | | |
| Organizational House | | 13 | | |
| | | 10 | | |
| | | | 20 | |
| | | 13 | | |
| | | 13 | | |
| | | | | 28 |
| | | | | 28 |
| | | | | 27 |
| Self House | | | 21[2] | |
| | | | 17 | |
| | 5 | | | |
| | | | 21 | |
| | | | | 26 |
| | | | 20 | |
| | | | 21 | |

Cognitive Scores in DTF

- Familiarity with cognitive measures (scores) in DTF helps with forming a vocabulary for speaking about one's own and others' thinking in terms of fluidity, balance, degree of systemic thinking.
- In DTF, three major scores exist, and they are linked:
 - The **Fluidity Index** is the total of the number of thought forms used in a 1-hr interview, multiplied by a weight calibrating the degree of articulateness of using the thought form (from 1/weak to 3/strong), e.g., 25.
 - The **Cognitive Score** breaks apart the total number of thought forms used into four classes – C, P, R, T – and expresses them in percent; the last percentage – for T – is referred to as the Systems Thinking Index, e.g., [19, 31, 18; 15(%)].
 - The **Discrepancy Score** shows the proportion of “critical” (P, R) versus “constructive” thinking in a person (C, T), e.g., 3:5.
 - Fluidity Indexes extend from 0 to 84; Cognitive Score percentages extend from 0 to 100; Discrepancy Score proportions can be of any kind.

Sense Making Imbalances

- As an interviewer and/or coach, one often finds that clients are able users of thought forms in one class but not another.
- In addition, clients may be more developed in their *critical thinking* (expressed through thought forms of PROCESS and RELATIONSHIP) than in their *constructive thinking* (expressed through thought form of CONTEXT AND TRANSFORMATION).
- In evaluative terms, we can speak of six kinds of imbalance of an individual's Sense Making Systems:
 - process imbalance (Process thought forms predominate)
 - context imbalance (Context thought forms predominate)
 - relationship imbalance (Relationship thought forms predominate)
 - transformational imbalance (Systemic thought forms predominate without being properly grounded in thought forms of Process, Context, and/or Relationship)
 - critical thinking imbalance (Context and Transformation forms predominate)
 - constructive thinking imbalance (Process and Relationship forms predominate).

Reading Interview Transcripts

- Before reading a transcript, review the Table of Questions regarding Thought forms. Keep in mind that the C-score refers to *classes of thought forms* (not individual thought forms), and *emphasizes cognitive balance*.
- Read the transcript in its entirety. In the margin, make comments regarding the class of thought forms you think is involved in the text, specifying also the individual TF that might best express the interviewee's thought. *Check your suggestion against the Table of Questions*.
- When you have finished reading, review your suggestions and enter those you can justify into the Thought Form Selection Sheet *with a justification of your scoring*.
- Determine the Fluidity Index suffices from the CBG.
- The Index is the sum of all weights from 1 (weak) to 3 (strong) you have assigned to each thought form use in the interview or conversation transcribed.

The Table of Questions is found in volume 2, pp. 595 f.

Homework

- Record a short section of an interview or conversation and transcribe it for analysis.
- With a colleague, analyze the transcription paragraph by paragraph, as follows:
 - generate an hypothesis as to which class(es) of thought forms is (are) involved in the paragraph;
 - having determined class, select the most pertinent individual thought form in the class that fits your understanding of the gist of what is said;
 - justify your selection by using the Table of Questions for thought forms, and entering your justifications into a TF Selection Sheet.
- At the end, list the Thought Forms encountered in terms of their class in order of occurrence (CBG).

SECTION 4

The Three Houses in More Detail

The Three Houses are useful not only in cognitive interviewing, but also in consulting. They help focus attention on one of three parts of the client's mental space.

For more details, see Laske (1999) "An Integral Model of Developmental Coaching", reprinted in The Wisdom of Coaching, R.K. Kilburg & R. C. Diedrich, Eds., Washington, D.C.: APA Press (2007).

The Self House

- Both client and coach ‘reside’ in this House, being professionals each in their own way.
- For each party, the Self House expresses the ‘upper first quadrant,’ of intention. It comprises four “Floors” (internal dimensions):
 - level of self development (Meaning Making System)
 - work context
 - professional agenda (goals and objectives)
 - (idiosyncratic) personal culture

Work Context

- The client is functioning in a specific work context that includes his/her relationship to the coach.
- The context is a result of mental processes by which the client construes his/her relationship to the organization in practical, action-oriented terms, within the time horizon s(he) is capable of on account of his/her cognitive profile.
- On this floor, we are dealing with the images of 'sponsor,' 'boss,' 'colleague,' and 'management'.
- Also part of this Floor is the client's support system (peers, reports, sponsors).

The Professional Agenda

- Central to coaching is the client's *Professional Agenda*.
- The Agenda is a set of unconsciously held ASSUMPTIONS about how to “get things done,” by navigating within each of three HOUSES.
- The Agenda is an internal template for action in an organizational or life environment, and derives from (is sourced by) the client's present thinking and developmental level.
- The Agenda comprises: relationship to work, personal mission (mandate), formulation of goals and objectives, approach to tasks, and ways of translating theoretical and ideological convictions into concrete actions.

Personal Culture

- Personal culture is to be distinguished from organizational culture as dealt with in the Organizational House.
- Since as a leader the client is also the bearer of organizational culture, the line between the two cultures may be difficult to draw. However, the two cultures can be in conflict.
- Topical here are the client's value system and ethical convictions, as well as the coach's ethical responsibilities.
- Personal culture also includes the “cognitive fingerprint” of both coach and executive.

The (Client's) Organizational House

- Only the client has direct access to this House, while the coach learns about this House *indirectly*, via the client.
- In the Organizational House, the client does not act as a performer of roles (as in the Task House), but as a “thinker-in-action” who holds certain conceptions of the organizational environment.
- **These “mental frames” give rise to peculiar action schemes specific to the frame.**
- We can distinguish four FRAMES (Bolman & Deal, 1991):
 - the structural frame
 - the political frame
 - the human resource frame
 - the symbolic (cultural) frame.
- Importantly, to achieve integrated leadership, the client must be able to hold more than a single frame at the same time, thus taking multiple perspectives on what happens inside him- or herself, and inside the organization.

The Structural Frame

- **Focus:** division of labor; task and reward systems, hierarchical layering of control, vertical and horizontal command structure, structure of the internal business process.
- **Saliency:** goals and information inside the information are clear; low conflict and ambiguity; legitimate authority.
- **Change Policy Initiatives Required:** realign and renegotiate formal patterns, to establish clarity in organizational roles and relationships.

The Political Frame

- **Focus:** scarce resources; enduring differences between constituencies and coalitions; mismatch of organizational and individual needs.
- **Saliency:** goal and value conflict; diversity high or increasing; diffuse, unstable power.
- **Change Policy Initiatives Required:** create arenas where issues can be negotiated; help unearth divisive issues and make them fully conscious.

The Human Resources Frame

- **Focus:** fulfilment of human needs; conflict between individual and organizational development; reduction of people's "frustration index" (calibrated by Need/Press); improve "organizational climate."
- **Saliency:** goal and value conflict; diversity high or increasing; diffuse, unstable power; low morale
- **Change Policy Initiatives Required:** increase employee leverage, heighten morale, manage diversity; clarify power structure; empower clients to engage with company strategy; teach clients that are constructing the organization as they go.

The Symbolic (Cultural) Frame

- **Focus:** organization as theater, held together by ritual, story, myth, giving direction to events; mission; culture
- **Saliency:** goals and information ambiguous; cause-effect poorly understood; weak technology; high diversity
- **Change Policy Initiatives Required:** sensitize to diversity issues through 'cross cultural coaching;' support the grieving of loss of meaning and purpose; create new symbols of attachment; encourage spontaneous forms of symbolic activity.

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