

On Spiritual Maturity

For this month's advanced webinar, we will examine the process of growing up into your full spiritual potential. We will draw from our writings on this topic, and hopefully, clarify your questions about it.

Even as we move through the developmental stages in human life—from infancy to early childhood, to adolescence, to becoming an adult, a parent, and a grandparent—there is a parallel development that takes place in spiritual life. Here you journey from being spiritually unawake to becoming a neophyte, an aspirant, a disciple, and an Initiate.

In this webinar, we will dive deeply into this question of what is spiritual maturity and how it develops.

- We first will examine markers of increasing complexity and maturity in cognition, emotion, and behavior.
- We will then look at the stages of emotional maturity, and the role of spiritual evolution in catalyzing spiritual growth.
- We will then explore how spiritual evolution progressively impacts identity.
- Finally, we will elucidate the shift from ego to Self to Soul to Spirit, and how this inner change is generated.

It is important for aspirants and disciples to broaden their perspective from focus on unfolding the Soul to a new nodal point to a more holistic appreciation of the impact of Initiation and spiritual growth on personality and life.

This webinar will shed light on this area that usually escapes your awareness, and will attempt to give you insight into the grander work of transformation that takes place beyond the movement of the Soul along its spiritual evolutionary track.

Let us begin.

Maturity

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Maturation is both a neurological process and a psychological one. We can characterize landmarks in this developmental process as the inner being evolves and grows for cognitive, emotional, and behavioral domains of functioning.

Cognitive

Conceptual	Ability to understand, analyze, predict, and communicate abstract theoretical models using language, mathematics, and symbols
Functional	Ability to use an intellectual function to solve a discrete problem
Creative	Ability to use imagination to come up with potential solutions to a problem, or through brainstorming
Rote Memory	Ability to remember information and report it in a testing situation, through multiple choice, true or false, essay or oral interview protocols
Manipulative	Ability to filter information given out to others to create a positive impression and to defend against criticism; to persuade others to buy or otherwise do what one desires
Seductive	Ability to communicate to a potential sexual one's attraction and desire, and to convince them to grant sexual favors
Rudimentary Communication	Ability to communicate in a rudimentary way, with insufficient knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, due to lack of education in the language or subject matter

Emotional

Compassionate and empathic inclusion	Senses another's meanings, feelings, and experience with unconditional positive regard and to maintain empathic rapport with that other person. Develops empathy and compassion.
Intimacy	Discloses one's immediate desire, needs, values, and feelings to another person in an open and honest way. Develops integrity.
Sharing	Tells one's authentic life story to another and to truly report, in response to questions honest feelings and experiences from the past. Develops genuineness.
Assertiveness	Asks directly for what one wants or needs from another with an aim to change their behavior. Develops responsibility.
Insincerity and game playing	Avoids disclosing feelings, values, and experiences by a variety of diversions, prevarications, and defenses. Develops social flexibility and a sense of humor.
Obsession and worry	Allows anxiety, craving, fear, guilt, or shame to be the central focus of emotional life. Develops internal restraints.
Acting out	Translates feelings into reactive behavior, performed without regard for consequences and without appropriate restraints. These may take the form of fighting, criminal behavior, sexual indulgence, expression of profanity, disregard for the feelings and rights of others, and seeking to obtain what suits one's whims or fancy without considering the property or person of others. Develops identification of personal desires and motivations.



Behavioral

Service	Expresses the Soul through satsang (inspired discourse), acting to carry out the Divine Will, acts out of compassion and kindness for others, channels the gifts and abilities of the Soul.
Ritual	Adopts ritual postures to minister, to pray, to respond to the downpour of spiritual energies, to show reverence and respect for the sacred
Creative	Self-expression through art, science, sports, recreation
Human responsive	Performs acts of caring, kindness, concern and respect for others; expresses love
Sequential and scheduled behavior	Carries out the behavior facilitating family life, work, and recreation to allow independent living and adult functioning
Chaining of behavior	Learns new tasks, masters all aspects of a behavioral sequence, e.g., getting dressed
Individual task	Demonstrates a single complete action, e.g., tying one's shoes

As a result of spiritual evolutionary growth coupled with transmutation and integration of unconscious material, we see the migration of human cognition, affect, and behavior towards greater maturity.



Emotional Maturity and the Alchemy of Spiritual Evolution

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There are seven major types of emotionality. These are briefly described in the table below.

	Type of Emotionality	Description	Keynote(s)
I	Body identified emotionality	Governed by fear or terror at losing or injuring the body. Marked by superstitious thinking, or magical thinking, extreme defensiveness or guardedness	Survival/Fear
II	Attachment based emotionality	Linked to attachment bonding to and loss of parents, siblings, friends, lovers, spouses, children, and other significant persons. Identity is defined in terms of others.	Desire/Grief
III	Competition based emotionality	Obsessed with surpassing others or covering for perceived inferiority. Status conscious, obsessed with maintaining a public image.	Ego/Shame
IV	Caring (humanitarian) emotionality	Capable of intimacy, nurturing, empathy, sharing of feelings. Ability to listen and tell the truth	Authenticity/ Love
V	Commitment based emotionality	Words and deeds match. Capable of making commitments, of delivering on promises, being reliable and trustworthy, strives for quality, excellence, integrity, and truth. Results oriented.	Will/ Commitment
VI	Devotion - Absorption in the vision of Noumenal, Transcendental Reality.	Ability to dedicate oneself to a spiritual leader, a cause greater than oneself, or to the Divine. Obedience to spiritual principles.	Surrender/ Devotion
VII	Compassion and understanding	Comprehension of universal principles that unite all living creatures (Law), the cognition of the suffering of living beings, and the emergence of all-embracing understanding and compassion.	Wisdom/ Compassion

As the consciousness principles within human beings evolve, we can characterize seven stages of emotional development. The ability to effectively parent, to genuinely relate to and understand another person apart from one's own needs and desires is contingent upon the expression of stage four emotionality. *Emotional maturity can be defined, as the ability to express the qualities of stage-four emotionality at will.*

As the spirituality is further developed, there emerges three higher orders of emotionality: based on will, on devotion, and on wisdom and compassion. Through the transformative process of meditation and initiation, emotionality undergoes purification in the crucible of the Soul's inner alchemical fire.

This inner alchemy consists of seven stages.

1. First, the inner vehicles are tuned to a new and higher state of awareness (*Initiation*).
2. The second step, *implosion*, is an immersion of the formerly unconscious materials into the light of consciousness.
3. The third step, *sublimation*, is the transmutation of this material into the images and forms within consciousness.
4. The fourth step, *integration*, is the organizing of this new material within consciousness, and deriving understanding, meaning, and value from this material.
5. Next comes *identification*, in which the Self comes to know itself as the newly integrated conscious material.
6. Then arises *empowerment*, in which the Self is able to express itself through the new forms within consciousness.
7. The final stage is *expression*, in which the Self brings the new elements within consciousness into its daily life experience, for example, through art, science, literature, creativity, or invention.

Through the techniques of therapy it is possible to access the unconscious. However, therapy alone is insufficient to promote the inner alchemical transformation that can allow a person to express a higher order of emotional expression.

The real philosopher's stone that is needed is the key to the transformation of consciousness—that is the living power that promotes personal and spiritual growth. Without this power, all efforts are but a hollow form, empty of substance.

Shift of Identity with Spiritual Maturation

By George A. Boyd © 1995

Integral meditation fosters a progressive reintegration of identity around new centers. The typical progression of identity shift at the level of personality appears to follow nine steps. This is shown in the table below.

1. Identification with emotional complex	Focuses on an aspect of emotionality such as anger, greed, addiction, or revenge. A dominant passion rules the individual's life, often leading to personal misfortune and tragedy, and misery and unhappiness for those involved with the individual. May be an addict, criminal, or other dysfunctional personality type.
2. Identification with body	Focuses on appearance, bodybuilding, cosmetic surgery; obsession with being thin, muscular, or attractive; great attention to clothing, jewelry, and physical body.
3. Identification with sexuality	Focus on performance and orgasms, seeks sexual conquests and sexual adventure, pursues pleasure; may be identified with one's sexual orientation (e.g., homosexual) and advocate for rights. May be involved with pornography, sexual perversion, or prostitution.
4. Identification with career	Focus on advancement in career with increases in salary; responsibility and esteem, developing skill, professionalism, and expertise. May emphasize creating wealth through investment, sales, or acquisition of real estate.

5. Identification with family	Focus on needs and achievements of children, self- sacrifice to help them advance to a greater socio-economic status than the parents
6. Identification with religion or politics	Focus on advocacy for political candidates or religious proselytization, emphasis on ideology and doctrinal system, may operate on altruistic motives to right a perceived injustice, or to see one's religious or political agenda implemented as policy or law.
7. Identification with creative pursuits or innate gift	Focus on development and expression of a creative gift or talent, which may be secondarily expressed as one's career path or as a business enterprise.
8. Identification with spirit, a nucleus of Identity, or the ensouling entity	Focus on spiritual development with an aim to advance towards a perceived spiritual goal, such as ascension into Heaven or into the presence of the Divine, Mastery, or Liberation to gaining spiritual powers, wisdom, and enlightenment; characteristic of aspirants and disciples.
9. Identification with service and Divine Mission	Focus on carrying out a specific mission to assist humanity. May take a public role as a Guru, Avatar, or spiritual teacher teaching and ministering to the masses. May also engage in silent ministry on the Higher Planes; characteristic of Initiates.

Identity shift occurs by detachment and disidentification with one pattern and re-identification with an alternate pattern as the new “core identity.” This identity shift may retain elements from [earlier] identity patterns, so the individual may retain and express traits belonging to these more primitive patterns.



The Ray track conditions the expression of these identity patterns, imposing a particular context, orientation, and process that characterize this Ray influence upon identification. The conditioning factors of Ray influence are shown in the table below.

Ray	Context	Orientation	Process
1	Action (linear present)	Spatial	Operation on objections in space, use of will
2	Linear past	Historical	Construction of personal and collective stories
3	Linear future	Temporal	Cause and effect, plans and goals
4	Subjective	Experiential/ present time	Experiencing life unfolding moment-to-moment
5	Objective	Factual/empirical measuring	Gathering information
6	Idealistic	Identification with essence	Living of core spiritual truth and values
7	Synthetic	Intuitive/global contextual	Gaining understanding of the perspectives from which others view the phenomena of their objective, subjective, and trans-subjective world

It takes many transformations, identifications, and disidentification episodes, before an individual senses their core identity is their spiritual essence.

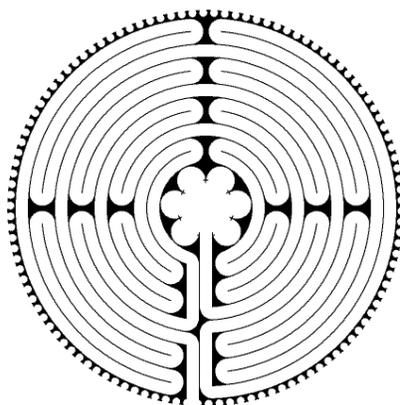
Reaching the requisite spiritual maturity to become identified with spirituality is a long process. For this reason, those for whom spirituality has become their core identity are rare among humanity. It is for these ones for which the Mudrashram® teachings are disseminated; only these are ready to receive them.

Patterns of Inner Development

By George A. Boyd © 1989

As the impulse of the Spirit begins to activate the dormant potentials within an individual, we see a developmental pattern occurring within the individual in progressive stages. This unfoldment constitutes a gradual shift from ego to Self to Soul to Spirit. Stages of this unfoldment are detailed in the chart below.

1	<p>Ego is completely in control. It accepts no internal input from conscience or the volition of the Self, does not accept the authority or direction of others (activity of others' will), or moral guidance (activity of others' conscience).</p> <p>It disrespects institutions that represent the laws of the state and those that enforce those laws. It relies upon its own reason, acts solely on desire, and does not care about consequences or its behavior on others. The Soul is completely unconscious. This is the stage of a living demon.</p>
2	<p>The ego is still predominately in control and exhibits many of the characteristics shown in (1). But in certain areas, a feeling of shame about certain acts, a remorse for hurting others in the past, and a sense of others' pain develops the rudiments of conscience.</p> <p>There is some voluntary restraint from the volition of the Self, a pulling back from injurious acts. The individual may stop short of gross acts of inhumanity such as torture, rape, or murder, but is still capable of injuring others through violence, extortion, theft, and con games.</p> <p>Thinking at this stage are strategies for crime, avoiding detection, and escape from harm. This is the criminal mind.</p>



3	<p>The individual gains the ability to reflect upon the moral consequences of behavior at this stage. Instead of acting largely on impulse and desire as in (1) and (2), the individual begins to think about the consequences of behavior on self, other people, and society.</p> <p>The ego continues to be boastful and defensive, demonstrates “show off” behavior, and regularly puts others down. But there is an increasing zone of self-restraint, now stopping short of criminal behavior and serious injury to others.</p> <p>Drunkenness, addiction, and fighting still are common at this stage, but the individual begins to show some responsibility for actions, and can increasingly respect and obey the laws of the community.</p>
4	<p>This is the dawning of self-awareness. The individual here realizes that the Self can restrain the ego; one can decide between alternatives; and one can perceive the consequences of behavior clearly.</p> <p>The individual begins to formulate a personal morality. One becomes capable of discipline, self-restraint, and delay of gratification for longer and longer periods of time.</p> <p>The ego continues to act autonomously in several areas, evidenced by ongoing addiction, attacks of rage or upsets, and efforts to dominate and put down others.</p> <p>But at this stage, the individual is able to identify that this aberrant behavior arises from the ego, and increasingly, the Self initiates more actions. The Soul and Divine are yet unconscious.</p>
5	<p>The awakening of the attentional principle and the first experiences of astral travel open the individual to the possibilities of the Great Continuum of Consciousness. The individual here gains the ability to observe behavior with detachment (mindfulness), and begins to gain insights into the sources of the ego’s defensiveness, boastfulness, and arrogance.</p> <p>Through this process of self-observation, the ego begins to let go of some of its defensiveness and manipulative games, evidenced by the individual beginning to relax in social situations. The individual begins to become more natural and genuine, and there are fewer attempts to present a façade or to manage the way one appears or comes across to others. <i>This is the neophyte stage of spirituality.</i></p>

6	<p>With the entry of the attentional principle into the Superconscious mind, the individual formulates belief in a Higher Power. The individual starts to study scriptures, moral teachings, and philosophical and metaphysical teachings: he or she begins to incorporate values and beliefs from these systems. Increasingly, these beliefs and values influence behavior.</p> <p>The individual may join a religious or spiritual group at this stage. The individual's spirit is activated at this stage, and there is longing for salvation. <i>This is the beginning aspirant stage of spirituality.</i></p> <p>The ego is here viewed as an evil entity to be overcome by faith. Rebelliousness of the ego may actually increase at this stage, as a reaction to labeling and censure by the individual's new spiritual beliefs and values.</p>
7	<p>There is a quest for deeper understanding and search for meaning and truth. Beyond mere membership in organizations and a rudimentary faith in the Higher Power, the individual seeks a relationship and communion with that Higher Power and may begin serious meditation practice and study with an advanced Initiate or Master teacher of meditation.</p> <p>The individual begins to commune with the Soul and receive inner guidance. The individual begins to direct behavior from wisdom, and checks both the impulsiveness of the ego and the practical choices of the Self.</p> <p>An increasing maturity and serenity develops at this stage. The ego is here discovered to be a primitive precursor of the Self, and the individual attempts to understand and befriend the ego. The ego, in turn, feels known and valued, and lets go of yet more of its defensiveness.</p> <p>The individual may move into counseling, teaching, ministering, healing, or therapeutic roles towards others. Love and wisdom begin to suffuse the aura, and the individual begins to act with kindness, caring, and compassion. <i>This is the middle aspirant stage of spirituality.</i></p>



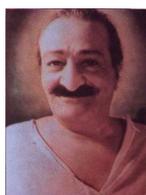
8	<p>The individual increasingly comes to identify as the Soul, and less as the personality. The individual, through sustained and dedicated meditation, makes contact with the inner Master teacher and begins to receive guidance and direction from this source.</p> <p>The individual becomes capable of increasing self-sacrifice and surrender to this Representative of the Divine. The ego becomes increasingly humbled, and the Self makes space for the spiritual guidance to be channeled through the personality. <i>This is the advanced aspirant and disciplic phase of spirituality.</i></p>
9	<p>Through spiritual work within, the individual's Soul evolves into universal stages of Mastery on the Great Continuum of Consciousness. The individual begins to actively minister to others. Only a few vestiges of the ego remain, and the Higher Octaves of the Will direct the Self. <i>This is the Initiate stage of spirituality.</i></p>
10	<p>The individual becomes a spiritual Master. The ego is completely dissolved and the individual becomes an anointed and empowered expression of the Divine Life. Divine Will directs the Self. The individual incarnates the Divine to humanity.</p>

In stages 1 through 4, the individual continues to be encapsulated in the cocoon of the ego (lower physical mind) and bubble of the Self (higher physical mind).

Spiritual life begins with the activation of the attentional principle and the capacity to be mindful, inwardly observing the phenomena of the ego at stage 5.

With deeper forays into the Superconscious mind typified by stages 6 through 9, the Soul begins to supplant both ego and Self as the dominant principle governing values, beliefs, and behavior.

At the deepest stage (stage 10), the individual becomes a Representative of the Divine to humanity.



Thank you for attending our webinar today!

