

FREE ESSAY

# Psyche and Humanity. User's Manual. 😊

(a study on the complex functioning of human systems)

from:

<http://paternita.info/fatherhood>

NON-PROFIT MOVEMENT FOR THE SAFEGUARD OF PATERNITY, CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE  
FOUNDED FOR PROMOTING FAMILY EDUCATION, TRUST AND LIFE



11th September 2009

“Make everything as simple as possible,  
but not simpler!” (A. EINSTEIN)

*note: necessary reading "Men and Women: One Single Culture" chapt. "Complexity" and "Family... why?"*

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How does the human psyche work? What is the collective unconscious?  
How is it that we continuously change moods? How is it that we are at times angry, at times apathetic?  
How do we develop an ideology? Why have there been so many ideologies that have changed around throughout history?  
What is the human being looking for? What is Mankind looking for?

Is there a hard and fast rule? Can we have a yardstick, a method for understanding the changes and developments of our minds and lives? Maybe we can. Thanks to the science of complexity we can look, interpret and simplify systems that seem indecipherable.

### **A BRIEF SUMMARY: THREE COMPLEXITY RULES**

RULE 1) As we have already explained in the essay "Men and Women: One Single Culture", one of the most fundamental principles of complexity science is that life (any form of life, as we know it, the world around us, the human psyche, a state, a family) develops and establishes itself **"in a "zone" of balance between Order and Chaos"**. Too much order is not life (rock, vacuum, inert state); too much chaos is not life (gaseous state, nuclear explosions in the sun, permanent change conditions).

RULE 2) As we have already explained in the essay "Family ... why?", another fundamental principle of complexity science is that life arranges itself at various **"Complexity Levels"**. For example, a system starting from a "simple" stage (say, a molecule) can gradually develop into, and arrange itself through, more and more complex systems (a one-cell organism, like a bacterium), then through yet more complex systems (a multi-cell organism, like marine, amphibious and terrestrial animals ...), and so on ...

RULE 3) One third fundamental thing to know is that, at each level of growing complexity, life systems show new **"Emerging Properties"**. Let us take an example (from "COMPLEXITY, EDGE OF ORDER AND CHAOS" a book by MORRIS MITCHELL WALDROP, 1996, 524 pages):

According to the author, there is nothing complex in a molecule of water - H<sub>2</sub>O, two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen in a mouse-ear-type shape behaving as atomic physics dictates. If we put billions of molecules of water together in a bucket, we suddenly obtain the glittering, gurgling and dripping substance that we call water. The molecules have acquired a collective property that none of them had on its own - the liquid state. There is nothing in atomic physics that lets us perceive such emerging property beforehand. An emerging property often produces emerging behaviors. If we bring the water in the bucket to temperature 0°C, its molecules suddenly stop collapsing into one another and bind together in an ordered crystalline net known as ice. So we can think of a new universe of complexity hierarchies, i.e. at each complexity level we find entirely new features, and at each stage we need new laws and generalizations that are as important and deep as those at previous levels.

## THE FOURTH RULE: THE ALTERNANCE OF OPPOSITES

Today we have added a new notion.

### RULE 4) "the Alternance of Opposites"

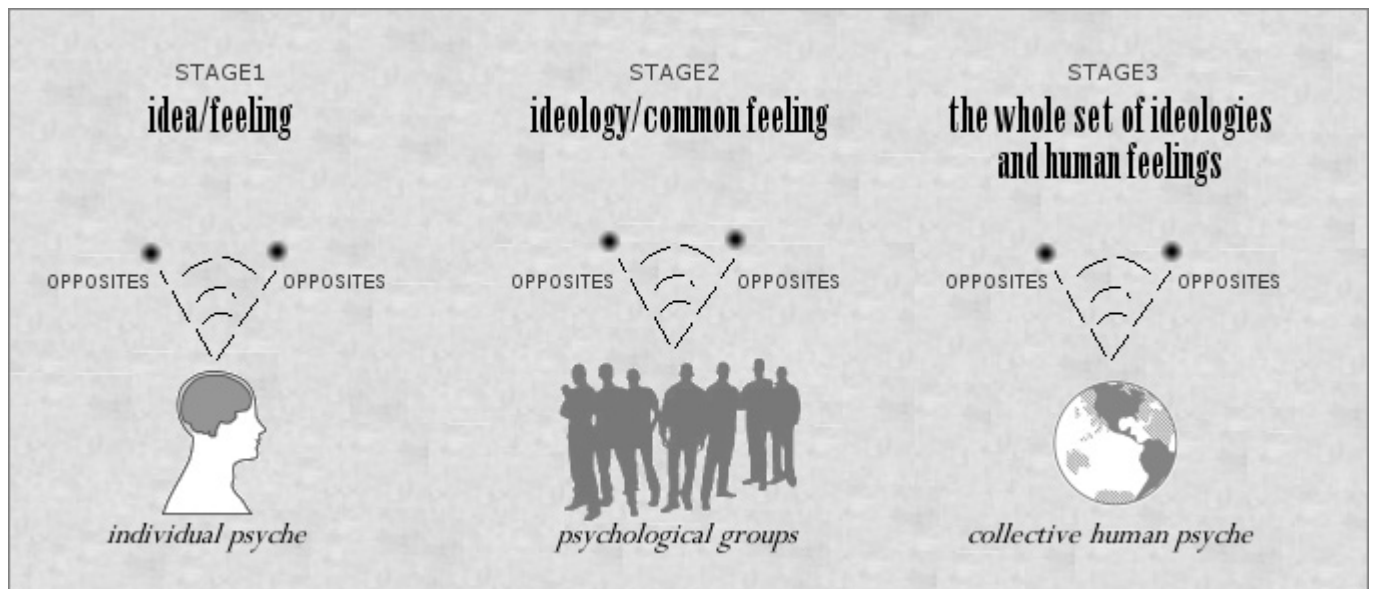
Or the oscillating movement within the space between the opposites Order and Chaos.

How does this movement take place?

In the simplest and most obvious way one can think of. By alternance and, typically, by approximation. It is the most simple research system that Life knows and uses in order to find the best balance. Let us make an easy example, with a **single mind**, our brain.

"We are in the woods and want to get warm. We light a fire, get closer and closer to it, as we are still too far away from it and it is cold, so we take two further steps towards it. Now we step back a little, as we have got so close to the fire that we feel our face is burning - we now take one further step back. Now we are at the right distance from it, feel the warmth that best suits our body - we feel well. Next time we approach a fireplace it will not be so clumsy as it has been so far, since we already know the right distance from the fire; anytime we have to find new balance, though, we will have to experience the two opposing extremes before we find the right place."

This method, however, also applies to **groups of people/minds** (ideologies, common feelings) or to **society as a whole** (Mankind, collective unconscious)

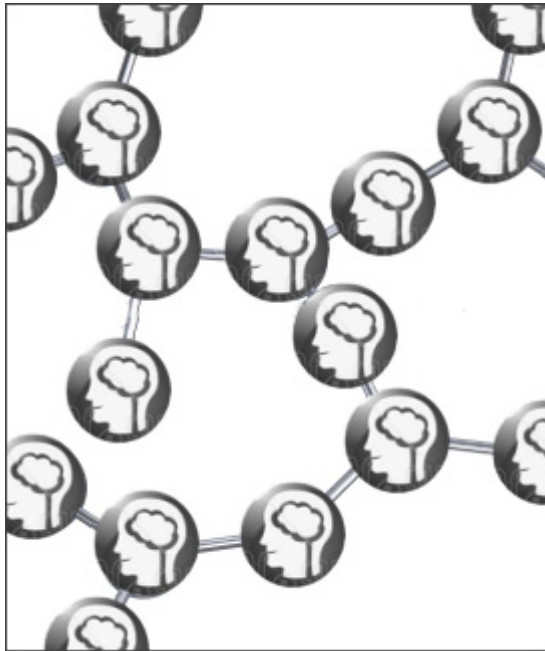


above, simplified scheme of the "aggregation stages" of the human psyche

Caveat: in the essay "The Family ... Why?" we have observed three major aggregation stages in the Human System at a scientific (or SOCIO-PEDAGOGICAL, for that matter) level (person -> family -> society); in this new essay, we will observe the aggregation stages from a SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL perspective (person -> group -> Humankind).

### STAGE THREE: THE COLLECTIVE PSYCHE (AND THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS)

By abstracting stage three, the Mankind system can be thought of as one single mind whose collective unconscious is the whole set of ideologies and human feelings.



left: detail from stage three

MINIMAL SECTION OF  
THE COLLECTIVE HUMAN PSYCHE

ONE (human \*1) NET OF (cerebral \*2) NETS

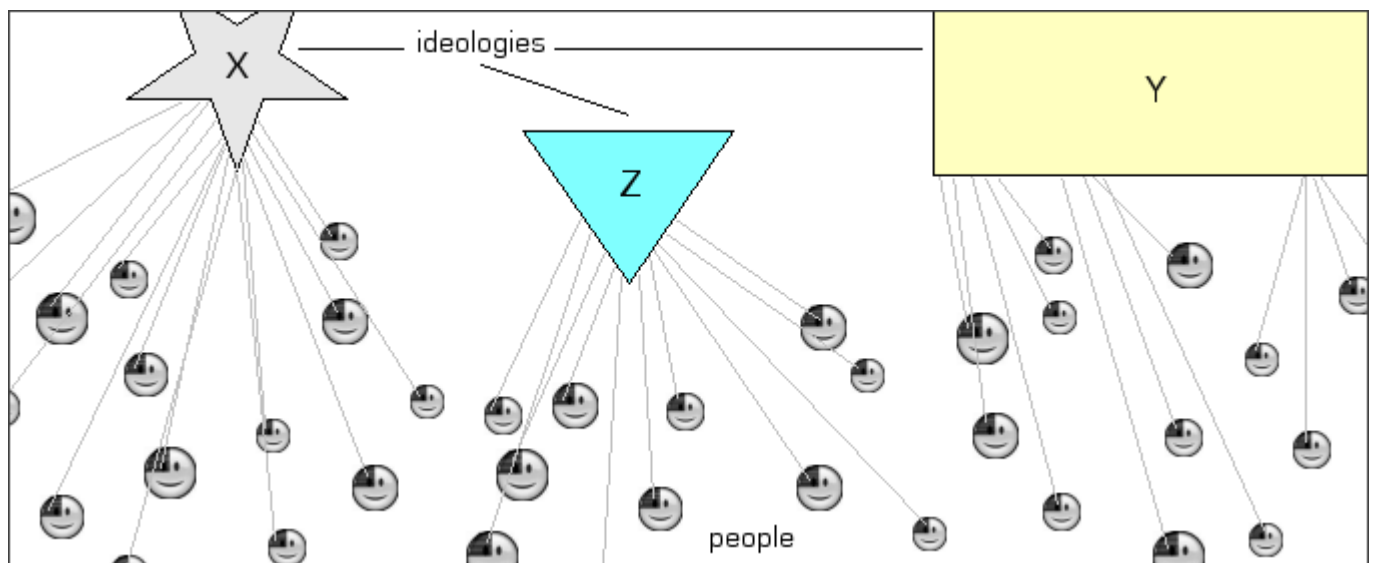
(\*1) about 6,000,000,000 humans  
(\*2) about 100,000,000,000 neurons

E.g., the about-2-billion-surfer-strong World Wide Web represents a conspicuous part, an excellent visual panorama of the collective mind.

### STAGE TWO: IDEOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL GROUPS

Ideology is the idea of one single psyche which becomes common, as it is shared with many psyches.

Ideology is something which we must cope with, as it represents and shapes the collective unconscious, i.e. the common part of Humankind's instinctual and intellectual thought.



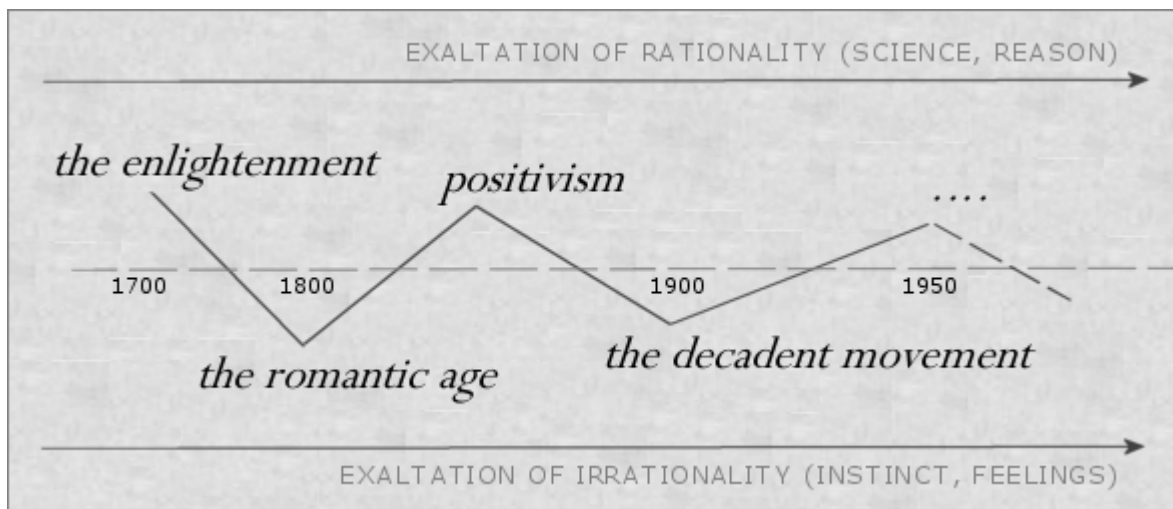
If we don't do it, somebody else (perhaps with evil purposes) or mere chance itself will. Even in the latter case, results may be uncertain, unpredictable, potentially good or potentially dangerous).

From the Paper/Thesis BIFBAV - ITALY 1993/94  
Ideological Mutations and the Alternance of Opposites Throughout History

"Ideology has been the mental development of humans seeking perfection in the natural world around them.

Such research process has led humans to constantly improve their continuously alternating and opposing ideological contents, so that each new ideology is often contrary to the previous one and better than any stream of thought characterizing all similar ideologies that have developed up to then.

below: example of the ideological alternance by opposites

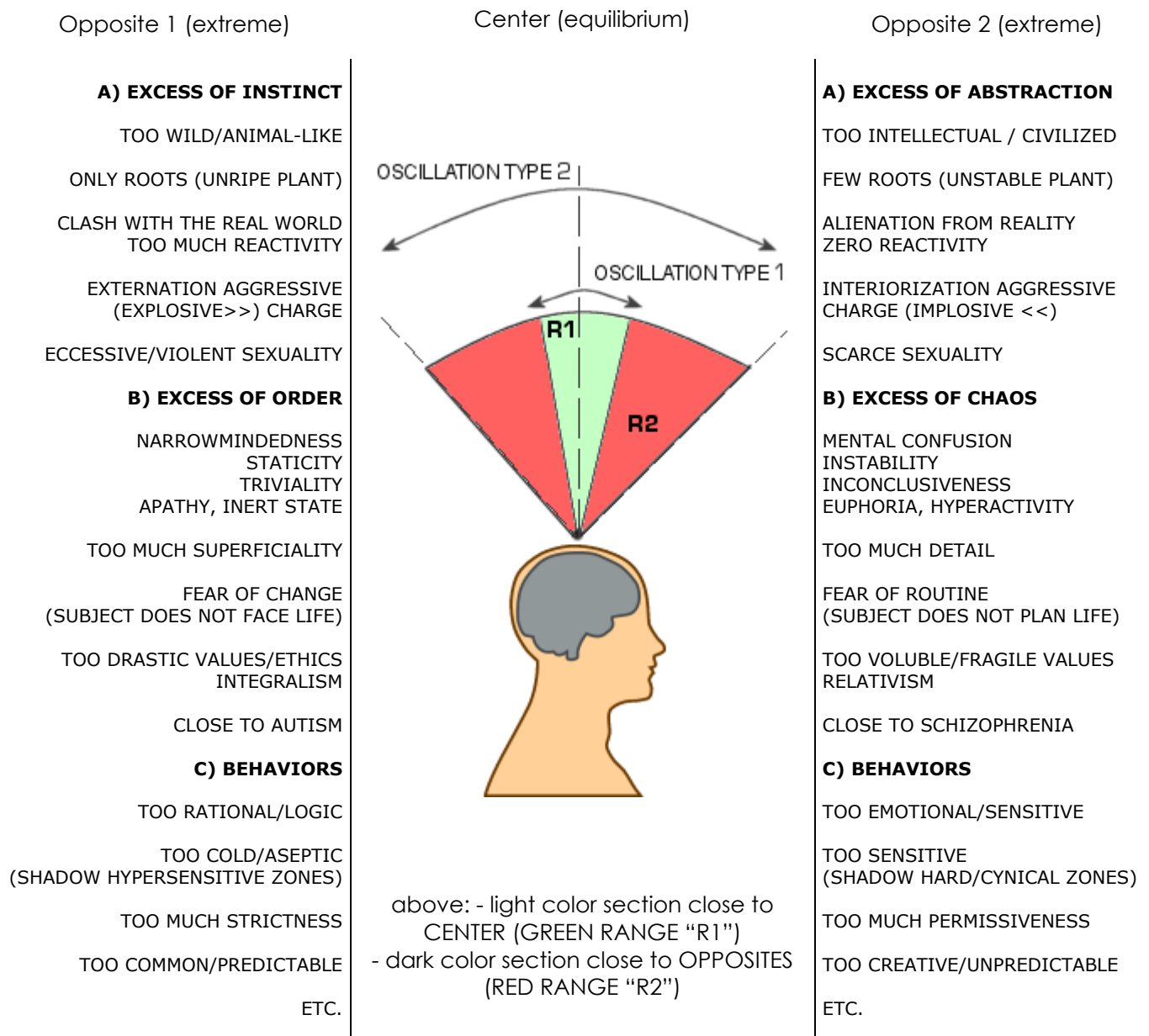


We can infer that the system seeks its own balance through a sequence of approximations opposing each other. This quest for balance will propagate a continuous drastic conflict between opposing ideologies over time.

Moreover, an innate aggregative force tends to cause a shift of the aforesaid forces towards the center, a hidden push which is hard to explain in objective rational terms. This finds evidence in society today - developed countries such as the United States, France, Britain, etc. feature quite simple political party systems made up of two great political or ideological poles which are not so different from, or opposite to, each other. As a result, the characterizing differences between them are often ascribable to marginal aspects, more or less pronounced nuances in the programs they present to the public, who are often undecided and confused by the lack of clarity or primary elements to neatly distinguish one party from the other. The drop in the voting population is all too common in industrialized countries. [...]

## STAGE ONE: THE INDIVIDUAL PSYCHE

Life is movement. Even psychic life is. So, let us see a simplified scheme showing what extremes could be reached during the natural movements or oscillations of the psyche. This scheme is to be taken as a mere methodological cue.



The oscillation type 1 in the light color space (GREEN RANGE R1) is the most ordinary and common. In a healthy mature mind, this is the most recurring, constant and continuous oscillatory movement during the whole day, the sequence of both daily routine and less typical and more unforeseen events still within a certain threshold of psychological bearability and sustainability.

Conversely, the oscillation type 2 in the dark color space (RED RANGE R2) is linked to typically temporary phases of life, e.g. adolescence or physical/sexual development, states of emergency/stress linked to extraordinary events (a mourning, a physically or emotionally traumatic or dramatic event, a serious illness or disease, as well as a critical event which, albeit positive, has changed one's state of affairs, knowledge or lifestyle too quickly or drastically).

Oscillation type 2 also includes people who have suffered or are suffering various forms of manipulation (mental control/possession) and are aware of it (see following chapter).

A person regularly living in oscillation type 1 will build and develop a more harmonious, mature, complete, ample, balanced, and stable identity and personality over time. Even in the case of oscillatory jolts, events and unexpected psychic upheavals, he will face them in a more contained, sensible and evolved fashion, which would lead him to build and/or develop new forms of awareness.

On the contrary, a person regularly living in oscillation type 2 will develop a more unbalanced, excessive, nonsensical (to oneself and to others) personality with frequent and unforeseen dangerous upheavals, which has a serious bearing/impact on one's psyche and psycho-physical health in general. These processes are too schizophrenic (and often destructive) to be integrally assimilated or catalyzed toward anything constructive, which floods the unconscious with useless shadows and burdens as a result.

### HOW - TO NOURISH A STRONG HEALTHY MIND: THE PERSONAL SPACE

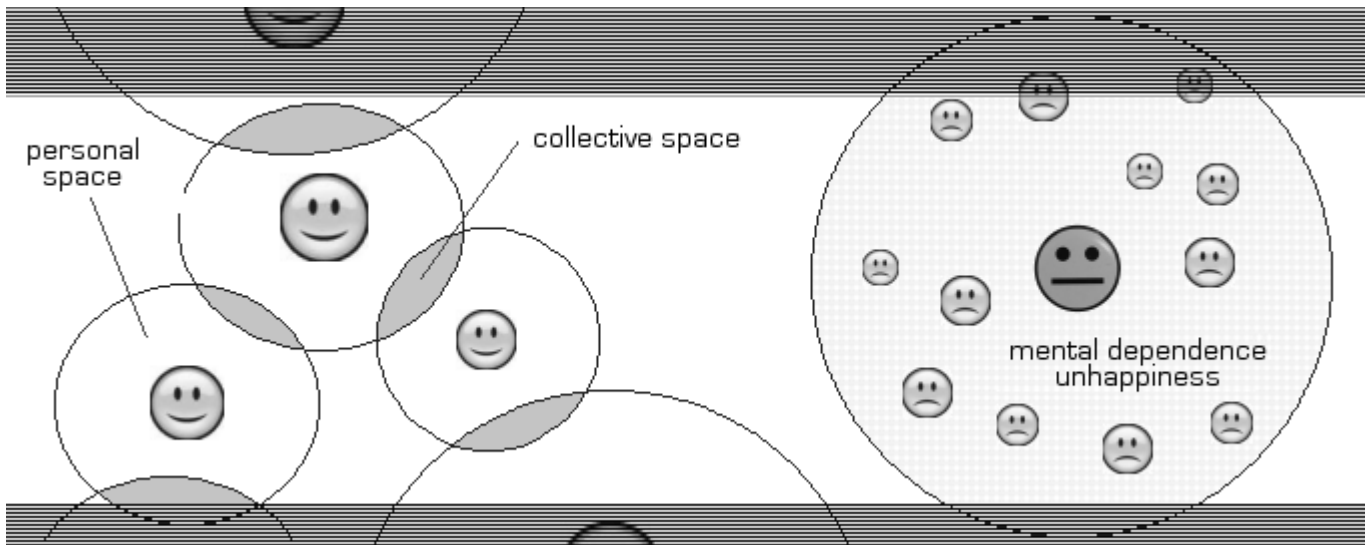
As you have just noticed, the way the psyche (individual and collective) works is not so complicated. How is it, then, that many things go wrong in us and in other people? How is it that we see so much evil, many murders or acts of violence, as well as examples of mere lack of respect, love or decency, more animal-like than human behaviors... so much disharmony, hatred, rage or sadness, nonsense, solitude, depression, discomfort and devastation?

You will have realized that the real reason for all the above lies in our not having been educated to an awareness and understanding of the human psyche and mind:

If we do not know an object, we will use it improperly; if we do not know what it cannot do, we will burn it out or destroy it; if we do not know what it can do, we will underestimate it and underuse it; if we do not know its shape, we will handle it improperly and drop it and break it. It is like wanting to lay the table in a stranger's kitchen that is totally dark - a disaster! Broken dishes, smashed glasses, vases in pieces all over the place, never mind swollen knees and lumpy heads... ☺

However, this is not enough.  
There is still something that wants knowing and nourishing – **personal space**.

below, a simplified visualization of personal space



A healthy adult mind has in itself a **collective sphere** (human instincts, gender instincts, family roots, national identity and culture, common rules and values, etc.) and a **personal sphere** (aptitudes and inclinations, personality and experience, freewill and mental independence, etc.) – to put it simply, we can be said to have a **public** part (common to all human beings) and a **private** part (our uniqueness which characterizes us) balancing each other.

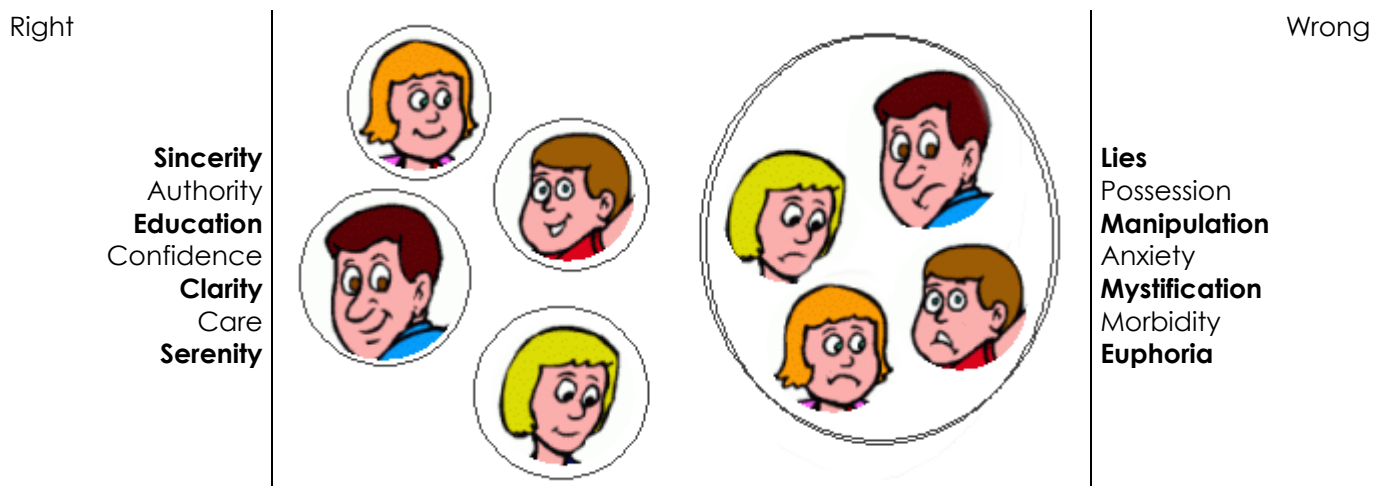
When a child is born, he/she is basically in the collective part (primal instincts) and his/her parents should gradually guide him/her to build up his/her own personal part. In fact, this is rarely the case. I say “basically” because (at least from what I have observed) **the most typical feature of a parent or educator is the ability to question himself/herself continuously**. 20<sup>th</sup>-century generations do not seem to have had much or any of this ability. We should not get discouraged, though. In order to survive, each new generation has to deal with the mistakes previous generations have made. So, let us carry on and face the parents’ issue with great optimism and hope.

Parents are the 2 people (male and female) who usually enact the initial imprinting on the child. In the world today, parents account for the whole sphere of influence of the child in the first 2-3 years of his/her life. Most of this sphere of influence basically stays as such up until he/she is 15-20. [...] The imprinting always takes place, even if the child's parents refuse to educate him/her (according to some outdated ideologies); the child's brains will take a definite form anyway.

As is usually the case, chaos prevails and the people left in such state will struggle hard for an identity and personal balance of their own.

It is exactly what happens when the child has not been trained and educated towards the building up of his/her own personal space:

left, some attitude enabling the child to create his/her own personal space - right, the opposite attitudes, it is not always easy to choose between the two or tell the right one from the wrong one



As they have no personal space, the children on the right side will always have dominant/dependent psychic relations, insomuch as they know no better mode - servants or masters of their own friends, of their partner and, finally, of their own kids; those on the left side will be free and will establish an authentic relationship with the other people, including their parents.

N.B.: if you are undecided as to whether to be a friend or a parent to your children, always choose the latter, particularly during their childhood. They will find many friends if you have raised them properly; as parents, they will only have had you. If u do not care to guide them, no one else will! (these aspects are dealt with more extensively in the manual mentioned below, “EDUCATIONAL IDEAS”, which you can freely download from <http://paternita.info/fatherhood>)



## WHEN - TO TEACH YOUR CHILDREN: THE VARIOUS STAGES OF MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

Well, we have studied and learned what complexity, the collective psyche and ideologies are all about. We also have seen how the individual psyche works or better still oscillates. We have talked about personal space.

However, in order to protect a mind we have to know how and when it has developed, which is important for **dosing the teachings and taking educational measures at the right time**. Every teaching has to be introduced and enacted at the right time. If you do it too soon, he/she will not be able to understand it (the child does not have his/her tools ready yet); if you do it too late, the environment will already have filled his/her head (with obviously unpredictable outcomes).

It is less inconvenient to do it too soon (as you can still try again in the future) than it is to do it too late (as it is extremely difficult to correct an educational mistake). Any master or artisan will tell you that it is far better to teach a subject or trade to the totally ignorant than to the wrong learner. The later you teach, the more problematic it will be to correct bad habits.

So, in order to be so "timely", you will have to be a good observer and have a grasp of how the human brain develops and configures since the child is born:

From the manual "EDUCATIONAL IDEAS" - <http://paternita.info/fatherhood> - ITALY 2008/09 - Inner, social and scientific aspects of being a father in the 21st century.

(brain development in the child - a simplified version)

**Dependence:** the virgin brain absorbs the earliest information without strong filters, it adapts to the world around without obstacles, it is very reactive, i.e. it responds directly to the stimuli it receives.

The child is not yet aware of himself/herself. This can be proved by the fact that he/she cannot see himself/herself in the mirror and, like 90% of all animals, looks into the mirror and thinks he/she sees another child.

**Semi-Independence:** the brain has built a first (thin, but solid) database. The answer to the stimuli from the world around him/her is no longer directed; it passes more and more often through this cerebral database that filters the final answer.

The child starts recognizing himself/herself in the mirror, making more articulated and complex sentences, performing actions which result from the elaboration of several thoughts put together. This is the most delicate stage. An unshaped ego is an ego that continuously risks dying, getting depressed or destroying itself, developing selfishness or megalomania, becoming the appendix of another ego, or becoming unhealthy, pathologic or insane. You are the guardians of this ego until it is fully-shaped and independent. Keep dosing your teachings gradually and you will see that day will come along.

**Independence:** you have done a good job: your children now walk on their own. They have obtained cerebral independence. They are adults. They are masters and conscious observers of their own existence. They can well tell themselves from you and the rest. They know that each person is a mind, a body, a life of a kind and of their own.

see also a brief documentary - The Stages of Mental Development - [www.paternita.info/cervello.html](http://www.paternita.info/cervello.html)

## CONCLUSIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

with a nice fancy "image"  
we can say that  
your brain is like a piano,  
  
you can play from classic slow  
to fizzy jazz,  
perform rigorously from the partiture,  
or improvise  
by instinct and intuition..  
  
but you must know  
  
in your life you can meet him/her  
who teaches you to play your piano,  
or him/her who  
plays it for you without telling you,  
on the sly, and plays the melody of your life  
without letting you play it yourself...

So, who's playing your piano?



A wish for everybody: let us get together and nourish a better identity and a better world.

Live and give, think and tell. Yes, always tell everything and never withhold anything. Withholding anything is still a loss, even if it does not seem to be one.

Whatever you withhold will die with you. Whatever you tell will live forever.  
And all that will be left when we die is whatever we have done, said and given.

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*Complexity Science and Philosophic Application Series*

<http://paternita.info/fatherhood/complexity>

the series also includes the following resources:

- PSYCHO-GLOSSARY (an interactive glossary)  
<http://psychoglossary.wiki.zoho.com/>
- MEN AND WOMEN – ONE SINGLE CULTURE (Essay)  
<http://www.paternita.info/fatherhood/mw.html>
- THE FAMILY ... WHY? (Essay)  
<http://www.paternita.info/fatherhood/fp.html>

All documents and resources are free and aim at spreading a peace- and knowledge-oriented culture.

Curiosity and creativity are seen as instruments of growth and development.  
Wisdom and awareness are seen as instruments of communal life and peaceful coexistence.  
Family love and confidence are seen as instruments of appreciation of the pleasure of living and the sense of life itself.