

## Personal Growth, Development and Evolution - a Visit

by

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In this paper, the male pronoun will apply to either gender. The plural pronoun will apply to both authors. The nominal pronoun will apply to the first author.

This paper reviews personal growth, development and evolution as second order change cites what are the critical elements for it to be extant.

Change happens for all living things. For us, as sentient beings, it is inevitable and unavoidable. Even in an isolated semantic domain in us that has become static, its statism is the state of stagnation. This, in turn, is the condition of its degeneration and degradation. These processes will determine its decay and finally, its death. And this too is change.

From the work of the researchers of the Mental Research Institute<sup>1</sup> (MRI), we now know that there are two kinds of change. There is *first order change* and then there is *second order change* (hereafter to be designated 2<sup>nd</sup> order change).

What is 2<sup>nd</sup> order change?

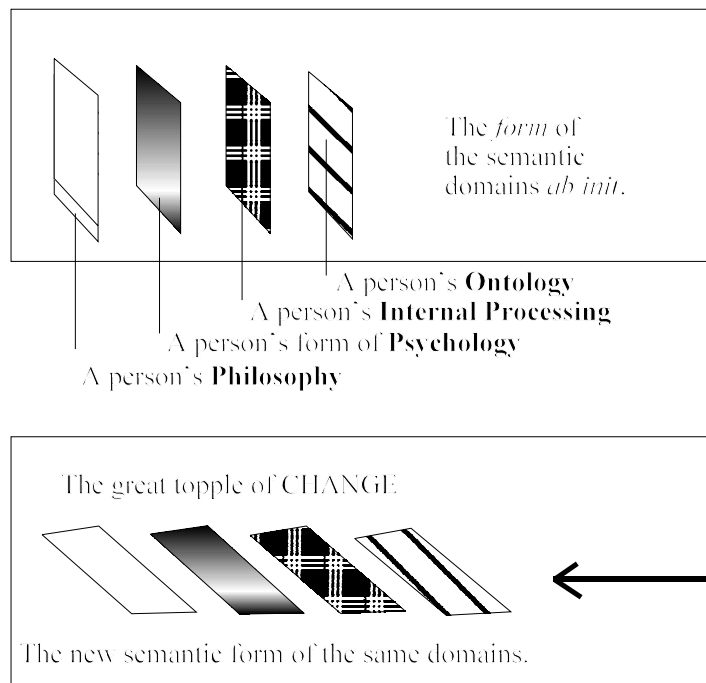
As a concept, it was first introduced by three co-researchers from the MRI. They were Paul Watzlawick, John Weakland and Richard Fisch. They did it in their work *CHANGE*:

**To summarize what has been said so far: Group Theory gives us a framework for thinking about the kind of change that can occur within a system that always stays invariant; the Theory of Logical Types is not concerned with what goes on inside a class, i.e., between its members, but gives us a frame for considering the relationship between member and class and the peculiar metamorphosis which is in the nature of the shifts from one logical level to the next higher. If we accept this basic distinction between the two theories, it follows that there are two different types of change: one that occurs within a given system which itself remains unchanged, and one whose occurrence changes the system itself.<sup>7</sup> To exemplify this distinction in more behavioural terms: a person having a nightmare can do many things *in* his dream – run, hide, fight, scream, jump off a cliff, etc. – but no change from any of these**

behaviours to another would terminate the nightmare. *We shall henceforth refer to this kind of change as first order change.* The one way out of a dream involves a change from dreaming to waking. Waking, obviously, is no longer a part of the dream, but a change to an altogether different state. *This kind of change will from now on be referred to as second-order change.* (The equivalence of this distinction with Ashby’s cybernetic definition of the two kinds of change, quoted earlier, is evident.) Second order change is *change of change* – the very phenomenon whose existence Aristotle denied so categorically.

7. The Greeks seem to have known only the first of the two. “Nothing comes into being or is destroyed. Rather, a thing is mixed with or separated from already existing things.” asserts Anaxagoras in his seventeenth fragment. Similarly, for Aristotle change is the passage from potentiality to actuality. And he expressly rules out what we nowadays would call a shift from level to metalevel, when he writes: “There cannot be motion of motion, or becoming of becoming or in general change of change.” (9). The latter Greeks and the Middle Ages tended to see change as the antimony between being and becoming. Only Heraclitus, it appears, envisaged change in a different perspective. In addition to his well-known dictum about the impossibility of stepping into the same river twice, he asserts in another fragment, “All change is contradictory, therefore, contradiction is the very essence of reality.” The evolution of the concept of change is well summarized by Prior: “It would hardly be too much to say that modern science began when people became accustomed to the idea of change, e.g. to the idea of acceleration as opposed to simple motion.” (80)

**Paul Watzlawick, John Weakland & Richard Fisch:** *CHANGE Principles of Problem Formation and Problem Resolution* W. W. Norton & Co. 1974 page 10 - 11



2<sup>nd</sup> order change in the case of a human being relates to the scan of his psychology, ontology, internal processing and his philosophy. It is about how the semantic form of these domains change as intimated by the diagram below:

2<sup>nd</sup> order change means transformation, i.e. a change in form from a cis<sup>2</sup>-form to a trans<sup>3</sup>-form. This has to encompass the scan of a person's psychology, ontology, internal processing and philosophy as suggested in the above diagram.

The belief that a new insight, regardless of how awe inspiring it might be will entail a 2<sup>nd</sup> order change is not true. There are too many exceptions that question the accuracy of this belief.

Thus, when Moses<sup>4</sup> or if you will, Charleston Heston<sup>5</sup>, presented to the 12 tribes of Israel, and through them to the whole world, the wonder of the Ten Commandments, we say that this event was the moment of transcendental insight. There was not then, and there is not now, any overwhelming evidence that we, as a species, have changed and so unfailingly abide by them. In one way or another we violate the Ten Commandments.

When Christ uttered the Royal Law, *Love thy neighbour as thyself*, before the Imperium of Rome that saw the worth of a man, either as a piece of living meat for slavery or for slaughter in the "games<sup>6</sup>," we only have to look around to see how far we have truly come. It was only recently that an article was published in the Scientific American in which the authors argued that in terms of our performance as moral and ethical entities, we have hardly moved out of the stone age.

When the evidence was finally presented that smoking is an utterly deleterious habit, it was a powerful insight with *zero* impact. The number of smokers did not decrease in any critical way. The numbers of young people taking this habit up has been increasing. Also the profits of the tobacco companies and the tax revenues of governments have not fallen.

I lived through the generation in which it was a NO! NO! to swear and to take the name of the Lord in vain. That was the preferred way of my time. To-day, you only have to listen to the words

of actors and actresses as they utter the words of their scripts in films and you will hear the verbal violations.

If a 2<sup>nd</sup> order change happens, apparently because of a new insight, we say that there are ancillary components to it that have to be explored. We think it is an urgent matter to find out what the critical neuro-semantic considerations and variables are that accompany the new and different way of seeing things for this 2<sup>nd</sup> order change to occur. This exploration, in our view has, been deficient because of the assumption that a new powerful insight of great depth inevitably means 2<sup>nd</sup> order change.

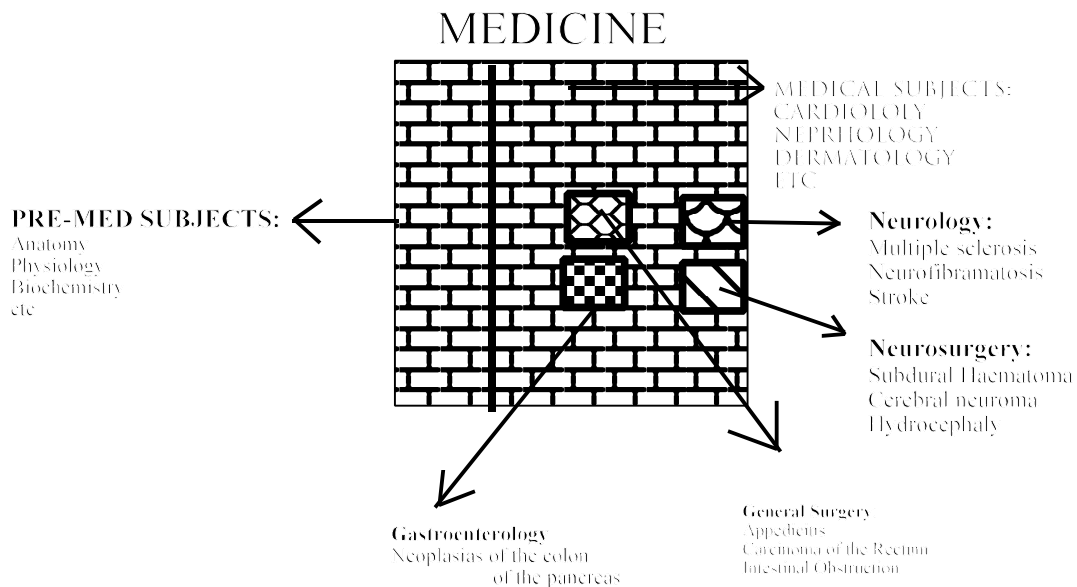
A new and powerful insight of great depth is *not* the condition for 2<sup>nd</sup> order change because of the findings by Jerry A. Fodor of MIT. In his work, *Modularity of Mind*, he stated that the mind is *not* a seamless whole. In its operation, it is modular. This is to say that the entire body of information that is in the mind is segregated into modules or compartments. It is our findings that this modularity extends to

1. sub-modules that comprise the modules
2. domains that comprise the sub-modules
3. kernels that comprise the domains
4. files that comprise the kernels
5. and finally the atomic units of information that comprise a file.

Let us take one module such as Medicine. In the diagram below we illustrate what is meant by modularity:

The modules right down to their files are distributed in a hierarchical manner within a person. When a person wants to retrieve an item of information from his mind, what he wants or seeks will be at the top of the hierarchy.

For clinicians, to realize the concept of modularity, is in our view very useful and worthwhile. It will remove the confusion when he wonders how it is that the insights he offers his client “fail to take” especially when the client continues to be ill-formed either in the manner of his



attitude or speaking or relating and to exude an ill-formed philosophy of either life in general or, of a specific domain of consideration. For a well-formed 2nd order change, all modules have to change. It is, therefore, a change across the scan of a person’s Psychology, Ontology, Internal Processing and Philosophy since each is a neuro-semantic domain in its own right. Their only connection with each other is that a semantic file of consideration within one domain is in the same ball park with its counterpart.

The speed of light<sup>7</sup> is not infinite. It has a finite velocity of about 299,792.3km/sec. If the speed of light was infinite, then when things happen, we would see them in a flash. This, however, is not the case. What we know is that things happen in some order or sequence. The sequence or order involve the *pertinent-elements-in-context*. In a condition of illogicality or illegality it may not entail the *pertinent-elements-in-context*. The sequence or order of the *pertinent-elements-in-context* represents the *structure* or the relation of what exists outside of our skin.

Let us consider this. Long before Einstein, scientists had known about the speed of light, mass and energy. However, it took his genius to connect them together. This connection are the *pertinent-elements-in-context*. We now know it to be  $E = mc^2$ .  $E = mc^2$  is a structure, an order, a

relation of the *pertinent-elements-in-context* that are cited in the equation. We also know it as the basis for an atom bomb.

Of course there are other *pertinent-elements-in-context* or structures such as:

1.  $AB^2 = AC^2 + BC^2$  – this is sequence or relation between the hypotenuse of a right angled triangle and its other two sides. It is also known as Pythagoras' Theorem<sup>8</sup>
2.  $a^2 - b^2 = (a + b)(a - b)$  – this is the famous quadratic equation of Algebra
3.  $C = 2 \pi r$  – is the well know equation for calculating the circumference of a circle
4.  $y = mx + c$  – is the equation for a straight line
5.  $S.G. = m_1 / m_1 - m_2$  – Archimedes Principle for the Specific Gravity of a specific substance
6.  $S = k \log w$  – the Boltzman's equation for entropy

From the experience of life and from the discoveries of Science and the derivations of Mathematics we all know that outside of our skins are unique individuals and things. All of them are in relationship with each other. This relationship is the *pertinent-elements-in-context*. It is therefore, for this that such relationships are not illogical or chaotic. They have a form of order, a structure or a relationship with each other. The mission of Science and Mathematics is to discover what they are.

It is for this that in his *opus magnum, Science and Sanity*<sup>9</sup>, Alfred Korzybski<sup>10</sup> argued how critical it is that we find out what are the structures of the world outside of our skins. It is structure, order and relation that is the basis of meaning:

**To 'be' means to be related. To be related involves multi-dimensional order and results in structure.**

**Alfred Korzybski:** *Science and Sanity* The Non-Aristotelian International Library Publishing Company 1980 6<sup>th</sup> Reprint page 161

**In this vocabulary, 'structure' is the highest abstraction, as it involves a whole, taken as-a-whole, made up of interrelated parts. The relations of which can be defined in still simpler terms of order. 'Knowing', in its broadest as well as in its narrow human sense, is conditioned by structure, and so consists of structural knowings. All empirical structures involve relations, and the last depend on a multi-dimensional order. A language of order, therefore, is the simplest form of language, yet in structure it is similar of the world and ourselves.**

Ibidem page 161

At a very simple level, this example given to us by John Grinder over 20 years ago, amply

demonstrates that language has structure.

The cat chased the mouse and it ran.

The mouse chased the cat and it ran.

By transposing the nouns, the order of the syntax has changed. This act has co-attending it a very profound change in meaning.

**MEANING is a function of a GRAMMATICAL SEQUENCE.**

**MEANING is, therefore, a function of SYNTAX.**

**SEMANTICS is a function of syntax.**

Dennis K. Chong & Jennifer K. Smith Chong: *Power and Elegance in Communication* C-Jade Publications Inc. 1993 page 36.

However, at the level of a 'language of order . . . similar to the structure of the world and to ourselves' we are now quite sure that it has to be a metalanguage. A metalanguage is a language about language. The first functional metalanguage was the Meta Model proposed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder.

However, in 1993 we proposed the WWF-ML the Watzlawick-Weakland-Fisch. This metalanguage:

1. extracted the Meta Model out of Cause and Effect
2. re-gearred its linguistics formats to the natural scanning, reading and sorting patterns of a human being. This meant that one did *not* do what was proposed in the Meta Model, i.e., to delete what one saw, heard or felt. If one did this then one would firstly see X and would delete it by *not* seeing it<sup>11</sup>, hear Y then delete it by *not* hearing it and feel Z then delete it by *not* feeling it. There is nothing in neurology to support this. Additionally, by self witness you can confirm that this is something you cannot do – even if you wanted to.
3. augmented and expanded the linguistic formats that were missed in the Meta Model.

We cite here two final observations that Korzybski indexed:

**Investigating structure, we have found that structure can be defined in terms of relationships; and the latter, for special purposes, in terms of multi-dimensional order. Obviously, to investigate structure, we must look for relations, and so for multi-dimensional order.**

Ibidem page 248

**As the only possible content of knowldege is structural, as given in terms of relations and multi-dimensional order; numbers, which establish an endless**

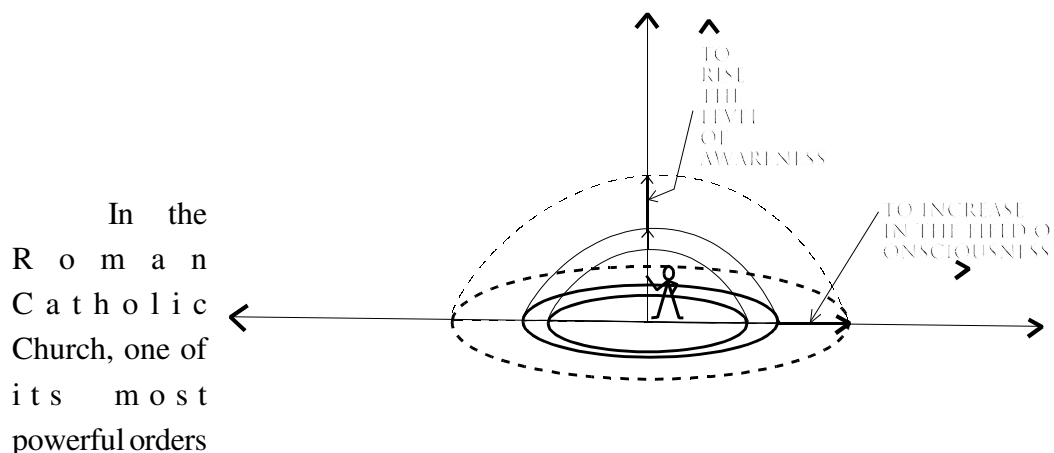
**array of exact, specific, and, in each case, unique, relations are obviously the most important tools for exploring the structure of the world, since the structure can always be analysed in terms of relations.**

Ibidem page 260

In Neuro-Linguistic Programming, the teaching is always to focus on the process and not the content. The logic of this is that the process is about the sequencing of the *pertinent-elements-in-context*. To determine this is to know what the structure, order or relation is. In this way a NLP operator discovers the meaning of what is going on in a problem case.

We now know that there are structures upon structures. These latter entities are called meta-structures. They govern the operation of those processes that determine our sentience. This will apply to whether the behaviour is well-formed or illogical or illegal, regardless of whether it is an isolated event or recurrent.

Therefore, 2<sup>nd</sup> order change is about how we can infract across impoverishing meta-structures and structures and to replace them with rich and empowering ones. Unless this is done a person will remain constrained within the existing boundaries of his field of consciousness and his level of awareness. We diagram it as below:



are the Redemptorists<sup>12</sup>. From this order comes their most powerful preachers. As a result they play a very critical role in religious retreats. I have attended their sermons. However, the witness of my experience is that I came away completely reinforced and re-fortified in my knowing of my sinfulness and the part my sins played in the killing of my God. I knew that I truly was a sinner. I

felt sincere guilt for all my actions. Now as I look back, it was most surely a horrible state that I was in. However, I now know that the horizons of my consciousness had not widened and neither had the scope of my awareness expanded.

On the other hand we have today powerful trainers and gurus. When they complete their training, their students are left feeling unbelievable good. They feel completely revived, re-energized and re-vitalized. As they say they are ‘wowed’ and ‘rah rahed.’ The question that one has to ask is whether such feelings of being ‘wowed’ and ‘rah rahed.’ are the condition by which a person’s consciousness has widened and his scope of has awareness expanded. If the answer is “yes’ then the person has to determine what are the new structures that he has gained that underpin such an event of growth, development and evolution.

FEELING  
WOWED

In this respect, Neuro-Linguistic Programming as a field of study has raised the level of awareness and expanded the horizons of its students. Its trainers and especially its researchers have discovered new structures have set the conditions for their ever expanding intellectual horizons. In this respect we can also say this of the field of General Semantics, Science and Mathematics have expanded our intellectual horizons. Now, in the new millennium we have two new field studies, Neuro-Semantics and Neuro-Semantic Programming. We are quite confident that these two new fields will take its students “up notches unknown to man<sup>14</sup>” to date<sub>1999</sub>.

What these two new fields has to offer will have critical value for health professionals especially those in Psychotherapy and Hypnotherapy.

#### **Endnotes:**

1. **Mental Research Institute** is an internationally recognized place of research and teaching in Psychotherapy. It is located in Palo Alto, California.
2. **Cis** is a Latin word meaning ‘on this side.’ So there was cisalpine Gaul (France) which referred to Gaul that was ‘on this side’ of the Alps and hence closer to Rome.
3. **Trans** is a Latin word meaning ‘on the other side.’ There was, therefore, a transalpine Gaul (France) which referred to Gaul that was on the other side of the Alps. The word transformation means the form that has changed from this side to the other side.

4. **Moses** was one of the great patriarchs of Judaism. On Mt. Sinai, also known as the Mountain of God, he was given the Ten Commandments by God himself.

5. **Charleston Heston** is a Hollywood actor. He played many critical period roles. One of his most famous was of the patriarch Moses. He has since assumed the office of President of the National Rifle Association of America, a position in today's climate<sub>1999</sub> that is proving to be quite controversial.

6. **Games** as a term to describe the events in a Roman arena has to be the ultimate oxymoron. The definition of a game is that there is a chaotic variable that introduces the element of chance to escape the constraints of the system. If there was ever such a chaotic component it was the exception that proved the rule that it was *not* ever a game in the arena.

7. **Speed of light** in Science is denoted by the letter 'c.'

8. **Pythagoras' Theorem**, with cited in this paper are great discoveries of structure, of order and of relation.

9. ***Science and Sanity*** is a work that carries a body of profound epistemological insights appertaining to the thinking and being of *homo sapiens*. In our view it is critical for a student to know this work before he can embark on the exploration of what it means to be human. This work also critically explores the problems that are an integral part of thinking by Causality and how this in turn is the condition of human insanity.

10. **Alfred Korzybski** wrote the foundational work of the field of General Semantics. It was *Science and Sanity*. He was a Polish nobleman who immigrated to the United States. We regard him as the Einstein of the field of human epistemology and ontology and for this he is one of the outstanding thinkers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

11. **Metalanguage** is a critical concept that was first proposed by Paul Watzlawick, John Weakland and Richard Fisch in their work *CHANGE* published in 1974 by W. W. Norton. Simply put, unless you have a language *about* language, you have no hope of understanding the language that is shared between two people.

12. **'Not seeing it'** as an event in which you see it, but yet you do not, happens only as a hypnotic phenomenon. In life, we cannot see and then decide to not see the item.

13. **Redemptorists** may have new functions since Vatican II. We speak here of them as we understood their role in the fifties.

14. “**up notches unknown to man**” is a favoured turn of phrase of that fine chef, Emeril Lagasse of the Food Channel and of New Orleans, New York, Orlando and undoubtedly of elsewhere in time to come.

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