
Artho Stefan Wittemann

The Intelligence of the Psyche

How to discover its hidden order

IndividualSystemics

First edition 2017
Original title: Die Intelligenz der Psyche

Cover design: Eckard Friedrich – haerzblut
Cover illustration: Yuri Arcurs „Rich inner life“,
PeopleImages.com – ID1193816
Layout: Astrid Bartels, Berlin

ISBN-13: 978-1543291964
ISBN-10: 1543291961

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IndividualSystemics AB, Sweden
www.individualsystemics.com

To Veeta

Acknowledgements

My first thanks goes to Veeta, my wife and colleague, whose clarity, depth, and insight have contributed greatly to the writing of this book.

I give my thanks to my former teachers Dr. Hal and Dr. Sidra Stone, the founders of the Voice Dialogue method, whose knowledge and support have opened many doors for me—within and without.

I also wish to thank the following people for reading the manuscript and their valuable advice:

Professor Dr. Schulz von Thun, Hamburg; the psychologist and trainer Hugo Maier, Munich; and screenwriter Daniel Speck, Munich.

Finally, I owe my thanks to my clients and seminar participants. They are all co-authors of this book.

Note by the author:

The terms inner person, inner part, and part, even though slightly different in meaning, are to be understood as synonyms in this book that avoid unnecessary repetition.

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Foreword to the English edition

2017

The book you are about to read has first been published in the year 2000 in Germany. Over time it has steadily gained its reputation as a new standard in parts-psychology.

Back then I was a diligent and enthusiastic student of Hal and Sidra Stone, the American psychologists who founded the Voice Dialogue method. Their yearly summer camps and other teaching seminars were a source of great inspiration to me and answered so many questions that had kept me searching for years.

The deepest questions I had: why is Man acting destructively in so many areas of life while claiming and striving to be good at the same time? Why is human behavior so contradictory? And why is there no commonly accepted unifying theory about the inner structures of the psyche?

When I first heard about the idea of many independent sources of will inside a single individual's mind, a firework of insights and investigation was kicked off in me. I

contacted Hal and Sidra Stone, I translated their books into German, found publishers for them and I invited Hal and Sidra Stone for seminars and lectures to make their work known in Germany. It was a happy time full of discoveries and revelations.

As it often happens with students who completely dedicate their energy to their teacher's work: at some point they start to question even that teaching; they start to find new ways and bring new ideas to it; the result of the process being this book. And now, some 17 years after its original publication, the process is still rolling on. A second book has been published¹ that introduces the results of 16 more years of basic studies and insights into the architecture of the inner world. These in turn prompted me to make some major changes in "The Intelligence of the Psyche", too.

As you are about to dive into the world of parts—or inner persons as we call them now—keep in mind that this is only the beginning of a journey that will be taking Man deeper and deeper into the understanding of his own subjective reality. It is this inner reality that ultimately shapes our outer life and we need to comprehend and master it, if we want to turn our fate not only to the better, but to the essentially good.

Artho Wittemann, Sweden, January 2017

¹ Artho Wittemann, *Love and Logic of the Soul*, 2016

² C. G. Jung: *Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken*, Zürich: Walter 1971, p.121

¹ Novalis: *Selected Letters and Documents*; Winkler 1953

In the Psyche's Labyrinth

Cast into the world, the body, the psyche

The human condition is absurd. As we behold the infinity, majesty, and indifference of the universe and recognize that we are speeding on a small sphere through the mysterious vastness of space, the absurdity of our situation becomes clearly evident.

We are cast into a world that we do not understand. It took Man ages to comprehend and master the most simple processes of life, to make a fire (and extinguish it, too), to use bow and arrow, to build a house and cultivate a field. During all this time he didn't know where he was. Was he monitored by a Sun God who rises in the morning on one side of the world, sleeps under the horizon at night and comes back on the other side the next morning? Was he floating on a disk in the middle of an ocean? In countless myths he tried to explain the world and thus make the absurdity of his situation somewhat easier to bear.

Still, the mystery of his existence was nothing compared to the fight for sheer survival: We are cast into a body that is unfit for this world. Unlike other animals that

are born almost fully dressed in fur and plumage, we find ourselves in a body that constantly requires clothing, housing, and warmth.

Imagine yourself exposed to nature without shelter or clothing for just three days. You would quite likely be on the brink of despair, maybe even on the brink of death! The same is true about food: the wild plants, the grasses, and leaves which the animals feed on are largely inedible to humans.

Now that we survived against these odds by continually adjusting the world to our needs, still old age and death inevitably await us all in the end. And because we still do not know where exactly we are (just like our original ancestors), the last journey takes us back into the unknown again. So we find ourselves in a universe that we cannot understand and in a body that is constantly challenged by nature. This is the world we are thrown into. But this is only the outside part of the world. The other part is within us: our inner world, the psyche.

We tend to take our inner world for granted. We avoid to get to know it more deeply, let alone try to understand it. The outside life is complicated enough and we are happy to manage a fairly successful and normal existence.

But sometimes that doesn't work anymore. We may get restless, tense or paralyzed for no apparent reason. We may feel empty and dead. Everything looks normal on the surface and still it all feels meaningless. Surely, there has to be more to life?

Then again the psyche inflicts itself on us, tormenting us with scary dreams, constant cravings and moods that are hard to bear - for ourselves and for those around us.

Just how often did we wish to change, to become a better person, to be more patient, friendly, lovable? Or to show more determination, to draw clear boundaries, to assert ourselves? And how often did we wish that someone close to us would be willing to change and finally realize how their behavior was bothering or hurting us? And how often did we have to concede, perhaps after long struggle and dispute, that there is no use in trying to change someone—not even ourselves.

The resignation that we are slaves to our own psyche is deep-seated. We are all the more hesitant to take a closer look. This world within us is so obscure and elusive, so confusing, manifold, and conflicting that it seems wiser to cling to outside constructs and objects as long as possible. But wherever we go and whatever we do, we take our inner world with us: we are cast into ourselves.

This fact determines our lives from cradle to grave. And yet most people live without ever asking or understanding what this "I" actually stands for, how it works, and what it needs in order to thrive.

The Children of the Earth are coming of age

Since first appearing on earth, Man has been at the mercy of Nature in ways good and bad. The worship of lightning and thunder, of trees and mountains as deities

was not merely an expression of love and respect, but also of powerlessness in the face of mighty and unpredictable forces. Man has always been a Child of the Earth.

Ultimately, there were only two ways for Man to deal with this situation—the same that work between child and parents until today. The first is love, faith, and trust; to receive from the parents, the Earth, and the Gods and seduce them to goodness by obeying—this is how religions emerged. The second step is to use these gifts to develop one's own powers, to grow up and make oneself independent—this is how science emerged. Both are appropriate to humans and will always be. We will always be children of Mother Earth while we continue to grow up.

We start to grow up by asking questions and then question the answers we find. This leads to new answers that we can question again. In ancient Greece some curious men would ask themselves what the world was made of. According to one opinion, the world was made of a changing composition of the four elements: fire, air, water, and earth. Another view held that there had to be a single indivisible building block: the atom. Both of these ideas relate to fundamental insights of modern physics and chemistry, and have prompted thousands of further, deeper questions that eventually lead to new discoveries about the structure and behavior of atoms and molecules. These discoveries that have revolutionized our way of life by allowing us to make the world better suited to our needs. They made us come of age on a material level. On the psychological level, this step is still ahead of us.

**The questions are still the same:
what makes up the inner world?
What are its basic units?
And how do they fit together?**

If we could answer these questions only half as precisely as the natural sciences do for the outside world, if we could be less dependent of both the positive and negative influences of our own inner world—we would really have grown up. And perhaps then we could even solve the problems that result from our domination of the outer world—for many of these problems are but a reflection of our own inner confusion.

This book means to show you how we can learn to navigate that mysterious and mercurial inner world. How we can find orientation and direction once we know its building blocks and how they fit together.

Seeming order in chaos

The rational mind, as the foundation of all natural sciences, inclines toward order and structure. It detects patterns, rules, and laws behind the confusing and manifold appearances of the world around us. When the rational mind looks at nature, it does not fill with joy like a child or stand in awe like a mystic, but rather asks: What is this made of? How does it work? How does it all fit together? It disassembles an object until it figures out its

building blocks. This is how the rational mind took fire, air, water, and earth apart and found molecules. It took the molecules apart and found atoms. It took the atoms apart and found still smaller particles. Now it can assemble molecules that previously did not exist—because it understands their intrinsic laws.

How is it then that a mind—that can penetrate the minutest arrangements of matter and at the same time explore the farthest reaches of the cosmos—understands so little of what we centrally are: our own inner world? How can that which is closest to us be less understood than the orbit of Neptune, the structure of the human genome, and the eating habits of Papua New Guinea's aborigines?

It is the unpredictability, volatility, and complexity of the human psyche that makes it so difficult for scientists to really understand it. How is one to examine something which is subject to constant fluctuations and changing moods, which appears to consist of purely subjective perceptions and feelings, and is so replete with inner contradictions and inconsistencies?

The scientists who are concerned with the outside world always had an advantage in this respect. It is no coincidence that the foundations of science as we know it emerged from the study of planetary orbits—as far away from our inner worlds as possible. In the 17th century, when Isaac Newton published his book *Principia* on celestial mechanics, science celebrated a great success—not only was Newton able to predict the precise orbital path of the planets, but also the exact position they would ap-

pear in at any given point in time. Later on, the same laws would prove to have an enormous scope of application in the physical world.

There was tremendous hope that the absurdity and obscurity of our existence would yield to a meaningful and explainable order, and that our arduous struggle for survival could be put to an end by exercising control over nature. At long last, our helpless dependence in this existence was to be countered by reasoned understanding and action.

This hope still inspires and carries us today, and is enlivened through the incredible developments in science and technology every single day. At the same time, the limitations of traditional scientific thinking are becoming increasingly clear.

Linearity

When Newton, Galilei, Descartes, and many others first began to discover the underlying physical laws of matter, they were so exhilarated by their great accomplishments that they succumbed to a serious error: They believed that, given sufficient time and instruments that were precise enough, their methods would allow them to explain the world in its entirety. They were firmly convinced that eventually the whole universe could be described by a set of mathematical formulas, perhaps even by a single world formula. In their mind, the world was like a giant clockwork that only needed to be disassembled into its component parts to understand how it ticked. They

relied heavily on the law of causality, which they observed in the course of their research. The law states that cause and effect are in direct proportion to each other—small cause, small effect; big cause, big effect—such behavior is also called "linear."

You are familiar with this principle from driving a car: You expect your car to go faster as you press harder on the gas pedal; or your radio to play proportionately louder as you turn up the volume knob. While there are admittedly more complex examples of linear behavior, for our purposes it suffices to understand the principle. Ultimately, linearity means predictability: Once we know the cause, we can predict the effect.

Fortunately, this law applies to most things that make our lives easier. Otherwise we would have to worry about refrigerators randomly cooling, freezing, and defrosting, or the lights in the room flickering and making the bulbs explode. We could not possibly count on our houses and bridges to stand stable, or our telephones and televisions to create clear audio and images.

It was not long ago that scientists began to understand that linear processes were in fact the exception in nature. It was thought that many natural events—such as the weather, earthquakes, turbulences in streams, or the human psyche—were just not understood well enough to accurately predict them. Until some scientists came to the realization that they were dealing with systems that were *unpredictable by their very nature*. They called such systems *chaotic*.

However, such systems are only chaotic at first glance, for behind the apparent chaos lies a certain order. Not the inanimate and perfectly predictable order of a clockwork or a statistic about the purchasing habits of the average Western European in January, but the *living order* that can be found everywhere in nature.

Once we accept that the human psyche is a child of nature—it's prodigy—and once we try to understand it as a system that is built on similar principles like any other living system, then we will be able to arrive at an entirely new understanding of our own parts.

Seeming chaos in order

There is a principle in nature that is so familiar and axiomatic that we do not normally spend much thought on it; it is called: Nature consists of units. The stars in our galaxy, planet Earth, the seas, the land, the flora and fauna, humans and everything they have created—all of these phenomena are interrelating as separate units. This has been the fact from the beginning. Only for an instant, at the moment the universe was born, there was total chaos: There was neither structure nor order. The temperatures were too high and matter was too dense to allow the formation of atoms.

Scientists believe that the first subatomic particles formed a fraction of a second after the Big Bang, and then combined to form simple atomic nuclei within the first few minutes. The state of total chaos existed for a few short instants only. Immediately after, matter began to organize and form units.