



The Need For Conflict

Towards An Integral Understanding Of Conflict

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Overview

"The perpetual gale of creative destruction." An economist...

Approach Who, what, where, how, and why.

Theory Conflict, needs, values and politics.

Dynamics Implications for multi-level situations.

Implications An integral agenda and discussion of 'conflicting futures.'



Approaching Conflict

Purpose

To *initiate* a new approach to understanding conflict.

Audience

Aimed at people aware of *Integral Theory* concepts (AQAL), and have an *interest in understanding conflict*.

Nature

Summary points of report, reflecting its generalised meta-view and use of an integral methodological pluralism *through a creative exploration of ideas* rather than just facts...



Creative Theory?

“In theory there is no difference between theory and practice, in practice there is.”

Aphorism

“The purpose of models is not to fit the data but to sharpen the questions.”

Samuel Karlin

"If you disagree with me, (re)interpret me."



Defining Conflict

Dictionary Definition:

- To come into collision; a striking together;
- To clash, be in opposition, or at variance; disagree;
- To contend, do battle or struggle, esp. a prolonged struggle; and,
- Discord of action, feeling, or effect; antagonism as of interests or principles.

Working Definition:

Any affect of negativity in being, thinking and action: from mild discomfort to fatal violence.



The Need For Conflict



UL Subjective:
Psychology –
Dissonance

UR Objective:
Darwinian Evolution -
Behavioral Capability

AQAL's

Quadrants

LL Inter-Subjective:
Sociology -
Creative Conflict

RH Inter-Objective:
Prigogine's Open
Systems Theory -
Stimulus overload to
bifurcation point



Conflict Theory

Three broad types of conflict:

- Need/interest driven;
- Value based; and,
- Structural/power activities.

Intensity/escalation process analysis's:

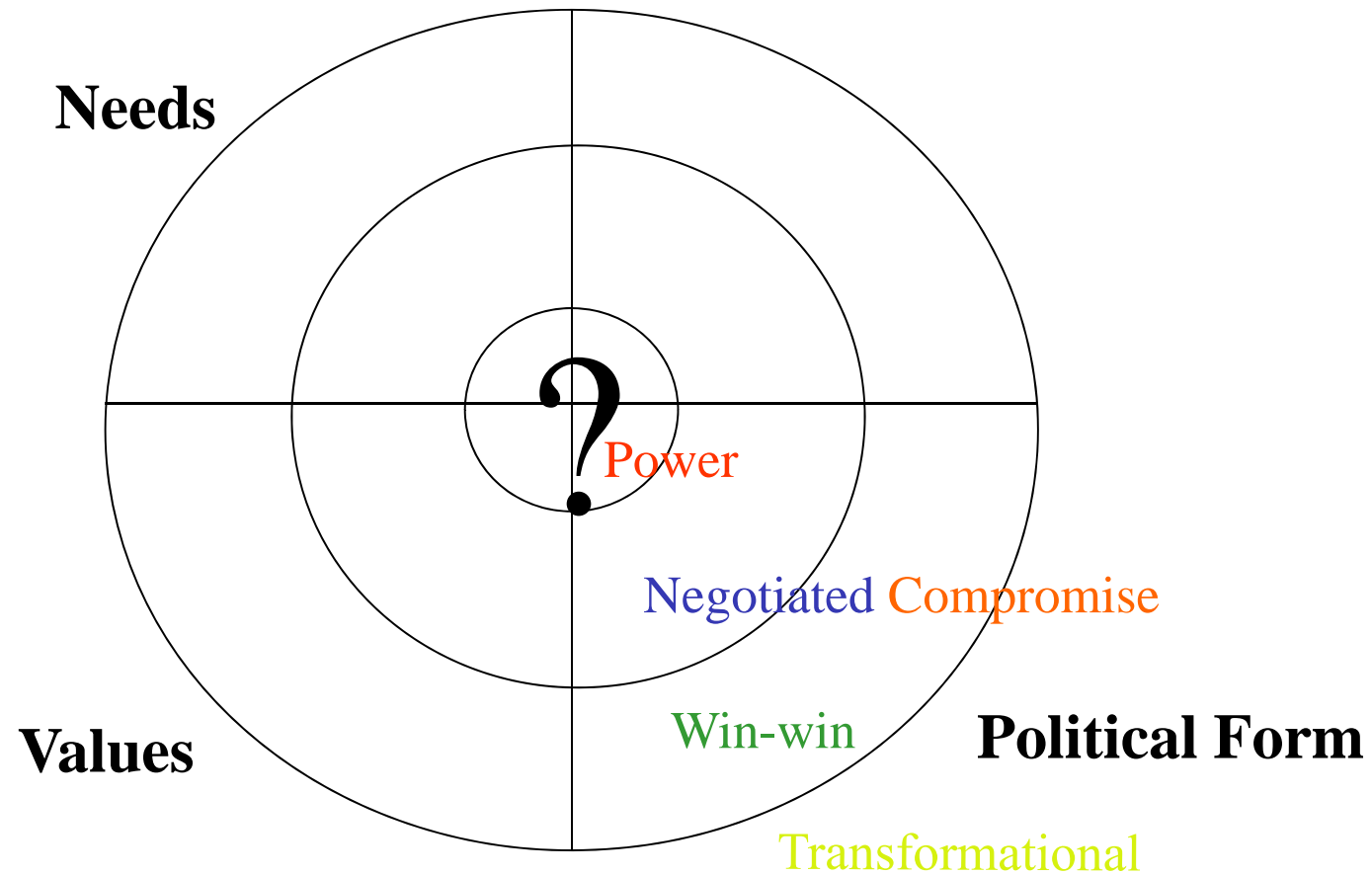
- For example Friedrich Glasl's nine stage conflict escalation model.

Broad range of approaches:

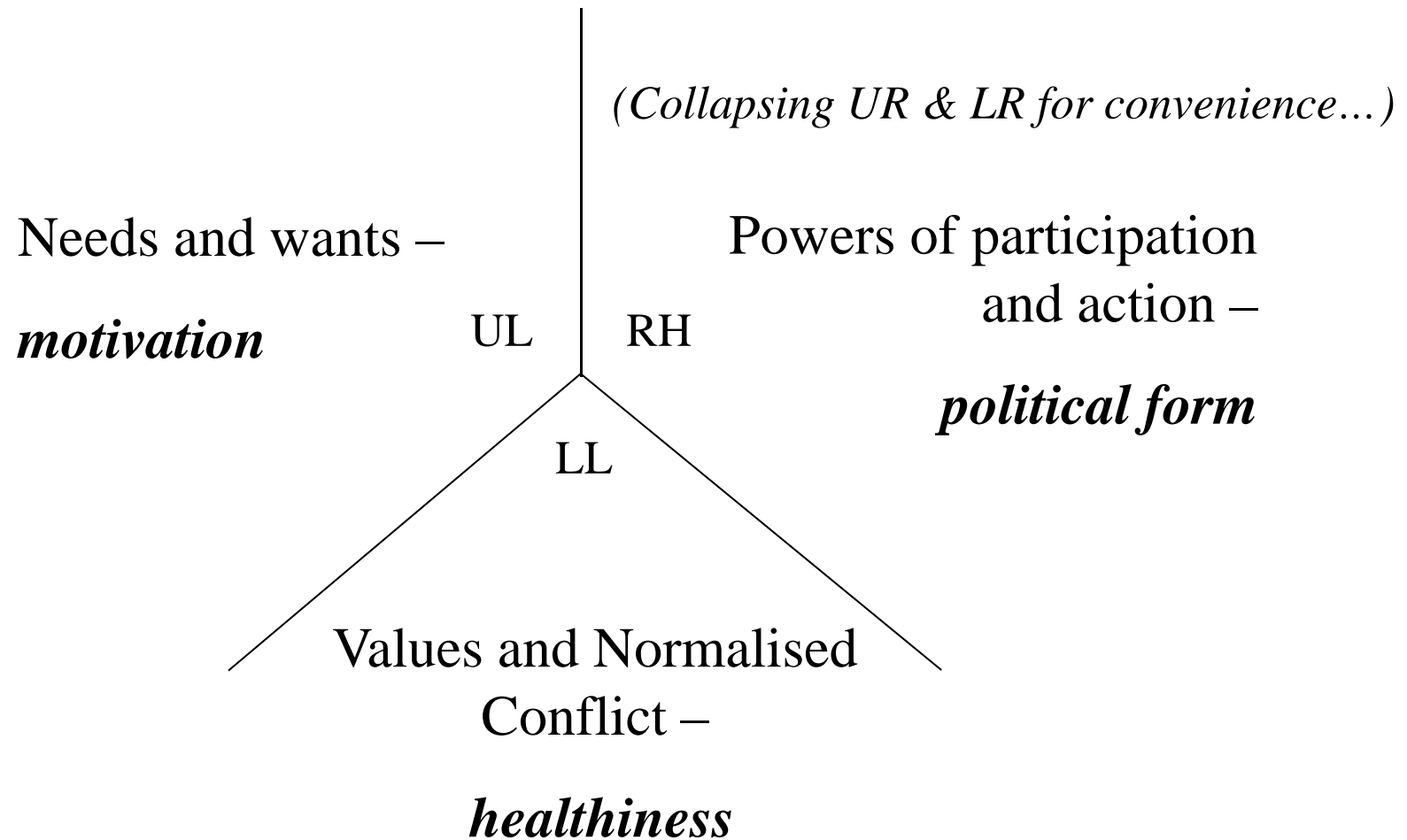
- Arbitration, ombudsman, conciliation, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, consensus, diplomacy, Democratization, Mediation, Negotiation, peacekeeping, reconstruction, restorative justice...



Integral Mapping of Conflict Theory?



Conflict Driver Analysis



Driver Spectrums

Each driver of conflict origin can be seen in a spectrum, or developmental level conception (these can be roughly correlated):

- ◎ A Hierarchy of Needs – Maslow
- ◎ Evolution of Political Forms – Habermas & Wilber
- ◎ A Spiral of Values – Clare Graves



Needs & Wants

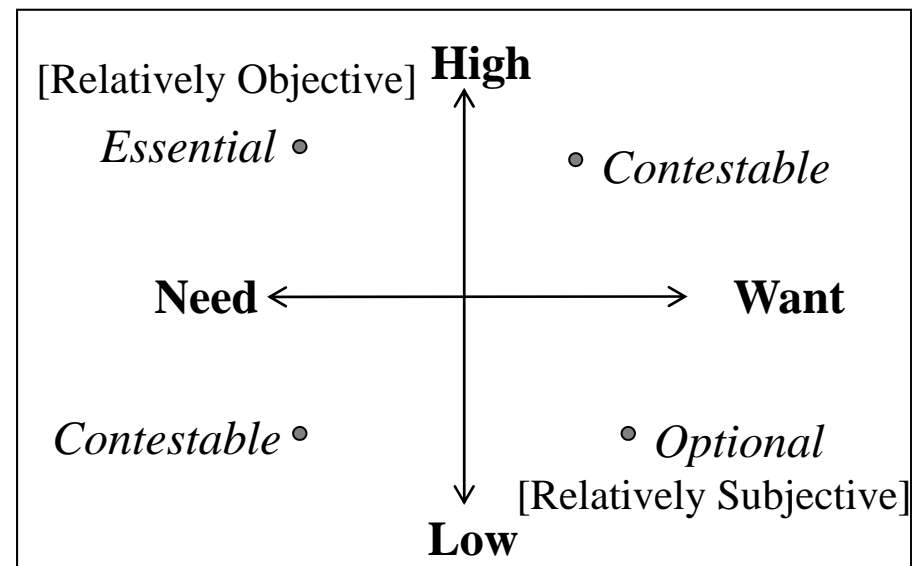
Choice – Is it a really a need? Or just a want - a preference?

Culture – Cultural or ‘surface feature’ differences in fulfilling needs, yet the basic ‘structural’ needs appear to be universal.

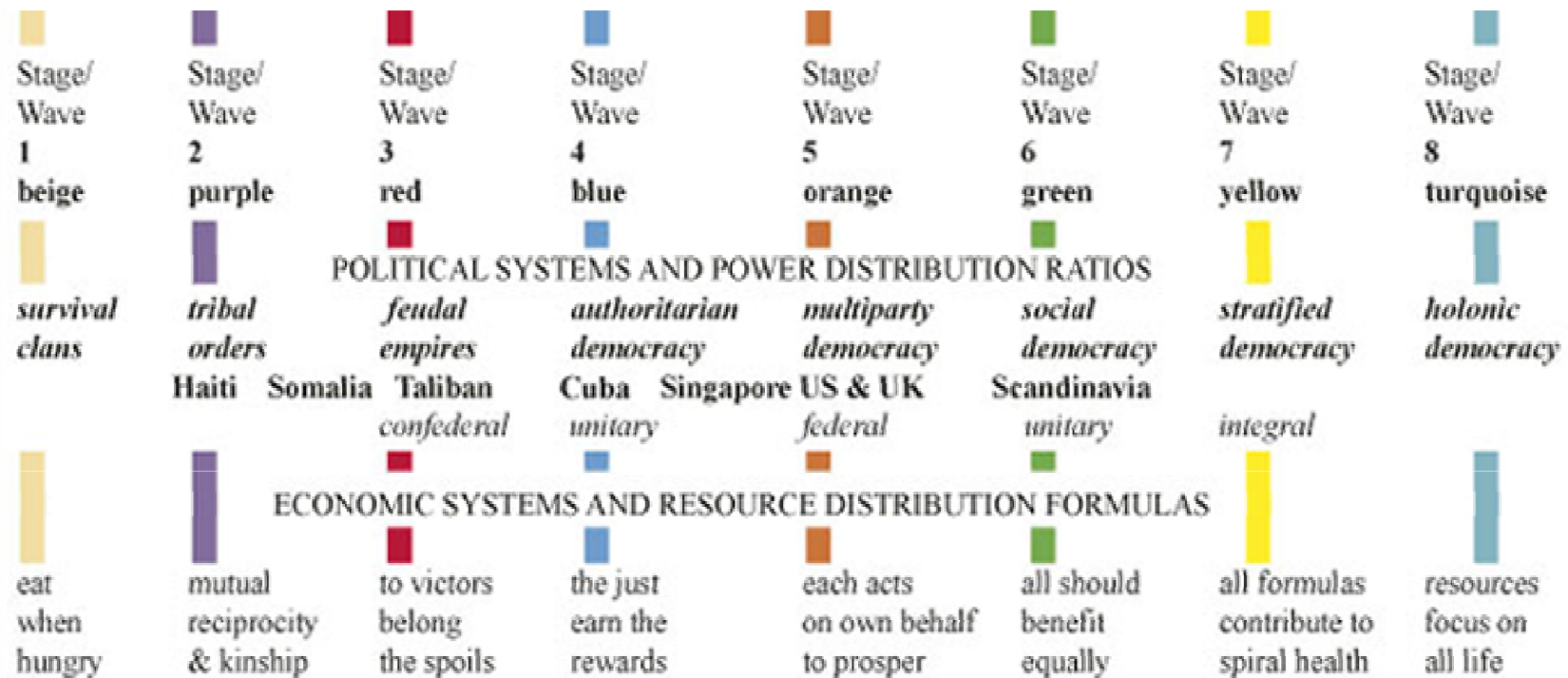
Conditioning – Conscious choice in how to fulfill a need or want is fundamentally conditioned by both ‘nature and nurture.’

A ‘Priority Spectrum:’
from *needs to wants*,
perceived as *higher to*
lower priorities.

"Energy in action varies in proportion to the strength of its motive." [Clausewitz](#)



Spiral Dynamics & Valued Political Power Forms



Adapted from "[Stratified Democracy](#)" ©Don Beck 2002



Integral Conflict Theory

Integral Mapping of Origin, Nature & Approach – The three drivers of conflict *origin* need to be understood, then their influences on the conflict *typology*, leading to a refined *approach* selection from integral disposition.

Enormous options in each map – Three driver positions (maybe more) X five levels (Maslow) or eight (SD) = a big number of options...

More Inclusions - Other streams, horizontal degrees of legitimization in each level, states and types can all be included...

A Manageable Approach - Three drivers X common levels X corresponding approaches = manageable integral analysis...if we consider intra-level dynamics of the drivers...



Multi-Level Dynamics

Developmental Re-Alignment – Each new level re-aligns the previous configuration in each driver. Each remains available.

Universal Priorities – Fundamental needs will escalate into intense conflict quicker – of lower levels, but also core needs at each level.

Access To Forms – Once a higher level form becomes available, parties at lower need/value levels may automatically be able to use it.

Higher Levels – More levels of manifest development means increased:

- Options and ability to manage, instigate and/or intensify conflict;
- Ability to mask and/or justify conflict;
- Sites of potential conflict internally and relationally;
- Importance of choice in determining needs, values and forms; and,
- Choice of more sophisticated and/or severe/unhealthy action to maintain lower level needs.



Global Implications




An Integral Agenda – To encourage healthy securing of needs for all potential conflicting parties at each level they are open to, and to foster continued development to higher levels: the healthy survival and development of humanity.

Conflicting Futures – What implications for recent conflicts can you see using these drivers, levels and dynamics?

"The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact, non-Westerners never do." [Samuel P. Huntington](#)

"Terrorism is the worst kind of violence, so we have to check it, we have to take countermeasures." [The Dalai Lama](#)





"It is close to a historical universal that our terrorism against them is right and just (whoever we happen to be), while their terrorism against us is an outrage. As long as that practice is adopted, discussion of terrorism is not serious. It is no more than a form of propaganda and apologetics."

[Noam Chomsky](#)

