

Integral Sustainability 101

A Brief Introduction to:

- ~ The Quadrants Element of the Integral Framework
- ~ Use of the Quadrants for Sustainable Development Initiatives

Barrett C. Brown

Co-Director, Integral Sustainability Center

BBrown@IntegralInstitute.org

To Learn More

www.integralinstitute.org. The first three papers can be obtained directly from the author.

Brown, Barrett C. (2005). Theory and practice of integral sustainable development: Part 1 – Quadrants and the practitioner. *AQAL: Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*, 1 (2), 351-386.

Brown, Barrett C. (2005). Theory and practice of integral sustainable development: Part 2 – Values, developmental levels, and natural design. *AQAL: Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*, 1 (2), 386-448.

Brown, Barrett C. and Riedy, Chris (in press). Use of the Integral Framework to Design Developmentally-Appropriate Sustainability Communications. Chapter in *Innovation, Education, and Communication for Sustainable Development*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang Scientific Publishers.

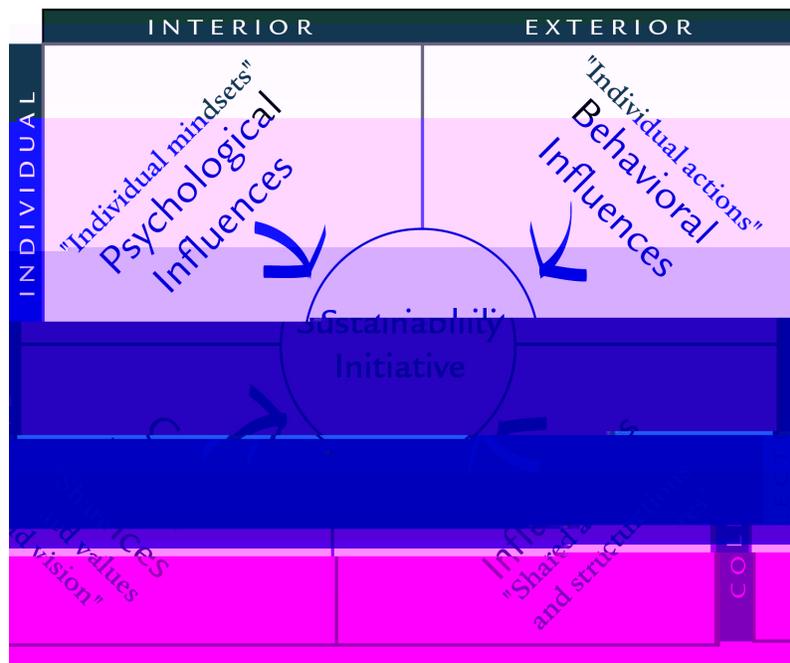
Hochachka, Gail (2005). *Developing sustainability, developing the self: An integral approach to international and community development*. University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia: POLIS Project on Ecological Governance. Available at: <http://www.drishti.ca/resources.htm>

At a Glance

The Integral Framework is a comprehensive map of *systems, culture, psychology, and behavior*. It is used worldwide in some of the highest levels of business, government, and civil society. Quadrants are one of the five major elements of the Integral Framework. The other elements are Levels (stages of development), Lines (intelligences), States (of consciousness), and Types (e.g., personality or gender types).

Each quadrant is a lens, or perspective, on a different, but important, dimension of reality. By looking at a sustainability initiative through all of the quadrants, we are able to identify most, if not all, of the major forces which will influence the success or failure of that initiative. The quadrants can thus be used as a comprehensive map to help understand the terrain in which the initiative must succeed.

The Quadrants



To Use the Quadrants for Sustainable Development Initiatives

1. Clarify the initiative or central issue to be addressed.
2. Identify the forces revealed by each quadrant which might thwart the initiative or hinder resolution of the problematic issue.
3. Identify the forces revealed by each quadrant which might support the initiative or help resolve the issue.
4. Choose the thwarting and supporting forces which seem likely to have the greatest influence on the ultimate success or failure of your efforts.
5. Design an integrated response which addresses the major thwarting forces and builds off of the most influential supporting forces. Use tools and methodologies appropriate to each quadrant to respond to forces in that quadrant.
6. Implement the response.
7. Measure results to the greatest degree possible. Gather feedback.
8. Repeat process and design a more tailored response, based upon previous results and feedback.

The Territory Revealed by Each Quadrant (Contextualized for Sustainable Development)

PSYCHOLOGICAL INFLUENCES

Individual-Interior: Self and Consciousness

The subjective, internal reality of an individual

Context: self-identity and consciousness; intentions; personal values; attitude; religious or spiritual beliefs; commitment (e.g., cognitive, emotional, moral); cognitive capacity; depth of responsibility; degree of care for others and the environment; etc.

Examples of areas addressed: psychological health and development; educational level; emotional intelligence; motivation and will; understanding of one's role in the community and impact on the environment; personal goals; the practitioner's mental model, and self-knowledge; a city-dweller's disconnection from the natural world.

Tools for transformation: e.g., psychotherapy; religious or spiritual counseling; Enneagram analysis; Myers-Briggs testing; phenomenological research; self-questioning; body scanning; introspection; prayer; meditation; journaling; goal-setting; emotional literacy training; increased exposure to wild nature; vision quest; compassion practices.

I

We

CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Collective-Interior: Cultures and Worldviews

The intersubjective, internal realities of groups

Context: shared values and worldviews; shared meaning; mutual resonance; cultural norms, boundaries and mores; language; customs; communication; relationships; symbolism; agreed upon ethics; etc.

Examples of areas addressed: cultural "appropriateness"; collective vision; relationship between practitioners and the community; relationship amongst community / family / organization members; stigmas; language differences; collective interpretation of power, class, race and gender inequities; collective perception of the environment and pollution.

Tools for transformation: e.g., dialogue; community-directed development; inclusive decision making; consensus-based strategic planning; organizational learning; support groups (religious or secular); trust-building exercises; participant-observer techniques; community visioning; cooperative participation; stor

[The following is from participants from Swaziland,
during a United Nations Development Programme training.
They used the quadrants to identify the main forces propagating HIV/AIDS.]