ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT -- REVERSING THE (Pre-Adult) EGO CHANT:
Me -- Me want -- Me want It -- Me want it now -- Me want it now regardless.

The (pre-adult) Ego Chant ------- reversed to bring about --------------- the Responsible Adult

1. ME --------------------------------> WE

   I must realize that I am not the center of the world. Others also matter. I must move from an Ego-centered perspective to a Partnership perspective -- seeing myself and others within what unites us (roles and deep roots). Only when I can make this move can I commit to ethical or principle-guided living. Seeing [Myself & Others & What unites us] allows me to operate from a large-minded context. I begin to live from the criteria -- Good for the whole and fair to each participant-part. This is not to enforce my will on others but to care about the effects my actions have on Myself, Others and What joins us together -- roles & roots.

Developmentalist Lawrence Kohlberg’s scheme suggests that this sense of partnership cannot begin before his stage 3. Let’s call this crucial move from ME to WE the Realization of Partnership.

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2. WANT IT--------------------------------------------> LIMITATIONS -- ENOUGH FOR NEED NOT GREED

Requires the ability to distinguish wants and needs. In his book Transformations, Roger Gould states the Rule of Necessary Limitations: “We often want more than it is possible to have.” Let us call it the Realization of Necessary Limitations. There are limits to what can be given -- of money, time, affection, etc. We need to know and respect the limitations of situations. Adult question: Was I expecting too much (i.e. more than could be given)?

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3. NOW --------------------------------> CONTEXT OF PAST -- PRESENT -- FUTURE

Requires the ability to go beyond the “now “ of the impulsive child, the “now” of immediate gratification. The adult learns a wider sense of time, learns to delay some present gratifications for the sake of other significant future gratifications (e.g. practicing a musical instrument), can see the longer term effects of actions on self on others on what joins us together. Let us call this the Realization of Longer Rhythms of Time.

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4. REGARDLESS --------------------> TAKING INTO REGARD THE WORTH AND RIGHTS OF OTHERS

Requires recognition of others as (i) of equal worth, (ii) as rational (having an intellect and understanding) and (iii) free (having a will and the right to informed consent). Roger Gould calls it a Rule of Fairness: “We do not always have a right to have what we want when we want it. Our rights are limited. Other people also have rights.” Let us think of this -- in line with our usage above -- as the Realization of Fairness. Treating others as we -- in our best moments -- would wish to be treated. Golden Rule reversibility. Recall the contrast between Manipulative Persuasion and Non-Manipulative Persuasion. Think of Kohlberg’s stage 3: ideal role maintaining. Think of our Partnership Tree.

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The (pre-adult) ego chant and its reversal show us that becoming a responsible adult is an achievement -- an achievement which has ethical dimensions. Seeing that I am not the center of the world; that others matter -- and -- even more profoundly, that I am already embedded in prior connections.

   First, shifting from ME to WE -- Realization of Partnership -- coming to appreciate what Kohlberg will call ideal role maintaining.
   Second, moving from WANT to NEED, NOT GREED -- Realization of Necessary Limitations.
   Third, moving from NOW (of immediate gratification) to a CONTEXT OF PAST -- PRESENT--FUTURE -- Realization of Longer Rhythms of Time.
   Fourth, echoing again partnership, moving beyond a simple REGARDLESS (of anyone else) to TAKING INTO REGARD THE WORTH AND RIGHTS OF OTHERS -- Realization of Fairness.

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Reversing the Ego Chant and Time and the Timeless © John G. Sullivan, Elon, March 9, 2006  p. 1
Consider two dimensions:

The **Horizontal dimension deals with time and steps** – with doing shaped by ethical awareness of what is good for the whole and fair to the participant parts – with what reduces unnecessary suffering and promotes creative possibility for our common life.

The **Vertical dimension deals with the timeless and the spirit** – with the present and presence – with stillness and depth, with silence and listening beneath the words, with being shaped by an expanding and deepening spirituality. The Vertical moves through time in the sense of being always available right here and right now. The vertical takes the “I” down into the observing self and then allows that observing self to become more and more open to the Spirit or the Dynamic Ground always and everywhere present.

Here is the mission for Quest at Elon University and for the programs I have designed for Tai Sophia Institute in Maryland:

**To come to life more fully**

so as

to serve life more wisely and more nobly:

Sagely stillness, within; Sovereign Service, without.

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Heaven in the heights

Time out of time

Spirit as Vastness -- the lure of possibility

Planetary domain

Institutional domain

Interpersonal domain

**One Origin:** cosmic & earth time --

Earth

Zero point Earth

Earth

unfolding of time and particularity

Below the zero point on the vertical, notice levels of awareness (Lake Analogy), levels of realization that arise from a oneness, live within a oneness, return to the oneness, that ultimately are expressions of a love supreme.

Consider soul work as bringing more of the vastness above and the source below into the manifest world of time and particularity.

Heaven in the depths

Time out of time

Spirit as Source, the Ever-Present Origin

(in Jean Gebser's phrase)