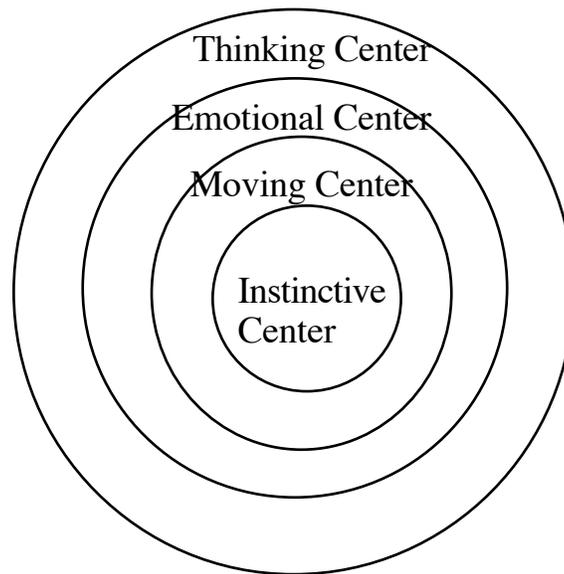


UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES AS A SYSTEM



Working of Centers.

We might be able to understand some of our manifestations better if we can see ourselves as a system that is composed of different centers designed to work in cooperation and harmony with one another, even helping one another out from time to time, and each with a different Mind and different work to do to serve the whole.

We have an instinctive center, which is quite fast and complex. It attends to the inner working of the organism in all its million and one details, digesting food, healing wounds, looking after the temperature, regulating the respiration and heart beat, making and causing the internal secretions of the glands to work in harmony, supplying this, taking away that, modifying this, increasing that, etc. None of this is or can be done with the intellectual center. The intellectual center cannot work this quickly and would get in the way if we tried to do the work of the instinctive center.

The moving center has a different mind. It is constantly making judgments of the most complicated kind that are quite impossible for the intellectual mind to make. It can judge

exactly and in what way and with what strength you must throw a stone to hit a distant object. It is a very intelligent calculation but is not intellectual in nature. The calculation can even be felt in the muscles as it proceeds. This calculation, however, has no numbers or words, but yet creates a very precise and exquisite series of calculations to carry out a series of movements that give a definite result.

The emotional center has still a different mind or “a mind of its own” we may feel at times. It also has a logic of its own, but not an intellectual logic. To feel a situation is quite different from thinking about. The emotional center can feel, for example, the inner state of other people that is hidden from the mind of the intellectual center. It can give us knowledge of others. It is this connection that gives us the capacity for empathy, compassion, and understanding of others and even ourselves.

The intellectual center works from three intelligences that “read” the working of the situation, engages with ideas, and seeks to understand. The working of the intelligences of the intellectual center as a whole is a very high order thing and can bring a high order process to the world around us. When the center is working appropriately, it provides the ability to observe ourselves and be choiceful about our behaviors.

Wrong working of centers

The question is what can we notice, where do we enter ourselves as a system. It usually starts with a thought in the intellectual center, even mostly an unarticulated thought. It frequently stops there or at least is all we are aware of. In reality we are more of a system than that but our awareness is low and takes lots of energy to realize how we are behaving functional and to see our thinking. If a thought we encounter has enough energy in it we take it into the emotional center, then we create an emotion about the thought. This is a process of feelings becoming associated with certain types of thoughts. With even more energy coming in from a thought and feeling now it may move to the

moving center and we may shout or change our tone of voice, or stamp our foot or throw something. We are reacting to the bias creeping in that has been created in our emotional center. We are reacting to the thought not thinking. We project our thinking onto reality then we react to the projected thought. Our whole body is now a part of the thought. If the thought penetrated the instinctive center then it becomes more permanent especially if it is repetitive. e.g. if we felt as a child we had to be quiet to avoid being hit, then we associate safety with quiet. If someone says to us as an adult, “be quite”, we associate it immediately with safety even it is not. It becomes a “learned instinct” therefore. It becomes unconscious or subconscious.

Developmental Working of Centers

If we look at things developmentally, we are working to try to regenerate the problems or issues behind something—not in time but in thinking. These will stay in our memory no matter what we do, but to address the management of it we must address it with the same level at which it was generated—in our inner process.

We are better able to manage ourselves in the world in an unbiased way if we can look at the systemic nature of the process, and adopt the posture of observing ourselves, seeing the interconnection of our centers and see ourselves as a system. When we can do this, we have more comprehension of its nature. At the same time we are engaged in a process, we are reflecting on it. We can bring a new order to our thinking by working regeneratively. The way we develop as people is to have some level of reflective process at the same time as we are trying to operate—through seeing the interconnected and interaction of our centers. We have to see the generation involved. e.g. “this action was generated by this emotion, which was generated by that thought” then we regenerate the thought. We do not really change the basic one that was there, just use it to reconceptualize and regenerate our thinking. If we can do that in a way that deals with different qualitative level, we get a qualitatively different outcome. If we cannot get to

this wholistic level, we tend to turn off until we can get order our way and tend to do this through our biases from not seeing the systemic connection in our centers.

If we proceed on the other hand from instincts crystallized from associated feelings—e.g. safety, then we present our disorganization to the world instead of our virtues. From here we cannot escalate the quality of thinking. Biases replace our natural human instincts.

Process for managing biases

The best vehicle for escalating system nature of thinking is a framework. It lets us overcome the lack of coincidence in direction for everyone. A group can develop answers and then reflect on them and then rewrite them as they see more relationship and harmony among the elements of the framework.

Exercise:

1. Select a thought or idea that is being offered or directed to think about from a particularly authoritarian source? Chose one that you experience a great deal of energy in regard to.
2. As you talk about the subject that is under discussion, observe the different emotional experiences that you are having personally. Also observe what ideas for actions you experience emerging as the discussion goes on.
3. Make notes for your own reflection on these observations. Set a stopwatch for 5-minute intervals and pause three times during a 15-minute discussion to record you thinking during the *stop* time

After 15 minutes time, stop the unstructured discussion of the topic—DO NOT CONTINUE BEYOND THE 15 MINUTES BECAUSE YOU MAY FALL INTO REINFORCING WRONG WORKING OF CENTERS and reflect together on these observation. What are the implications? What bias does this introduce? Continue to observe yourself during the reflections

4. Proceed with the discussion, but now use the following framework.
 - What did you observe about the different centers working?
 - Where did you experience one center doing the work of another? e.g. moved to yell when should be using critical thinking skills, trying to analyze when connecting with compassion was called for.
 - Where would further observation in regard to this subject be useful?
 - What higher order result might be sought as a outcome of this observation?
 - Create a symbol or simple work picture that could be used to trigger such work in yourself.