



AUTHORING SOCIAL EVOLUTION

We all come into this world with one purpose—instinctually programmed to survive. Yet, as we grow and evolve, we transition from purely surviving into creatures that are driven towards self-actualisation. Everything we do is to survive—then, when we are surviving, we seek to self-actualise.

We form communities, become leaders and emerge as authorities in the ideals closest to us. We desire professional growth, becoming ever more altruistic and philanthropic. We develop spiritually from lonely, isolated individuals into the increasing recognition and nourishment of our oneness with everything.

However, along the way in this journey of social evolution, we lose our way, go around in circles, or simply decide to stand still, all while convincing ourselves that we are still forging ahead! Every time we encounter new layers of social experience and the values derived from those experiences, we find comfort in our growth—believing we have reached the pinnacle of our social sophistication.

Those very same values soon become a prison which limits and confines us. Those values create comfort in believing we are the best we can be, and are the jailor that ensures we stay incarcerated. If you do not continue to move away from the comfort and towards the next layer of social evolution, you will remain, rotting away, all the while convinced you are growing.

Reaching out to the best version of ourselves, despite the loss of our contentment, means that we never become stuck, we stop lying to ourselves and we avoid the pitfalls and traps that so many are fooled by. Weaving into your authoring this exploration of social experience is an ideal way to give context and meaning to your audience's ongoing adventure through life, their happiness and your legacy.

Every reader in your audience will interact with their experiences, in life and in your media, over a multitude of layers. These layers will bleed through each other to create a seemingly cohesive reality—because our social evolution is not simply a matter of human history from nomad to complex society, but also your personal history from newborn to now.

We all know the fight for survival—the fight for breath. The overwhelm of the world and people. The need for acceptance from our family and peer group, polarised against the need for self-discovery and identity. We learn the rules and play the game. We discover kindness and compassion and chaos and mess and wholeness.

And when you speak to your audience, every layer they have grown through will distort what you say differently. If you can develop authoring skills in each of the layers, you will not only have a great sense of who your reader is, you will also support them in growing through the layers of social evolution—an act they will always associate with you.

The first eight (and most relevant) layers are:

1. Survival Layer	Instinct	internal	Isolation	Connection
2. Community Layer	Tribal	external	Sacrifice	Self-esteem
3. Leadership Layer	Ego	internal	Power	Self-acceptance
4. Authority Layer	Law	external	Guilt	Altruism
5. Material Layer	Gain	internal	Desire	Compassion
6. Sociocentric Layer	Harmony	external	Control	Tolerance
7. Systemic Layer	Chaos	internal	Subversion	Holism
8. Global Layer	Experience	external	Hopelessness	Oneness

As a person expands socially and culturally, they do so in reaction to the limitations of the previous layer. These are factors vital for a person to expand into the next layer. So, our primary values (Survival Layer) are based upon instinctual perception where survival is the paramount objective.

This relates to the first stage of human development, both with our early ancestral humans and the initial instincts of a baby. This layer is animalistic in nature and very often has only limited self-perception and awareness of individuality.

Those who form connections to other individuals, thus creating groups, families, small communities, etc., move beyond the initial layer, to perceive values in a tribal or community-based view.

In the transition between these two layers, a person evolves their attitude, socially and culturally, from acting on values that result solely in survival of the self, to the values that work towards survival of the community.

This approach often leads to sacrifice of the self for the good of the whole. Consequently, it entails surrendering the needs of the individual for the needs of the whole. Whether this be in an ancient tribal context or a modern family—a human sacrifice to appease the angry gods or a teenager who forgoes schooling to look after a younger sibling.

The expansion from being a part of the group, to wanting leadership over the group evolves a person into the Leadership Layer. Here they recognise their own, individual worth over that of the group and this creates aggressive traits, power struggles and eventually war. Throughout human history, egocentric values have instilled social and cultural attitudes of me against you where me is an individual, small group or community and you is the other.

The historical reaction to any situation involving anarchic wrangling between people and groups is to form authorities and governing bodies that create rules, regulations and laws. The idea of democracy is a concept born from the evolution into the fourth layer of social and cultural values.

The rejection of ego guides us to form communities in the greater sense of the word, with the development of national boundaries and patriotism. The identity of the self envelops nationality and the ideology of cultural identity is created.

We also see the emergence of organised religions, where people are asked to tame their aggressive, egocentric natures through the promise of a better life or threat of some horrific outcome. Here guilt, threat and fear are used to gain control of people en masse.

The result of this mindset is a rigidity of thinking—if you are the same as me, then all is well, but if you are not the same as me, I will ridicule you. This creates dogma, prejudice and totalitarianism. Yet, when people experience empathy, they learn altruism. This forges evolution into the next layer where material gain is the main focal point of values.

The I-want-it-now attitude of self-gain at the cost of all else without care for others, is personified in the way memes are interpreted in the Material Layer. Often associated with ruthless business people, callous corporations, etc., there is a distinct connection made between acquisition on material levels, and the detriment to the care, health and well-being of people.

Yet this layer could also be associated with organisations that rely heavily on propaganda to tell their story. From Nazi Germany to the Cold War Era Soviet Union. Even modern-day examples of political leaders demonstrate their Material Layer status with each narrative duck and dive.

This layer has intrinsic links with adolescence—who are usually in the development stage of the Leadership Layer. The inward-facing ego connects both with an attitude that prioritises the needs of the self at the expense of others.

This is a suggested reason for the high-spend potential of teenagers and why businesses often aim their marketing at older children and teenagers. The issue that arises in this layer for many is the lack of fulfilment and emotional emptiness that results from focusing on material wealth.

When a person decides to go with the flow and deviates from the significance of personal gain, they discover compassion for others, thus often undergoing a major change of some kind. This evolves them into the Sociocentric Layer, where the care of others outweighs the needs of the self, therefore recreating the message of the Tribalistic Layer, but on a much larger scale.

The ideology of free love and Flower Power of The Sixties were the first inklings of the Sociocentric Care Layer, even though initial sparks of these values can be observed in the teaching of many spiritual leaders and in the formation of organisations that were established to care for people in a wider sense, such as the National Health Service.

The sophistication of the Sociocentric ideals have developed significantly as we advanced through this layer, with values of ever-increasing complexity. The Sociocentric Layer now encompasses many of the current philosophies from the environmental movement, woke culture and, increasingly, within media outlets.

The Sociocentric ideals are to ensure that everybody has a good life, lives with dignity, equality and the protections of human rights; they are happy and act as custodians of the environment and the Earth. Yet, the reality of this social layer is that many possess a deep-seated aggression and dogma—where people who do not respect those same values are targeted with all manner of threats and anti-social behaviour.

This often stems from frustration at the attitudes of the other social and cultural layers, but it can also create expansion beyond the Sociocentric Layer. An inability to control the betterment of our global community and cajole change

through intimidation, combined with the continued damage of the environment, marginalisation, disenfranchising, and so on, leads to evolution into a Systemic attitude.

A person who actively works within narratives of the Systemic Layer will obtain, for the first time, the ability to actively work within the previous layers, thus contracting as well as expanding. In the first six social value layers, only expansion is possible, thus creating the illusion of a linear journey. The seventh layer enables us to be aware of our contracted layers of perception and move between them depending on situation and circumstances. Here, the author's craft can have maximum effect.

The Systemic attitude involves complex concepts, the need to work towards personal gain and development, but with an innate care for others. The person who is consciously focused in this layer will often have an issue with duty and will easily walk away from issues or challenges that prove to be too testing for the individual.

Therefore, the Systemic values tend towards lack of commitment and it is this need to discover devotion to projects, a sense of mission and a legacy-focused, long-term approach of holism that leads the Systemic into the Global Layer.

This value layer also has the expansion/contraction ability, yet unlike the previous layer, those operating consciously in this layer will strive for unity and oneness. The overriding perspective of the eighth layer is that all things are connected, with parts existing as facets of one complex overall system. So, whereas those working in the previous layer will see themselves as individual parts of a system, this layer will focus on the paradigm and a deep-seated paradigmatic shift in the world.

Those of the Global Layer understand that the Earth is a biological system from which we are created and that we are bound to. As part of that ecosystem, the individual is also the whole. Thus, we perceive the beginning of the many-in-one and one-in-many attitude.

This creates the biggest challenge for the author working from this value layer. The global attitude requires one who takes responsibility as a leader that transcends their peers. Courageous and willing to create unity in their audience, they are prepared to step up while so many are stuck on themselves or blaming others. Here, the author's craft is not simply a question of writing a proposed new future; they are the originator and facilitator of that future.