

Evolution of Consciousness
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“The self in consciousness is a combination of sensations, perceptions, and emotions related to our body, all its motor expressions, and its interactions with the world, other animals, other people, and its own structure.”¹

“ Events in consciousness, on the other hand, are ‘by definition’ witnessed; they are *experienced* by an *experiencer*, and their being thus experienced is what makes them what they are: *conscious* event.”²

“The paradox of our shifting minds is resolved this way: Conscious control is a small and weak force in most minds, a force that we can develop by self-observation.”³

“For good and ill, a system determines what is perceived, understood, and realized. On the down side, instead of being used as a tool for learning, it is molded into what eventually becomes perceived as the ultimate, unequivocal reality.”⁴

“Illusions prevent us from hearing our intuition. Illusions are thought patterns that increase our chances of having depression and anxiety as they censor our intuition.”⁵

¹ Page 309, *Consciousness in Four Dimensions* by Richard M. Pico

² Page 29, *Consciousness Explained* by Daniel C. Dennett

³ Page 273, *The Evolution of Consciousness* by Robert Ornstein

⁴ Pages 16-17, *A Toltec Path* by Ken Eagle Feather

⁵ Page 3, *The New Feminine Brain* by Mona Lisa Shulz. M.D., Ph.D.

We are living in a time when the evolution of our species has been accelerated immensely with technological advances. To ensure the healthy continuation of the human race, we must now move beyond our masculine paradigm of limiting our consciousness to what can be scientifically explained, and begin to accept into our awareness the power and importance of intuition in evolving our consciousness. This requires us to shift from relying on instinctual procreation to accessing our consciousness with purposeful mastery. What is consciousness? How has our consciousness evolved? What are the limits of our consciousness? How can we expand and continue to evolve our consciousness? Is this evolution of our consciousness expressed differently in men and women? Would humanity be served to gain understanding of its own consciousness?

What is consciousness? “Consciousness is the propagated 4D frame of reference that emerges from human prefrontal module activity...”⁶ To understand what consciousness is, we must first examine how consciousness is defined through western science and compare this to a more ancient, shamanic understanding of consciousness.

Neurobiologists have come to define our consciousness as existing through our ability to reflect upon our behaviors and our neural activity through the dimension of Time. Time moves us from a 3D reality into a 4D reality that allows us to become conscious, in other words, our consciousness is born out of the time-space continuum. Without the ability to reference the *now* with the past and future, we would not be aware of what *is*. Thus, through the lens of science, our understanding of consciousness is that of an organic

⁶ Page 271, *Consciousness in Four Dimensions* by Richard M. Pico

frame of reference that can be observed relative to “the background biophysical field... (and)...the field of general neural activity.”⁷

“Whether they are consciously aware of it in this realm or not, all humans are awesome multi-dimensional spiritual beings who create their reality (in all realms) through the thought processes of their MIND. Mind is just another word for 'consciousness'.”⁸ In non-science based traditions, consciousness is the aspect of our ‘self’ that is aware of itself, its environment, and is directly connected to the Universe (or Source). Both science and shamanic traditions agree that consciousness is an aspect of the mind (brain). However, where science deems consciousness to be a pure product of neurobiological processes determined solely on the health and function of the physical body, and more precisely, the function of the prefrontal brain. Shamanic traditions, however, deem that our consciousness is one with the Universal consciousness and that this consciousness continues after the death of our physical body.

“To fit together the pieces of an ordinary or a nonordinary worldview is a stupendous accomplishment.”⁹ “However, no worldview is all-inclusive. None can account for the sum total of creation; existence is simply too vast.”¹⁰ In the Toltec tradition, the seemingly opposing viewpoints of the biophysical and the spiritual are woven together to form a more complete understanding of consciousness. Having access to both the

⁷ Page 191, Consciousness in Four Dimensions by Richard M. Pico

⁸ Excerpt from online article by Alex Paterson
http://www.vision.net.au/~apaterson/esoteric/belief_systems.htm#2.

⁹ Page 20, A Toltec Path by Ken Eagle Feather

¹⁰ Page 74, A Toltec Path by Ken Eagle Feather

ordinary (scientific, biophysical, known) and the nonordinary (esoteric, energy body, unknown), Toltecs develop their consciousness to the point where it is not dependant on beliefs, behaviors or even the physical body itself. Simply, consciousness is our ever-increasing ability to be aware of our self and our surroundings, whether we are in a non-dream or dream state.

How has our consciousness evolved? “In the beginning, before the first animal, before the first emotion, there was a nerve cell, which in turn developed directly from bacteria. We carry this ancient system in each of our cells.”¹¹ Our brain is the biological organ that monitors and takes care of our body without much direct or conscious input from the part of us we call the ‘self’. Our brain also utilizes the same mechanism (neurons) to activate our consciousness through processing information much like the primitive cell. Both primitive and modern neurons are designed to fire upon stimulation and to relax with non-stimulation. This scientific perception shows us that our consciousness is activated solely when there is something new to stimulate it. The more new information that we think up (as a species), the more information we have to process, the more consciousness we grow, and the cycle continues.

“Many of the mind’s works are based on biological adaptations of more than a billion years ago. Since organisms’ needs are usually immediate, the mind adapted to focus on current events and to compute changes in the world immediately.”¹² Science explains that we have evolved from a basic nerve cell and thus, still carry the mechanisms of the

¹¹ Page 104, The Evolution of Consciousness by Robert Ornstein

¹² Page 105, The Evolution of Consciousness by Robert Ornstein

primitive cell in all our cells, including our brains cells. This perspective offers us the understanding that we came from a time where it was of utmost importance to our survival to be immediately aware of new, possibly dangerous or beneficial things. Our also brains learned turn its attention only to those things that were new and tune out the things that were constants in our lives (creating what is now known as the biophysical field). Research shares that this was and still is a very efficient use of our nervous system as it is not important or effective for us to be constantly aware of absolutely everything in our environment in order to be conscious. The paradox of our human consciousness is that the same biophysical system responsible for consciousness (which develops while experiencing increased levels of new stimulation and information) still functions identically to the first ancient nerve cell. This means that our hardware is an ancient operating system that has exponentially grown and developed through tremendous environmental changes and advances. Today, we function no differently than our ancestors, however, through the incredible plasticity of our brains, we are able to affect and change our level of consciousness.

“In fact, many native peoples have believed that we are more conscious when dreaming than when we are awake.”¹³ The shamanic traditions take a different perspective; here consciousness is seen as an intimate connection between the self and Source. The degree in which an individual is able to cultivate and expand their connection to their Source determines their capacity for growing their consciousness. The development of consciousness has equally been mapped out both by science and the Toltec tradition. The

¹³ Page 357, *The New Feminine Brain* by Mona Lisa Shulz. M.D., Ph.D.

evolution of consciousness, within the Toltec tradition, is simplified into four basic cycles.

“As people sensed their loss of union, rituals were born.”¹⁴ The first Toltec cycle began in an early time when people first discovered rituals (organized procedures that led to specific results). About ten thousand years ago, the second cycle of Toltecs emerged. This shift in human consciousness was also identified and mapped out by science, “our brains reached their current state millennia ahead of the agricultural revolution eleven or so thousand years ago.”¹⁵ This second cycle produced Toltecs that developed the ability to manipulate others and things with the use of personal power, thus, sorcery became the focus. This was a clear development in our consciousness as we gained access to greater levels of self-reflection that greatly enhanced our consciousness.

Approximately three hundred years ago, the Toltecs underwent yet another jump in the evolution of their consciousness. “Perhaps resulting from an external force demolishing an internal world, the third cycle saw the interaction of the external and internal influences as the principal determinant of perception.”¹⁶ After suffering the brutal invasion of the Spaniards, the third cycle Toltec were forced to evolve their conscious understanding of using personal power beyond self-importance into seeking to gain further knowledge beyond the self. This marked a time when their current beliefs and ideas were being transformed as they explored both the planet and themselves with more ability and curiosity, again increasing consciousness. The fourth Toltec cycle came

¹⁴ Page 28, A Toltec Path by Ken Eagle Feather

¹⁵ Page 15, The Evolution of Consciousness by Robert Ornstein

¹⁶ Page 30, A Toltec Path by Ken Eagle Feather

with the birth of our modern technological era. This cycle found Toltec practitioners coming out of hiding, living within mainstream society, and contributing to it through sharing their Toltec wisdom. Examining these four cycles in the evolution of Toltec consciousness, we see that Toltec practitioners evolved their consciousness through their ability to access the world around them in relationship to their innermost self and through developing the capacity to shift and change at will their focal point (a point of reference which influences everything we perceive, think and say).

“Our experience of consciousness, mind, and the human spirit is a local, earthly phenomenon forged across billions of light years in the evolution of matter and energy.”¹⁷ Scientifically, our consciousness is accepted to be located in our mind, therefore our physical brain. From the more traditional Toltec perspective, consciousness is the result of perception and the understanding that this perception can be altered depending on the location of our (changeable) focal point (or how we perceive the world and ourselves). Science views the development of the ‘self’, the part that becomes conscious of both its environment and itself, as the part of our neurobiology that is able to perform the act of self-reflection. From the point of view of the brain, it is the part of our brain that can compare and analyze any piece of information within the dimension of time or sequential events. Self-reflection is thus an essential component of consciousness.

¹⁷ Page 1, Consciousness in Four Dimensions by Richard M. Pico

“Becoming a Toltec requires immersing yourself in its way of going about things long enough to shift your cohesion, the focal point, and the forces shaping perception.”¹⁸

Within the Toltec understanding, self-reflection is a second cycle occurrence and its value is limited and restrictive. Moving into third and fourth cycle practices, self-reflection is used as a stepping-stone to evolve and enhance our ability to change our cohesion (our orientation or flavor of reality) through the shifting of our focal point (lens of perception).

“We cannot gain a perspective on our perspective! Whatever else we experience in our subjective world of thought propagation is beyond our biophysical capacity and our thermodynamic barrier.”¹⁹ We can see that despite all of our scientific advances in the area of brain research and consciousness, we still limit view of our consciousness through restricting it only to the biophysical aspect of who we are. We thus negate the Toltec understanding that we are both physical and pure energy, and capable of transferring our consciousness back and forth between our physical body and energy body. To shift our current understanding and research of consciousness beyond the restrictive boundaries of our biophysical self, we must consider that the very nature of science creates limitations in our exploration of consciousness. Perhaps a thorough, critical and experiential research into the wisdom of Shamanic traditions like the Toltec path, may lead us to merging the best of both worlds and developing an extensive understanding on how to better navigate the vastness of our conscious potential.

¹⁸ Page 98, A Toltec Path by Ken Eagle Feather

¹⁹ Page 342, Consciousness in Four Dimensions by Richard M. Pico

What are the limits of our consciousness? “Logic, conservation, deduction, inference, syntax, metaphor, allusion, perspective, empathy, reflection, space, time, past, future, imagination, and other classifications of basic patterns of thoughts that do not necessarily refer to any single type of information of sensory modality define important constraints on human consciousness.”²⁰ The fact that human beings share the same pattern of thinking no matter the culture, upbringing, education, etc, points to a shared limitation—we have yet to develop new ways for our biophysical selves to grow consciousness. However, science also states that each individual consciousness is unique unto itself as no two people can have identical moment-to-moment experiences, thus no two people can develop identical consciousness. “A limit on the information in each thoughts also sets a limit for a sequence of thoughts, for any combination of sequences of thoughts, and for the growth rate of the 4D information space.”²¹ According to science, the greatest limit to our consciousness is our ability to interpret information—we can only process so much information and hence cannot possibly take into account the vastness of life itself.

“However, while thoughts give direction and form to energy, they re not the main issue. They can deliver you to the threshold of intent, but are not, themselves, intent.”²² For the Toltec point of view, what limits our consciousness is our attachment to our lens of perspective (cohesion or understanding of the world). Intent is a tool used by the Toltecs to harness and develop the skill of being able to shift their focal point. Intent is not what westerners perceive it to be, it is not thought itself. Therefore, shifting the lens of

²⁰ Page 316, Consciousness in Four Dimensions by Richard M. Pico

²¹ Page 338, Consciousness in Four Dimensions by Richard M. Pico

²² Page 230, A Toltec Path by Ken Eagle Feather

perception and therefore expanding consciousness is important for success on the Toltec path and this requires that we let go of our reliance on thought and on ‘what can be proven’. “He adds that a major difficulty in connecting with Spirit stems from refusing to accept that we can know something without words or thoughts.”²³ In essence, the very fact that we can think and know our reality, as stated both by science and the Toltecs, is what limits our consciousness.

“Humanity has grown in size, strength, and dominion, but not in its consciousness.”²⁴ Another interesting limitation of our consciousness involves the ‘automation’ mechanism of our brain. In order to function in this high-stimulation environment our brains have adapted the ability to take us ‘out of consciousness’ into ‘habit’. Habits conserve energy and attention and this is vital seeing as so much new information is streaming in all the time. The issue we now face is that we have less and less down time to relax the nervous system and at the same time, our ability to shift to auto-pilot has expanded to the point where we no longer respond to true dangers (like long term environmental changes). In a sense, we have adapted so well to vast amounts of stimulation that we have succeeded in bypassing our conscious mind and thus, despite an ideal growth environment (high stimulation) we have not fully engaged our consciousness potential.

How can we expand and continue to evolve our consciousness? “Plasticity makes learning possible, but it is all the better if somewhere out there in the environment there is *something to learn* that is already the product of a prior design process, so that each of us

²³ Page 230, A Toltec Path by Ken Eagle Feather

²⁴ Page 277, The Evolution of Consciousness by Robert Ornstein

does not have to reinvent the wheel.”²⁵ The advantage that human beings have developed is the ability to share information and develop it from generation to generation, inviting each generation to further develop the thoughts and creative ideas of their (human) lineage. As we progress as a race, our evolution is accelerated by the development of incredible technology. One of these strange technologies resides in the concept of a ‘meme’.

“... so the evolution of memes could not get started until the evolution of animals had paved the way by creating a species—*Homo sapiens*—with brains that could provide shelter, and habits of communication that could provide transmission media, for memes.”²⁶ Memes are essentially thoughts that have structure (such as in a song, idea, fashion, catch-phrases) which are addictive and viral in nature (meaning they spread from one mind to another). Memes affect our consciousness as a race through their ability to propagate themselves in the thought sphere of humanity. Memes range in their influence on our consciousness from slow down our growth or terminating it all together (such as beliefs that lead individuals or groups of people to harm or kill themselves or others) up to the positive growth of our consciousness through the sharing of inventive, creative new ways of existing on the planet. Thus, one of our best means to propagate and influence the growth of humanity’s consciousness is through the spreading of memes that influence our consciousness for the better (like global awareness of the environment and of each other as part of one race).

²⁵ Page 193, *Consciousness Explained* by Daniel C. Dennett

²⁶ Page 202, *Consciousness Explained* by Daniel C. Dennett

How is this evolution of consciousness expressed differently in men and women?

“Women have a unique feminine brain. It is different from a man’s brain.”²⁷ As our environment stimulates our consciousness to grow and we become aware of the incredible potential of our race, one of the dynamics that are essential to gain more awareness about are the gifts of the masculine and feminine consciousness. To accomplish this, we must acknowledge our biophysical differences as found in the difference of male and female hardware (brains). It has been found that even though women’s brains tend to be 10% smaller than men’s brains, there are a greater amount of connections between the brain cells, giving women the ability to multi-task and to be simultaneously aware of both emotional and logical contexts of situations.

“The cortex is divided into two hemispheres, connected by a large structure of 300 million neurons called the corpus callosum.”²⁸“The corpus callosum, which connects the two hemispheres, is bigger in women.”²⁹ The structure of the female brain is such that women’s brains are hyper-connected and thus, have more plasticity (ability to change and grow their brain cells). This effect of having access to both sides of the brain with greater speed and frequency enables women to have the ability to multi-task as well as has sense the emotional content within all thought process with greater ease. In fact, it is impossible for women not to feel emotion in relation to practically everything we call life. This ultra-sensitive ability does have its downside as greater percentages of women suffer from anxiety and depression than men.

²⁷ Page 3, The New Feminine Brain by Mona Lisa Shulz. M.D., Ph.D.

²⁸ Page 133, The Evolution of Consciousness by Robert Ornstein

²⁹ Page 21, The New Feminine Brain by Mona Lisa Shulz. M.D., Ph.D.

“Developing more masculine brain pathways on top of her inborn feminine brain style comes at a cost to a woman’s emotional, intellectual, and physical health.”³⁰

Although women have heightened emotional and intuitive capacities, this does not make their brain better than men, just different. Our modern world tends to be more masculine in nature and thus, has forced women to develop both their feminine brain as well as adapt to a more masculine function. “Contrary to what I learned in my medical and scientific training, *there is no longer a traditional female brain*. The complex world we now live in — has molded, remolded, and rebuilt our brains.”³¹ In today’s masculine society, the feminine brain and consciousness is accessing greater plasticity (the ability to grow new neurons and to change these connections over time) as women respond to modern day demands and challenges. This new feminine brain can potentially create illness if women are not aware that who they are innately is okay and how to properly use her brain through acknowledging her intuition. If we are to begin growing the consciousness of humanity, we must take into account that men and women grow their consciousness differently. Differences can exist harmoniously if we are able to educate our society of the value of both the one-pointed, logical male focus and the multi-functional, intuitive female focus.

“Donner states that males and females relate to reason differently. These differences, she says, make females more flexible.”³² In the Toltec traditions, this difference in the brain’s

³⁰ Page 16, *The New Feminine Brain* by Mona Lisa Shulz. M.D., Ph.D.

³¹ Page 6, *The New Feminine Brain* by Mona Lisa Shulz. M.D., Ph.D.

³² Page 56, *A Toltec Path* by Ken Eagle Feather

of men and women is utilized to affectively harness the potential of consciousness and its growth. Toltecs feel strongly that the survival of the human race is dependent on allowing women the time they need to evolve. Women must learn about how their brains work, how their emotions and intuitions are invaluable and how the wisdom of their body is something of great value. As the consciousness of the feminine grows both within men and women, we will see greater emotional and physical health. In a sense, feminine consciousness is a holistic consciousness. It involves not just being aware of new mental stimulation, but also growing consciousness around emotional, intuitional and physical signals as a source of guidance.

Would humanity be served to gain understanding of its own consciousness? “We create the illusion of the temporal order of information not only for ourselves, but for all life and for nonliving objects in motion. We are at once both privileged and sentenced to move forward in time and create new information in consciousness.”³³ We have evolved in such a way that how and what we think greatly affect changes in our environment and these changes, in turn, affect the growth of our consciousness. Our incredible brains adaptations still function as did our ancestors and to the extent that that has served us to arrive at where we are today, we now must have a look at how we must now intentionally and consciously choose the direction of our human evolution.

“Because we have changed the world so much, we need as a society to direct new kinds of adaptation consciously in all periods of life, in infancy, in youth, in society at large, in

³³ Page 336, *Consciousness in Four Dimensions* by Richard M. Pico

the planet, in spirit.”³⁴ The growth of our consciousness as a race can no longer depend wholly on procreation and natural selection. We are now at the point of our evolution where we must become aware of our minds, of each other, and of the brilliance available in both the masculine and feminine brains. We must now actively seek to harness this brilliance to create new, innovative ways of thinking that will continue to evolve our consciousness beyond what we currently know as possible. We are now on the leading edge of conscious evolution. As we discover how magnificent we truly are and begin to use positive, perception-shifting memes, we stand to have a profound, positive impact on both our species and our planet.

³⁴ Page 279, *The Evolution of Consciousness* by Robert Ornstein