



Flourishing

By Richard Barrett, Chairman and Founder, Barrett Values Centre

What is flourishing and how do you experience it?

I believe that flourishing begins when you have the courage to align your ego motivations with your soul's motivations.

Your sense of flourishing expands when you master the first stage of soul activation—when you feel free to fully express your gifts and talents and find meaning and purpose in your life. Your sense of flourishing continues to expand as you learn to master the second stage of soul activation—when you can connect with others to make a difference.

You attain full flourishing when you learn to master the third stage of soul activation—when you contribute to the well-being of future generations, humanity, and the planet.

What prevents you from flourishing are the fears associated with the unmet needs you have from the ego stages of development. You have to overcome these fears if you want to flourish. For reasons beyond their control, most people on the planet never experience flourishing. They get locked into meeting their survival, safety and security needs.

The pathway to flourishing is a lifetime journey. It begins with well-being. Well-being is the feeling you get when you master the ego stages of psychological development.

There are seven stages of psychological development.

The survival stage begins at conception and continues to the age of about 2. During this time your reptilian mind/brain is forming and dominant. Your focus at this stage is physiological survival. If you develop fears about your survival, you will have difficulties self-actualizing later on in life.

The conforming stage begins around the age of two and continues to around the age of 7. During this time you limbic mind/brain is forming and dominant. Your focus at this stage is on learning to feel safe and protected in your family. If you develop fears about your safety, you will have difficulties connecting with others later on in life to make a difference.

The differentiating stage begins around the age of 8 and continues to your early twenties. During this time your neocortex mind/brain is forming and dominant. Your focus at this stage is security—learning how to feel recognized and respected in your



peer group. If you develop fears about your security, you will not have the confidence to contribute to the well-being others in your later years.

These are the ego stages of development.

The next stage, which is known as individuating, is the stage where you begin to let go of your dependence on others to meet your needs and start to align with the motivations of your soul. This stage usually occurs in your 20s and 30s. This represents the first stage of flourishing.

The self-actualizing stage represents the first stage of soul activation. The focus of this stage is on self-expression—finding meaning in your life. This stage usually occurs in your 40s. This represents the second stage of flourishing.

The integrating stage represents the second stage of soul activation. The focus of this stage is on connecting with others so you can make a difference. This stage usually occurs in your 50s. This represents the third stage of flourishing.

The serving stage represents the third stage of soul activation. The focus on this stage is on contribution—being of service to humanity and the planet. This stage usually occurs in your 60s. This represents the fourth stage of flourishing.

When you have mastered all seven stages of development, you will experience full-spectrum flourishing. You will feel energized and healthy and live a long and active life.