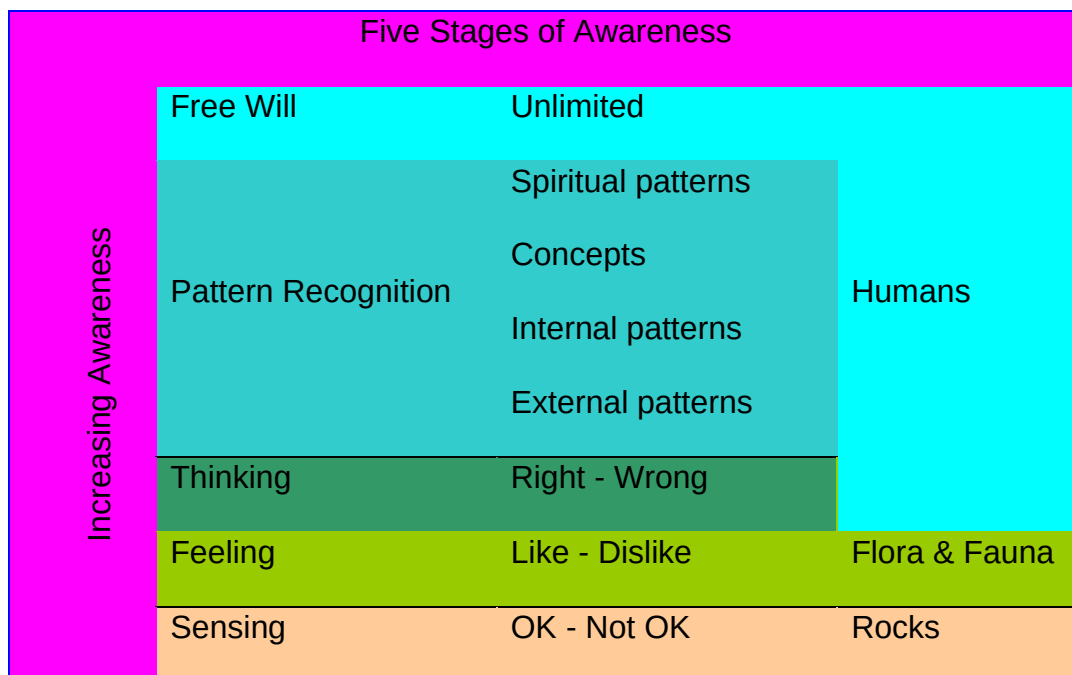


Five Stages of Awareness

Releasing Creativity is all about using the timeless elements of our own character in today's world even though it appears contrary to the time-aware way the modern world is set up. The pressure this dichotomy puts us under is the starting point for many of the developmental episodes in life as other people try and organise our time for us.

A simple structure will help to arrange some of these interests that appear to conflict with our own.



The Five Stages describe a journey along a footpath that ranges from zero awareness at one end to unlimited awareness at the other. The Five Stages are **Sensing**, **Feeling**, **Thinking**, **Pattern Recognition** and **Free Will**, and here we look at each stage one-by-one.

The first stage, **Sensing**, is a feature of matter. Matter has no awareness of itself or its surroundings but it does have sense of the weight that's been piled on top of it, and it has its limits. If there's too much weight it snaps and this ok/not ok switch is very basic sensing.

The next stage is **Feeling** which belongs to the flora and fauna of the world. Don't forget that we were animals once, and have retained the capacity to feel, though the feelings of modern man are more sophisticated than those of animals, which in turn are more complicated than the feelings of plants. But however complicated the feelings, they can all be reduced to like and dislike. And if we like something or if animals like something, we both move towards it, whilst plants will lean towards it and grow their roots in that direction. Plants, animals and humans all have awareness of themselves and their surroundings.

However, feelings are fuzzy and unhelpful when it comes to organising seasonal resources. So at stage three on our footpath we find **Thinking**, that-is-to-say, the ability to count and reason according to what we've counted. This can be very helpful when sorting out feelings, as in 'we need 6 for the meal tonight but so far we only have 3, so we need 3 more'.

Unfortunately that's as good as it gets for our thinking. Ideally we'd like to look upward to the next stage on the footpath, but in reality we mostly look downward to the previous stage and our old animal feelings.

Over time we've learned that thinking takes effort and humans are lazy. Often we want the result of thinking without the effort so, with the help of our feelings, jump to the conclusion of 'I want it' and claim it's the result of thinking. But those haphazard animal days have gone and we now depend on the order that thinking gives us, so when what we want doesn't materialise as required we judge that something is wrong, and our Downward Thinking has become the judge of right and wrong. People can often be judged guilty for the wrong reasons. From here on the situation rapidly deteriorates so that when we look over our shoulder we say "They've got more of what I like than I have, that's definitely wrong"! This misguided, Downward Thinking is the source of a lot of the problems in the world.

The fourth stage on our path is **Pattern Recognition**. This is truly where we leave the animals behind. We take our feelings of like and dislike and see patterns in their occurrence. If you were a hungry early human, you'd very quickly notice the physical cycles of the sun and the moon and link them to the tides and the weather, in particular you'd be very happy to find the connection between the moon and the planting times or the migration times of your favourite food.

Then we begin to see pattern inside ourselves, wake/sleep, emotions/behaviour, eating and thinking/wellness and illness.

This leads on to seeing human concepts that really only exist in our minds but have very practical applications; things like humour, music, writing, maths. And when we experience the work of those who practice these concepts well, what they produce from the ordinary things of life can appear magical. We might ask ourselves 'How can these people know these things and I don't'? and we promptly answer, 'Perhaps it was poured into them and I missed out for some reason'. Or, 'Perhaps they were doing something similar in a previous life and simply picked up where they left off'.

And so we begin to understand that there's a layer where life and death work together as a team, where we step into time for life experience and out of time to digest and understand those experiences. At the top level of Pattern Recognition we find the spiritual pattern of Soul, Dreaming and Character, and to a degree we're all aware of the importance of these.

The final stage on our footpath is Free Will where we're aware of everything and can, therefore, make a free choice about how we respond to situations.

The Creativity we're looking for is in our soul and character and we find it when we come up against the difficulties of Downward Thinking.

Dreaming is the way we channel it.