

"MEDITATION FOR MILITANTS"
A CONVERSATION WITH JUSTIN MILES

Jeff Salzman: Hey, folks. Jeff Salzman here, and welcome to the Daily Evolver Live. It's Tuesday, May 5th, 2015, and I'm coming to you from my home here in Boulder, Colorado. I'm here, as always, with our multi-talented Daily Evolver producer, Brett Walker. How's it going tonight, Brett?

Brett Walker: Good! I'm happy to be done with finals. Another semester down at Naropa.

Jeff Salzman: Cool. Congratulations.

Brett Walker: Thank you!

Jeff Salzman: We have a lot to get to tonight including a follow up on the topic that I focused on last week: the upheaval in Baltimore as well as the subject of race in general. I have a special guest, Justin Miles, who's from Baltimore. He's an integral practitioner, a former member of the Black Panther party, and a Buddhist meditation teacher. So does that sound integral enough for you people? I'd say he's a great interview, and I'm looking forward to talking to him.

Before we do that, let me do just a little housekeeping, and start by thanking you for following us over to our new home on Integral Radio. Of course, Integral Radio is a part of IntegralLife.com, which is the leading Internet hub for the Worldwide Integral Community as well as the home base for Ken Wilber and his latest work. Integral Life has just today announced two new web seminars that you might want to check out. They're producing them with one of our top integral business consultants, Brett Thomas, and they're called "Real Success: Making a Living Doing What you Love." I think that's a worthy goal, so check that out if you're interested on IntegralLife.com.

You can also find more of my work on my personal blog, DailyEvolver.com, where I post all the live podcasts plus conversations I have with other cool people and whatever else Brett and I run across that we think you might be interested in.

The key mission for my work here is to use the integral lens, particularly the AQAL lens, developed by Ken Wilber, to understand current events, politics, culture, spirituality, and to use current events to further understand integral theory. To that end, I have some charts and graphs on my blog that you might want to look at, particularly the Levels of Development and the Quadrants of Reality.

If you'd like to download those or take a look while we're talking, you can go to the DailyEvolver.com home page and click the "Theory" tab at the top. They're right there.

Okay. I want to start tonight by sharing a quote that I ran into this week that I liked, written by Joe Klein, a columnist who writes for Time Magazine and other publications. He said, "I've always thought that cynicism is what passes for insight among the mediocre," and I love that, actually. Let me read it again. He said, "I've always thought that cynicism is what passes for insight among the mediocre."

I have to say that I have always been amazed, even as a kid, by the default tone of cynicism in most political discourse. You hear people in your own conversations, as well as the pundits on TV, talking about politicians and powerful people in terms of, "They're all just a bunch of crooks. It's all about money and power. Everybody's on the take. Everybody's on the make," and while I recognize the piece of truth in that kind of thinking -- because it's there -- I've always found it to be shallow and demoralizing.

It's almost like we're little children, and we're taught that life has rules, and everybody has to follow them, and everybody has work to do, and we all need to do our work well. The implicit message in this is that life is fair, and God's in his heaven, and all is right with the world.

Then we begin to learn, at about eight or nine, that not only does Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy not exist, but that actually, the world can be quite unfair, and people are often quite bad and selfish, and that toy advertisers lie, and that what flies out of my Robot Commando's hands are not really firebombs but just cheesy little red plastic balls, and nothing is really as it seems. That's a big insight, but God, it ought not be our last one.

It's almost as if our bubble bursts at age eight or nine, and we become suspicious of everything. And we never recover. It's pervasive, but I think that integral theory gives us another way of looking at this.

The part of Joe Klein's quote that I'm not crazy about in "cynicism passes for insight among the mediocre" is the "mediocre" part. I'm not sure this kind of thinking is necessarily mediocre. From an integral perspective it's just characteristic of first tier memes. If you're looking at our levels of development chart, first tier memes ("altitudes") are the first six stages of both consciousness and cultural development. We're talking about the development of our *interiors*, in terms of our individual development from little children up to adults ... and also cultural development from early humanity up through modern day. Each of the altitudes that have developed so far has a real strong idea of how the world should be. It has not just an idea but an *ideal*. You add an "L."

Reality never looks good in comparison to one's ideal of what reality should be, and this is a large part of the problem. Just look at current events and current politics. The ideal for conservatives, and this would be mostly traditionalists and early modernists (those are generally the conservatives) is a world where people are free to make their own associations and are unencumbered by any but the most necessary government role. Government is just there to keep us safe, to provide police force, a military. And the courts to enforce the contracts that private parties have agreed to. That's the conservative ideal, and everything short of it is corruption.

Then there's the ideal for the liberals, which is the later modernists and postmodernists (the late orange and green altitudes). For liberals the ideal is a world where the institutions of the public sphere, that is, the government -- which are not private, they're not profit driven -- the government ensures that everyone has a baseline of security in terms of food, housing, health, and the equal opportunity to pursue happiness. And everything short of that is corruption.

You'll notice for the conservatives, the enemy is government, and for liberals, the enemies are the corporations--private institutions. It's interesting how development arises and emerges.

Integral, at any rate, gives us another way of thinking about the world. A wonderful thing begins to dawn on you at this stage: You begin to get hip to what an intellectual, emotional and spiritual strait jacket it is to have an ideal. At integral you become post ideological, in a sense. You see that life and ideologies and even thought itself are evolving things. Like brains and bodies, they become more complex, capable, intelligent, and sophisticated over time.

What is new about Integral, as we move into the first of the second-tier memes, is that Integral begins to see the fourth dimension. We begin to see -- and feel, cellularly -- the dimension of time in history, and the movement of history.

With the perspective of a Big four-quadrant History, we see that each ideology of each first-tier meme is appropriate to the stage of development that it arises in, both individually and with cultures. And that each is limited by that stage of development, but that they have a piece of the truth, too.

Again, at Integral, we become essentially post ideological. We become friends with life as it is, the world as it is, and we're no longer comparing "the world as it is" unfavorably to some ideal. That's a huge relief, I think, because we see, if we look at history, that the structures are evolving to ever more good, true and beautiful states of being -- even though they're not fully good, they're not fully true, and they're not fully beautiful. And they may never be, but they're *more* of that.

To get back to cynicism and the view that money is the thing that makes the world go round ... Yes. There's a piece of the truth there, and we can see that through history that truth has itself evolved. We see

that, in pre-modern time (we're talking the traditional altitude and earlier) what we call corruption is what they call the economy.

In times before we had complex economic structures and legal systems, people scratched each other's back. "You do for me, and I'll do for you." In ethnocentric, pre-modern structures -- and they still exist all over the world -- it's not about joining the global system. It's about working with the family, the clan, my people versus the others. It's about currying favor. In most pre-modern cultures, it's also about who has pull with the big dog, whether it's the king or the queen or the master or mistress. That's the nature of most of human history.

At the modern altitude--this is astonishing development--we get the idea that all men are equal. Women come a little later, but you get the idea. Here' it's not about who you know, it's about how everybody gets an equal shot. That's the ideology, at least. The practices fall short.

Still, we get a great advance at this stage over patronage. We get the bureaucracy--which we [from a higher altitude] see as stultified, slow, full of hoops to jump through ... where you take a number at the DMV, and you fill out the forms and follow all the stupid rules and regulations. But let's remember that this is a huge human achievement. It's huge progress over having to, like a cringing dog, discern what the master wants, which was the nature of pre-modern economies. So bureaucracy is progress.

Then, we get to post-modern economies where we witness a radical move to transparency. We have more and more activity, both economic and otherwise, which is seen and tracked by cameras and computers. We move into a post-secret, post-privacy world. We have Edward Snowden revealing the secrets of the NSA. Even the government can't keep secrets.

Still, as we know from an integral perspective, as all stages emerge they still include the previous stages. One of the current scandals, and this is actually when Joe Klein was writing in his Time Magazine column about cynicism. He was writing about this scandal that's arising around Hillary Clinton, and the Clinton Global Initiative, where we have these big donors who are donating to non-profit fund that is meant to do good in the world, run by Bill Clinton.

And what are the donors getting in return? What have they gotten from Hillary Clinton when she was Secretary of State? What might they get from Hillary Clinton if she becomes president? This is the nature of the scandal: "If I donate to help buy mosquito nets, might I get a favor back?" It's not great, and we want to progress, but it's a higher-end scandal than some of what we've been used to where people are just lining their own pockets. Of course, the Clintons pockets get plenty lined, but it's very indirect, and this is just the nature of the beast as we evolve.

We also see a great arising of prosecution of corruption, so there's a counter force that arises naturally. In fact, I saw today in the cover of the *New York Times* that the majority leader of the New York Senate is being criminally prosecuted by the feds for corruption. I'll just read one short paragraph from the article.

This is Dean Skelos, the majority leader of the New York Senate: "He pressed the powerful real estate executive to provide commissions to his son, a 32-year-old title insurance salesman. He helped get him a job at an environmental company and employed his influence to help the company get government work. He used his office to push natural gas drilling regulations that would have increased his son's commission."

He worked to help out his son outside of the rules of the game. This is as old as the hills and yet, the feds knew, and how did they know? Because they read his emails and listened to his phone calls. All with a court order, of course.

So corruption still there, but it used to be the only thing there. We see movement in history and now it's more and more mitigated by countervailing forces that enforce basic rules of fairness, however imperfectly. So I take some comfort in that.

All right. This actually gets me to the other main topic that I wanted to talk about tonight, and that is a followup on the uproar coming out of Baltimore, which was, again, I note, caused by a video that was taken by a citizen of a young man, Freddie Gray, being arrested and his apparent subsequent abuse, which was

actually not videotaped. If there were cameras in the van we would probably not be having this conversation, but unfortunately, there weren't, and we are.

This is the third or fourth high profile instance in a row of African-American men being brutalized by the police, including being shot in the back in plain view of a camera as the case of Walter Scott there in South Carolina a month or so ago.

After my talk last week on the protests and violence in Baltimore, Corey deVos, who's the editor of Integral Life pointed me to a powerful essay on this topic that was titled, "Meditation for Militants," and it was written by a member of the integral community, Justin Miles. Justin lives in Baltimore. He is African American. He was a member of the Black Panther party, and today, he's the founder of the Miles Institute for Integral Living in Baltimore, where he works with clients using a variety of modalities ... befitting an integral healer.

He uses psychology, spirituality. He's a long-term Buddhist practitioner, meditation teacher in the Zen and Shambhala traditions, and Justin has what I think is a really interesting and very integral view on the situation in Baltimore and on race in general. I had a terrific conversation with him yesterday and I asked him if he would join me on the show tonight, and he agreed, so here he is.

Justin, are you there?

Justin Miles: I'm here, Jeff. How're you doing?

Jeff Salzman: I'm doing good, Justin. How're you doing tonight?

Justin Miles: I'm doing alright. Just relaxing after work and having dinner and doing homework with my daughter and putting her to bed.

Jeff Salzman: Great. I appreciate you being with us. How's the energy and mood in our beleaguered Baltimore tonight?

Justin Miles: It's interesting. Relatively speaking, things have returned to normal. People are back to work. The National Guard left, I believe, on maybe Sunday, after the announcement that the six officers were getting indicted, and so, relatively speaking, things seem to be back to normal. I can't say that I think anything is going to be completely normal after the last couple of weeks.

I know that I'm still having conversations with people about, "What now? What happens now?" Everybody is in that zone, "What's going to happen with, of course, with the trial and what to do with all this energy that's arisen around Freddie Gray and larger issues that I think that this has illuminated?"

Jeff Salzman: Yeah, and I mentioned earlier that what brought you to my attention was this powerful manifesto that you wrote and published called, "Meditation for Militants." I think to give the listeners just a sense of where you're coming from, I want to just read a couple of paragraphs from it, and then ask you to comment.

You write, "In meditation, what is discovered is clarity, strength and mental stability, qualities that all revolutions are based on at their core. When we see the mind as a tool of liberation that has no beginning or end, it is unbreakable. That is the mind of Marcus, Martin, Malcolm and Huey. With that mind, we are focused on what is necessary, even if it is uncomfortable, scary or different.

"With that mind, we will use this [upheaval in Baltimore] as an opportunity to wage a protracted resistance to poverty, poor education, unemployment, underdevelopment, broken families, substance abuse, police brutality, declining mental health and violence against ourselves and others. We will both shut down this city until it responds to our demands, and we will spend time building our society in a way that we think it needs to improve.

"Discover this mind with me, not as the means to stop our anger, but to genuinely experience and express our anger in a way that is useful. At the heart of our anger is wisdom. We must feel angry to get there. Once we expose the wisdom, then the question becomes, 'What are the best means for us to get our needs met?'"

That's powerful stuff, Justin. What motivated you to write that?

Justin Miles: I guess it was born out of a couple different things. One, I think for some time, I've been trying to reconcile what seemed like different aspects of my experience, my life. I have the past, and I guess the present as well, of being revolutionary and rebellious in thought and in practice, being a member of the Panthers and in general, just paying attention to injustice and just having this energy that something needs to be different. Something needs to change, and it's not going to change if we're not in the face of it. It's not going to change if we're quiet about it, if we're hush-hush about it.

Whenever there's an incident like Freddie Gray or Garner or Oscar Grant--we could go on and on--there's a lot of energy and a lot of conversation around what needs to happen and oftentimes, the feeling is, "We need to go out, and we need to make something happen because this is just too much."

Not just in the last year, but in the history of this country. Black people have been historically brutalized and murdered and oppressed and a whole bunch of other terrible words I could throw out there. There's a feeling of wanting to do something about that.

At the same time, I have this part of my life that's been contemplative, and there's this motivation to look deeply into the mind and see what resides there and try and transcend whatever confusion that I find there. To look as deep as possible and see what usefulness is there in the depths of the mind.

I have this history of practicing Zen meditation and Shambhala Buddhism for the last fifteen years, and so the two seemed somewhat at odds. When I'm in different communities, it's difficult trying to navigate. When I'm with the really pro-black protest community, the feeling of, "You can't come from this contemplative perspective because then that seems soft and weak," and then when I'm with the contemplative community, it seems like, "Anger is not the way." Dharma teaches that a moment of anger can result in innumerable rebirths.

Jeff Salzman: Oh, please. I hope not.

Justin Miles: Yeah. (Laughter.) There's this feeling of how to reconcile the two of those things, and so, I've been thinking for some time about meditation for militants, that somehow the two of these things are joined, these two things aren't separate. It wasn't until last week with the energy in the city that I decided that at least I would try and put this together in my mind and make an offering for anybody who was struggling with the same thing.

I genuinely feel that there are those that see what's happening with Freddie Gray and everyone else in the recent past that's been brutalized by the police. There's both the feeling of a deep anger towards the mistreatment of black people and, at the same time, people see the situations from multiple perspectives. They're attempting to try and still remain compassionate. They're still attempting to try and see a way that doesn't involve burning the whole thing down. They're trying to see some way to make sense of it all. I decided to write some stuff down and make an offering.

For a while now, I've really been looking at movements, social movements, that black people have been involved in in the last 100 years, and I realized that most of the movements have been focused externally. They've been focused on trying to get something systemic to change, and that if we speak up enough and we speak loud enough that the system, whatever that is, or the powers that be, whatever that is, will respond, and then they'll come and they'll make things different.

I think if we take that approach, we'll be waiting for a very, very long time. There needed to be a movement based on something that couldn't be destroyed. It can't be co-opted. It can't be bought, and what kept coming up in me is the Dharma teachings of the nature of the mind that wasn't born and can't be destroyed.

Jeff Salzman: Right.

Justin Miles: My feeling began to be, if we somehow can turn our attention towards our internal worlds, then we'll go find the strength to stand up in the face of injustice, and stand up in the face of the injustices that we commit against ourselves.

We'll use that as the fuel for an internal and external movement that can't be destroyed. The more you return over and over and over to our nature, and trust in that, then the stronger that will be ... and I believe the more whole the movement will be. That transcends and includes perspectives in a sense.

Jeff Salzman: That's what I love about your work and about what you wrote in the Meditation for Militants Manifesto. You're dealing with both the exteriors and the interiors, and from an integral perspective, they both are inseparable. They both have to be online ...

Justin Miles: Right.

Jeff Salzman: Let's just look at them one at a time here, if we could. In the exteriors, you're talking about...let me see if I can find what you wrote. You said, "Let's act militantly in an unwavering stance against wildness, as if that gets us anything. Let us act militantly against being pulled into battles of the ego," and then you say, "Let us act militantly against the fear of resistance, against the issues in Baltimore city, whether that means shutting the city down, regardless of how long it takes, or getting arrested or missing work or getting hurt. Let us act militantly in our own communities to explore and serve the needs of others."

That part about "shutting the city down." We do note that what's really got the attention of the country was the death of Freddie Gray, to be sure, and some of the protests in the following week. But what really got the 24/7 attention was the violence.

Justin Miles: That's right.

Jeff Salzman: We don't want that, but there's something in the middle there. You were talking about this to me yesterday, about how Martin Luther King, when he was killed, was about to initiate a poor people's movement that was designed to do non-violent interference with the system as it was.

Justin Miles: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jeff Salzman: I'm very sympathetic to that, and I think there's a moral case for that.

Justin Miles: Yes.

Jeff Salzman: In the sense that, yeah, innocent people are going to get hurt, and things are going to get slowed down, and things are going to be disrupted, and your comfort's going to be violated a little bit. But on the other hand, it's just un-fucking-tenable to have this generational poverty and hopelessness and violence in these African-American communities ... in the country that is the most wealthy and advanced on the face of the planet.

Justin Miles: That's right.

Jeff Salzman: What do you think?

Justin Miles: (Laughter.) No, I agree with you. I think that for any movement in this country to be successful, we've got to go beyond our own comfort and start paying attention to the discomfort that comes from the temporary pain of, again, having to miss work, having to be hungry, having to be out in the elements. That nothing's going to happen if we're not there and present. And we're not there just to be violent, not just there to burn things down.

Definitely, that got people's attention, but I think that what got the attention of the world in terms of the civil rights movement, what got the attention of the world in terms of the Black Power movement in the '60s and the early '70s, is that people were genuinely affirming just their basic human rights to just be treated as a human.

"I am a man. I am a woman. I'm a human. Treat me with some sense of dignity." It's really, really hard to ignore a group of people who are just affirming their basic human dignity.

Jeff Salzman: Yeah. It's true.

Justin Miles: The right to not live in dilapidated communities, the right to send my children to schools that have textbooks, that have computers, that don't have lead in the water. That's an enormous problem in Baltimore city.

There's just some basic human rights that I think that if we're deeply concerned about these things changing, then we need to go into the depths of our humanity and say, "You know what? It's okay to feel this way. It's okay to be angry about these things, and it's okay to get in the face of the police and the National Guard and say, 'We're not moving until these things change. The city is going to be on standstill until these things change,'" And that involves going beyond our comfort zones.

Jeff Salzman: Which gets to the other side of the street, which is the interiors.

Justin Miles: That's right.

Jeff Salzman: For any chance of anything like that happening, the interiors of everybody (and we're talking the African-American community, individual African Americans and the culture at large) ... there has to be a movement forward in terms of expanding our circle of care somehow ...

Justin Miles: That's right. That's right.

Jeff Salzman: What I love, again, about your work is that you're bringing a deeply-practiced, transmitted orthodox Buddhist, transformational technology ... and my question to you would be, is it working? Are people getting it? What are you learning here, even in the last couple of weeks about how this part of it needs to go?

Justin Miles: I think what you said in terms of expanding our circle of caring, that's definitely been something that I'm seeing in the last couple of weeks that that's happened, that people are really displaying just their basic sense of goodness. Everyone...I can't say everyone, but many people are looking for ways that they can be more helpful. They're looking for ways that they can touch into people who don't seem to be heard on a normal basis, be felt on a normal basis. People who live in communities where even the people in those communities don't want to be in those communities ... and that's no good.

Jeff Salzman: Right.

Justin Miles: They're going into those communities and saying, "What do you need? How can I help?" I think that that's really been a lot of the energy that I've seen and I think that that's all good. I think that, again, the missing piece of that is that those efforts, no matter how good-natured that they are, may end up just being temporary.

They're putting a Band-Aid on a broken arm. We've got to look at the broken arm, and we've got to be willing to feel the pain of the broken arm, and I think that's probably my biggest concern is that we're not sitting with the pain long enough.

We get the indictment of the six officers, and all of a sudden, everything calms down. They go back to normal. People can be out on the streets again after 10 o'clock, and things are back to business as usual, but I think there doesn't have to be a separation between those two energies.

In fact, I do think that caring and concern is a part of the nature of anger. We need anger in order to go beyond the anger. It's part of the usefulness of anger, expanding this feeling of wanting to improve things in Baltimore City.

That we need anger, you know, and we don't need to see it as something that's not useful or something that somehow we feel bad about, that we shouldn't feel. I say, "No. Screw that. Let's feel that. Let's use that. Let's go with that. Let's use that as our fuel."

Jeff Salzman: That's the deeply spiritual practice. That's transmutation, where you literally find the wisdom aspect that's always embedded in anger.

Justin Miles: Exactly.

Jeff Salzman: Yeah, so we're getting onto the end of our time here, but I do want to ask you: So here we are on this call, a lot of white people, a lot of good liberals here ...

Justin Miles: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jeff Salzman: ... What do you wish we knew about the African-American experience that we don't? What could we do, or *stop* doing, to be more helpful?

Justin Miles: Right. That's a good question.

Hmm. I have people in my circle, people that I call brother, that I call mentor, that I call friend people that I feel related to that are not of my race, that are white, and they're my heroes. I allow them to teach me, and they allow me to teach them. I think that we all could go for that. We could spend more time doing a lot more listening, not to what's put out there in the media or popular ways of receiving cultural information about a group of people.

I mean actually spend time with those people and again, looking into the humanity of black people, in a sense putting yourself in the black person's shoes.

Not that all black people are the same. It's the same with anyone; we all exist at different stages of development. But spend time with what seems "other," allow the experience to wash over you and to challenge you and to put yourself in our shoes, so to speak.

I've often thought that there were plenty of white heroes and sheroes that get overlooked. America is very big on founding fathers, the self-created history of the country that says that these were the greatest... "You're the greatest white Americans that ever existed." But honoring the heroes in the white community who spoke out for the rights of all people or that did things to better all people, I think would also go a long way.

I guess also being present, whether at the protests or in a community that is close to you. Be present in whatever organizations or institutions that are working towards improving the conditions of African-American people. I think that would go a long way.

I really think that white America only listens to white America.

Jeff Salzman: Yeah.

Justin Miles: I've come across a few white folks during the last couple of weeks that were kind of afraid of what was going on as if this were strictly a racial thing. But it wasn't really just racial. It was more systemic.

I want to say either three out of the six or four out of the six police officers, they were African American, and the media has done a good job of highlighting the fact that the police commissioner's black, and the mayor's black, and most of the city council is black, so it can't be a racial thing, and I beg to differ on that, too.

Jeff Salzman: Just what you were saying, to drink up the perspective of the other.

Justin Miles: Yes, drink up the perspective of the other.

Jeff Salzman: There's the good old Buddhist practice of exchanging self for other.

Justin Miles: Tonglen.

Jeff Salzman: Yes, Tonglen, a venerable spiritual practice. I think that it's good instruction for us at this time.

Thank you so much, Justin. Your writing and your message and transmission here tonight is really powerful, really so much appreciated, and I'd love to stay in touch and hear from you as the story will continue to unfold, as it surely will.

Justin Miles: Thank you, Jeff, for having me on your show, and thank you, Corey, and thank you, Brett. I appreciate it. Again, I just want to encourage everybody out there to, again, get involved. America listens to you, so get involved. The more people out there that can see deeply into the pain with an open heart, the more likely that things will change. But don't hide, and don't think that it's not okay to be upset and be angry, regardless of who you are and where you come from.

Jeff Salzman: Right on. All right. Thank you again, Justin Miles.

Justin Miles: You're welcome. Thanks, Jeff.

Jeff Salzman: All right. Thank you, everybody, and Brett, do you think we have time for our questions? We have a couple of recorded questions from the Speak Pipe.

Brett Walker: Yeah. Considering we got kind of a late start, I think everyone would be happy to indulge us if you want to do it.

Jeff Salzman: Yeah. Cool.

I always love hearing from you listeners. You can contact me by e-mail at jeff@dailyevolver.com or on the home page of the dailyevolver.com website, where you'll see an orange button that you can press and leave me messages by voice mail. I get a lot of good questions there, and I love them, and we got a couple the last week or so that ... I think, Brett, just play them, and I'll respond as best I can.

Brett Walker: Okay. This is Suzanne from Asheville...

Suzanne Arthur : Hi, Jeff. This is Suzanne, and I'm calling from Asheville, North Carolina. I love your show and listen every week with my partner, Evan.

My question has to do with astrology and integral theory. A friend of mine asked me to talk a little bit about why I dropped astrology shortly after starting to study integral theory. I sort of ignored the question for a while and thought about it for a few years, and now I'm trying to articulate it.

Essentially, it's because astrology is a typology that fits into the integral framework but the integral framework cannot fit into astrology. That's one reason.

Another reason is that I wanted to transcend the purple magic mythic level, the enchanting level where astrology is located and do my work in the world in a much bigger way, but I'm trying to explain it to a person who uses astrology in her daily work and really loves it, and I don't want to hurt her feelings, and she's located in Green Wave, and she's having a hard time understanding what I'm talking about, so I just thought maybe you could shed a little light on that.

Jeff Salzman: Thanks, Suzanne.

Brett Walker: Okay. Next is Mark in Tennessee...

Mark Evans: I had this several-day cleansing experience one time that included visual hallucinations. I was sitting in my dark living room, and I saw a bunch of creatures about the size of cats, and they were like stick figure animals that walked like insects, and they were marching around the periphery of the room.

I don't think they were physically there, but I've always wondered if they were energetically there. Didn't scare me. Genpo Roshi had said, "Nothing wrong with hallucinations as long as you don't attach to them," so I just let it all go. Happened a couple of times that week.

Jeff Salzman: Those questions both get to an interesting issue that we deal with, and I think integral helps us to see ... and that is, how do we relate to these things that are ... It's like Mark said. He sat there and watched the cat-sized insects walking around his room and, as he said, the question was, "Are they really there, or are they energetically there?"

Again, to use the polarity that Justin and I talked about earlier, this represents the interiors and exteriors. We can see all sorts of things that are real and important and meaningful in our interiors, but would that be picked up by a video camera? That's another question.

Are they happening in the exteriors? This is true of a lot of claims that are made, certainly by religions, whether it's that Moses parted the Red Sea, or that my perfect yogi master walked through walls, or monks can levitate. I get that we could have the experience of any of those things, but are they actually ontologically real, that is real whether we believe in them or not? That's another question, and that gets back to Suzanne's question about astrology, and I love what you said, Suzanne. You said that astrology is a typology. Now typing each other is one of the things that human beings have always been very good at, even way before we were technologically competent in the exteriors.

We understood each other. We understood personalities. We have always been students of each other. That's what we human beings do. And so we realize that yes, people come out of the womb differently, we have different antenna, and we have different ways of processing information, and we have different ways of feeling and responding to circumstances. And they're just there.

Any parent who has more than one child marvels..."I did the same thing with each one. We live in the same house. We're in the same city," and they're completely different people.

They came out that way. That's the *karma* of us, and our *karma* actually arises in patterns. And these patterns are typologies. We have the Enneagram. We have Myers-Briggs. We have astrology. These are all maps of the different types of patterns that human beings arrive with the different gifts, the different blind spots, the different things that light us up and turn us off.

Now, the question is, are they related to the planets and the date and time of our birth? That's a different question, and this is why we have science. Science forces us to filter these claims through the lens of, again, would a video camera pick it up? Are they ontologically true?

Oftentimes, they're not. No credible video tapes exist of people levitating or walking through walls or parting seas or walking on water. None of that. Or of statues crying or any of the things that we find people believing in in the exteriors when, first of all, it's not proven, and second, it's not necessary.

Things can exist on the interiors and be completely relevant and important and meaningful just in those terms. So Suzanne, I would encourage you to, as I think you are, find whatever meaning you can find in astrology. You said about the thing that ultimately got you out of astrology was that you realized that while astrology fits into the integral framework, the integral framework doesn't fit into astrology.

For those of us who want the biggest possible picture, only integral will do because it includes everything.

Also, Mark. Whatever you can find from those cat-sized insects, you should have conversations with them, see what they have to say. All of that is good, but don't expect, and I know you don't, the rest of us to believe that that happened ontologically.

We can have both. This is one of the great things of integral.

All right. I thought I might end with a poem.

I got this poem today from Jorge Manuel Soto, who's a faithful listener and a friend. It relates to this idea of growth and development and Eros itself, and of course, this is a fundamental premise of the integral view ... that the whole world is evolving, growing, developing. It sometimes seems mystical-schmystical, but there's a very simple way of looking at it, and I think this poem really gets to it.

It's a poem by Tara Sophia Mohr, M-O-H-R, and the title is "Sometimes Growth is Just Seeing it Sooner":

Sometimes growth is just seeing it sooner.
You see sooner that you are silencing your voice.
You see sooner that you are acting out of fear.
You see sooner that you are projecting the past onto the present.
You see sooner that you were the one acting crazy, not them.

Because you did the work, you see it sooner.
Until our last breaths, we keep missing the mark.
We will dim our light and betray ourselves.
We will cause harm to those we love.
But if we stay awake, we can learn to course correct sooner.
Stay awake, and you might see it this year
-- and not let it extend for a decade.
Stay awake, and you might see it this week
-- and not let it extend for a year.
Stay awake, and you might see it this hour
-- and not extend for a week.
Stay awake, and you'll receive those moments of grace,
those crystal ones when, in the instant -- before the first choice
the first word, the first act,
you will catch it right at the moment of its beginning and choose differently.

The turnaround is the most important part of the flight path.
When you make it, you move the whole world forward.
You plant a seed of love in the ground,
and all those who come after you thank you.

Thank you, Tara Sophia Mohr. Thank you, Jorge, for sending me that poem, and thank you all for listening to another installment of the Daily Evolver Live. It's a great privilege to do this, and I thank you for listening and responding. Have a good week, and we will see you again, same time, same station, next week here for another edition of the Daily Evolver Live.