

# Stages of Adult Development

## Shifting from Reactive Mind to the Creative-Aware Mind

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This describes how the Reactive Mind develops and how it's structured. This content invites a deep, reflective inquiry into the nature of our own reactivity and what the hallmarks are in transforming into Creative-Aware adults (and leaders.)

- The question is, does our reactive mind have us or do we have it?
- In the Reactive Mind stage of development, the reactive mind **manages and runs us**.
- **Over 75% of adults and leadership cultures still operate from the Reactive Mind—resulting in escalating patterns of stress, fear, depletion, conflict, undue complexity, inefficiencies, etc.**
- **The 1st key marker** in the movement from Reactive Mind to Creative (Aware) Mind is how we optimize the tension between Purpose and Safety.
  - Creative-Aware Mind orients off the fundamental choice to pursue one's deepest personal values and vision.
  - Reactive Mind unconsciously pursues safety and plays not-to-lose.
  - Love and fear come up together. What we most want to create is often met with our greatest fears.
- **The 2<sup>nd</sup> marker** in the movement from Reactive Mind to Creative Mind is a fundamental shift in identity—from an identity that is structured from the outside-in to one through which we function (and lead) from the inside-out.
  - Reactive Mind is organized externally, from the outside-in. It is dependent on outside validation for its sense of identity, self-esteem, and security.
  - The hallmark of the Reactive Structure of mind is that the self is made up by outside expectations.
  - Identity, at the Reactive Stage of development, is socialized. We define ourselves based on messages from key figures and institutions in the growing up and surrounding environments.
  - Reactive Mind loves to live up to these expectations, and it lives in fear of not meeting them.
  - As we act on these outside-in messages, they go on auto-pilot, and then they run us. **That is, until we learn to see them and decide if we actually want to live by them.**
  - The Creative-Aware Mind inner structure is self-authoring and driven from the inside-out. An individual in this stage of adult development is no longer controlled by fear of meeting expectations but rather is anchored in their unique and *intrinsic internal* awareness, worth, wisdom, clarity, compassion,

and creativity. *(Meaning... these inner resources are "already present" from within and don't have to be earned, fixed, acquired, manufactured, etc.*