Let me ask you a question…

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Have you heard about the The 7 Levels of Awareness?

It’s also known as the 7 Steps to Mastery.

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There are seven levels of human awareness, from the most primitive state of having animal instincts and reflexes all the way **to being a master.**

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It’s so useful to know what these levels of awareness are so you can achieve quicker with fewer setbacks.

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At the master level, we use these levels to apply the relevant treatment, training or coaching cue. Let’s have a look at them.

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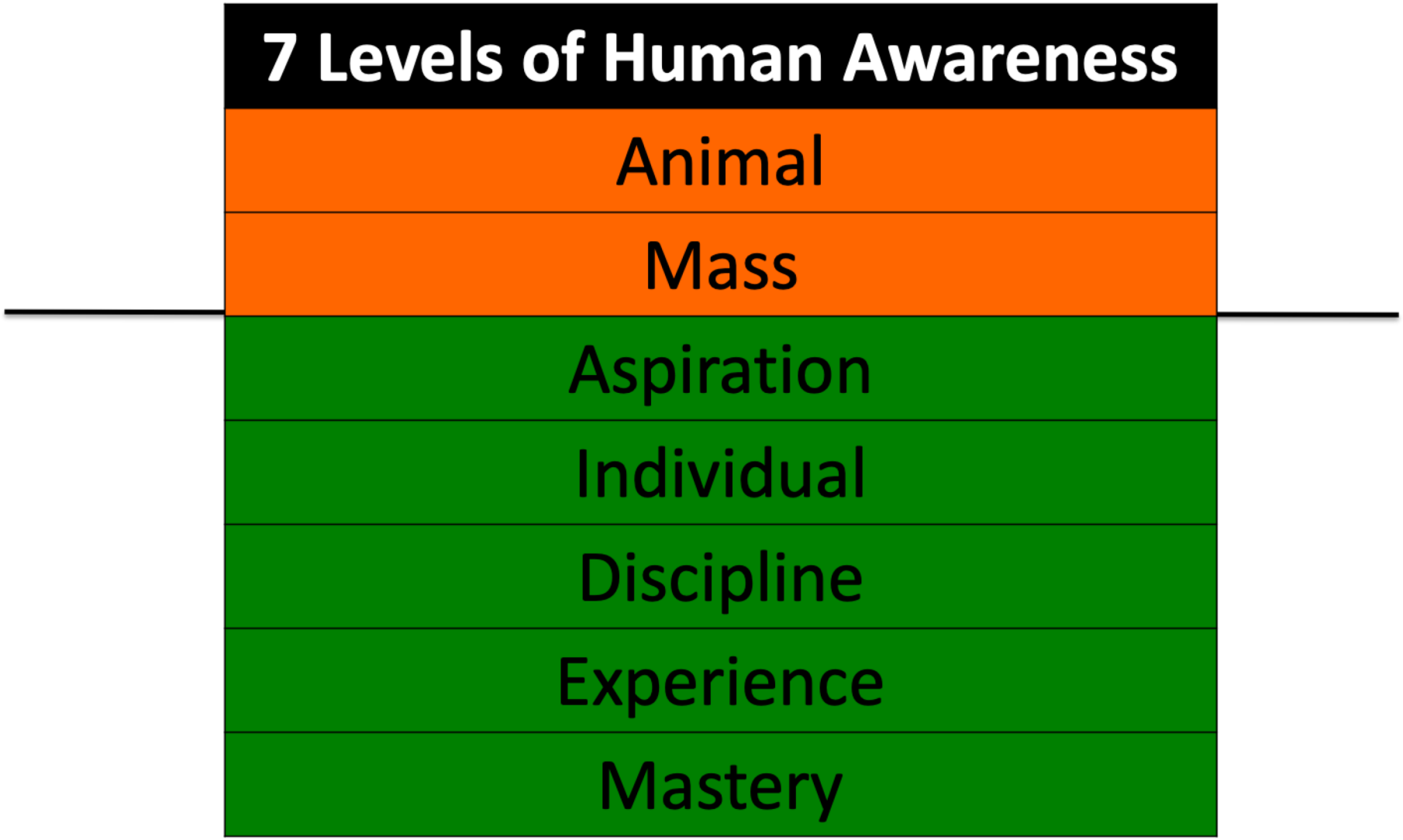

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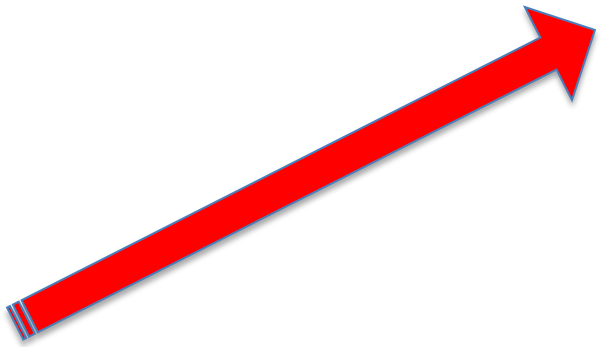

This is the critical point where
you get stuck…
or break through.

7 Levels of Human Awareness
Animal
Mass
Aspiration
Individual
Discipline
Experience
Mastery

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At the lowest level is the “Animal” level of awareness.

At this level, all individuals rely on instincts and reflexes to interact with the world.

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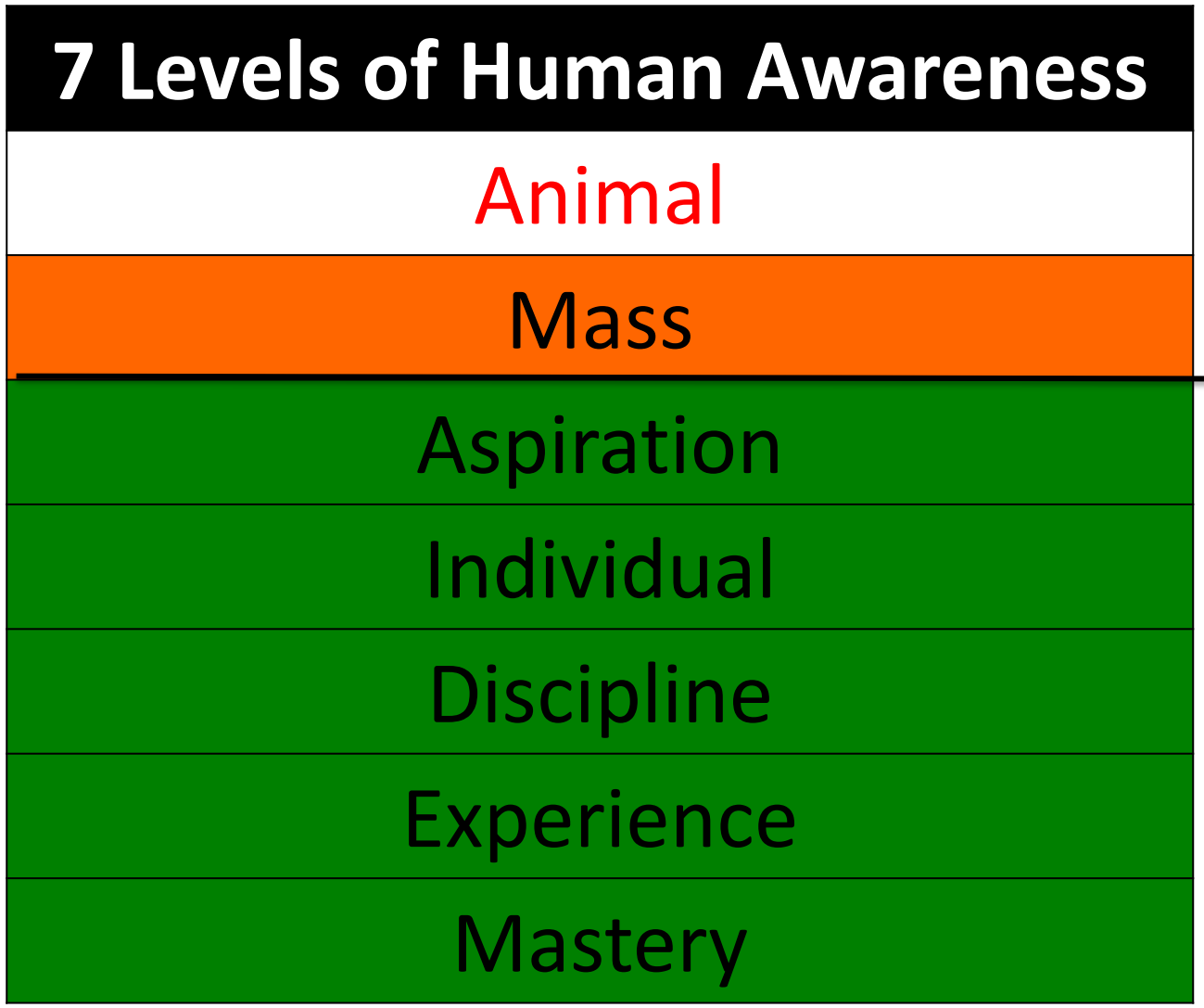
7 Levels of Human Awareness



Instinct. Reacting instead of stopping to think, then respond.

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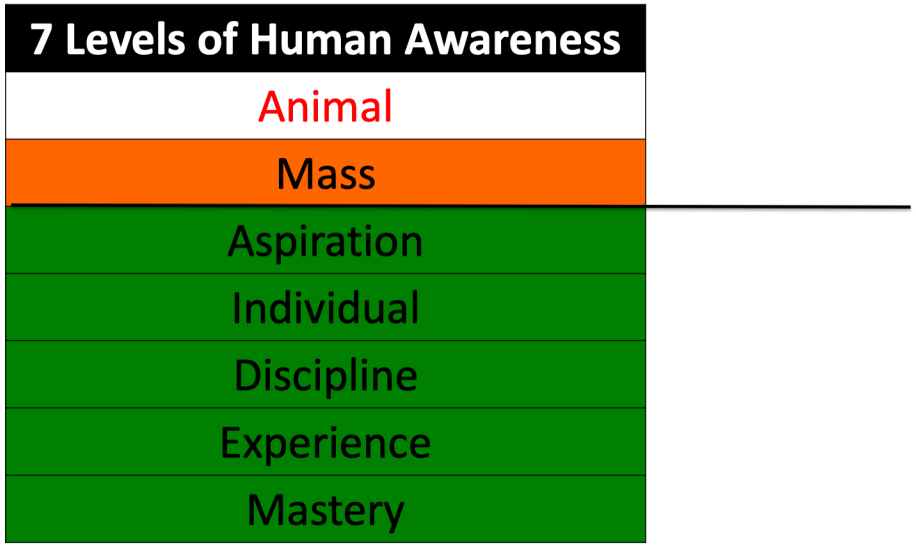

The primitive instinct at this level is to survive.

As a student, juggling all that your professors and social generals are throwing at you, you're mostly staying with the crowd, keeping your eyes down and trying not to fall behind or fail.

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To influence students to be most responsive and adaptable to all those social and academic stressors, we simply provide protection against *not surviving.*

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“Manage your resources, and don’t quit.”

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This means if YOU are in a position of influencing a students life, ***shape the path*** of their schedule to include the four simple strategies of social basics:

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… movement, mindset, nutrition and recovery.

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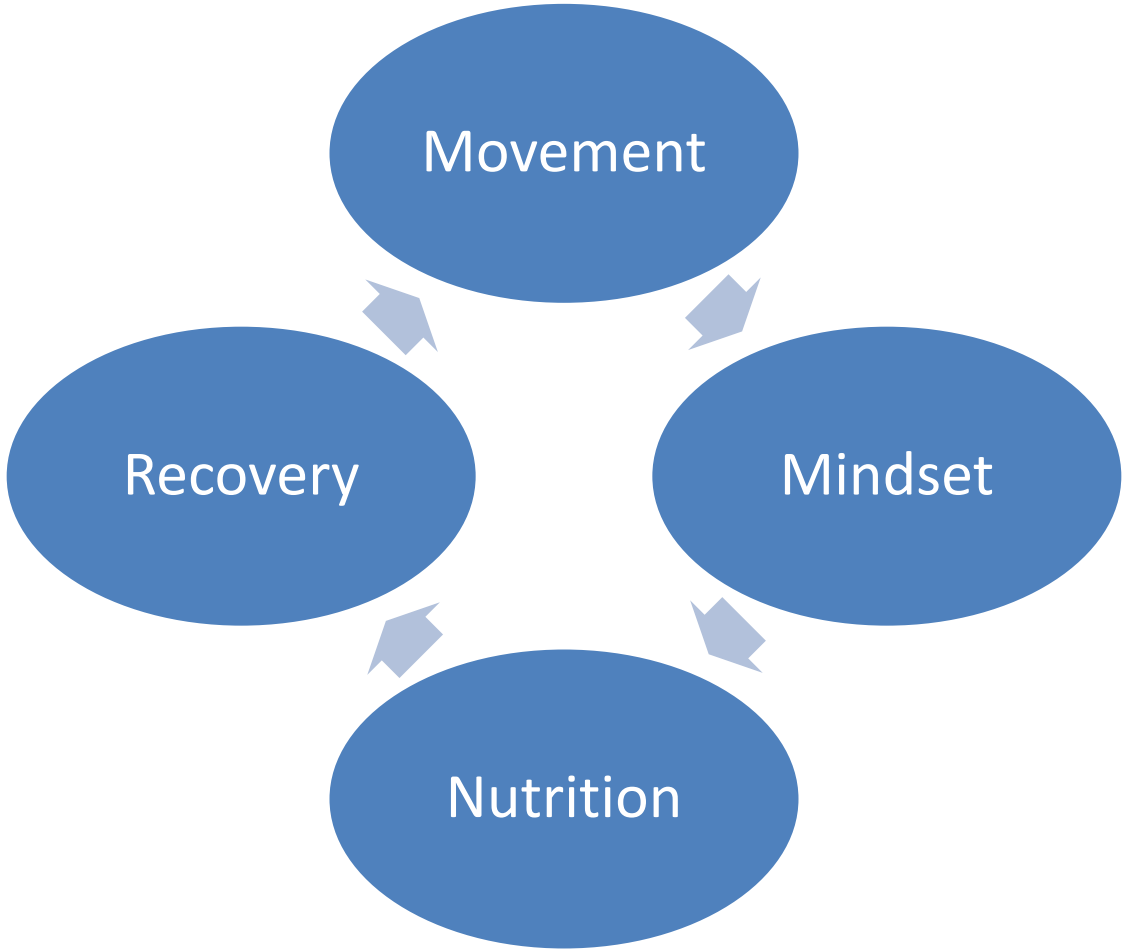
Interestingly, these the same four pillars that work for athletic preparation.



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At the animal level, don't bother educating them at this point – remember, they are simply trying to survive – just program into their schedule *mandatory* movement, mindset time, nutrition and recovery.

If it is **YOU** who are the student, program this as a mandatory part of your day.

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- The *similarity* between students and athletes is that students and athletes also have to find a way to keep income high enough to keep them afloat until they gain job security.

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If you find that your students, or yourself, or your athletes, are sacrificing one of those pillars because of their workload or outside influences, consider the option of scaling back a workload or academic schedule.

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– switch to less hours per week, less after-work “work activities”, less units per semester, or extend the course duration.

“If you don’t have time to do it right the first time, when will you find time to do it over” – John Wooden

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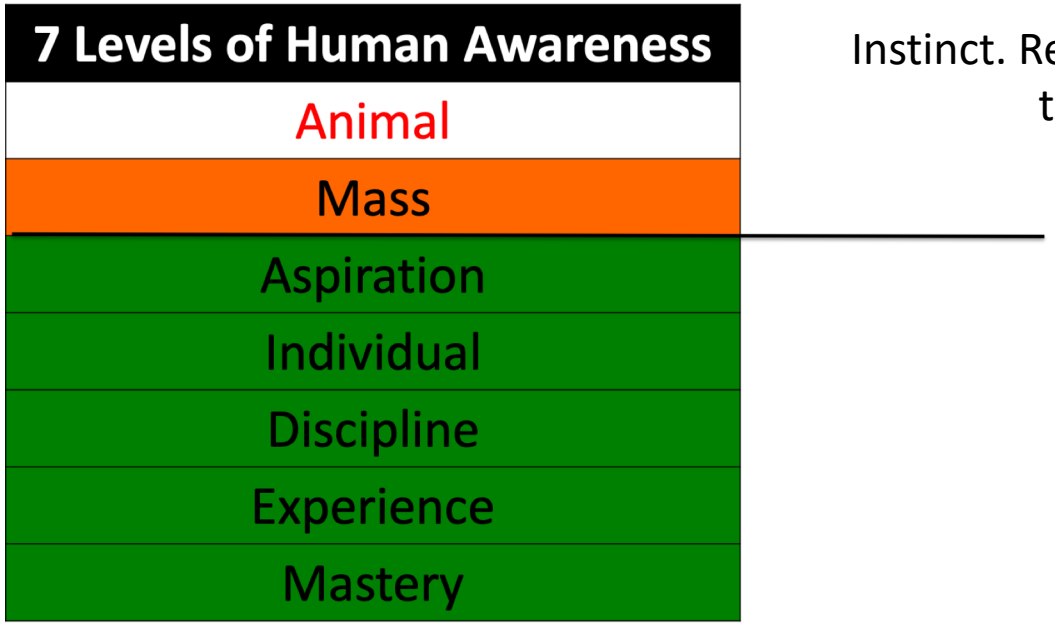
The typical behaviour of someone at this level of awareness is to behave based on instinct.

An individual is typically reacting instead of stopping to think, then responding.



Instinct. Reacting instead of stopping to think, then respond.

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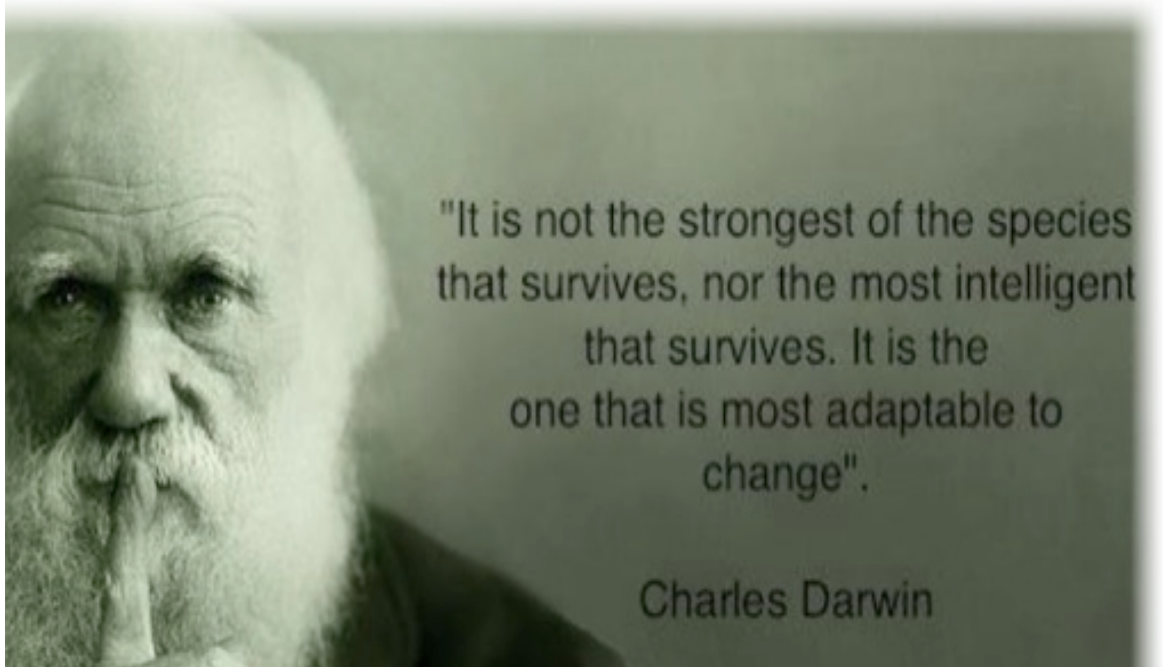
In athletic training circumstances, the coaching cue is to just “do whatever it takes to get it done.”



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Applying the animal level to athletes

To influence athletes at the animalistic level, supply them with a rich sensory environment to react quickly to all stimulus that comes at them – this means work to reduce and eliminate pain and improve mobility.

Awareness Level	All individuals…	Cues
1. Animal	Rely on instincts and reflexes.	Survive. Do whatever it takes to get it done.

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At the next level of awareness is “Mass”.

An animal that finds itself in need of protection will seek the company of similar animals.

To do that requires *AWARENESS* that there are others.

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7 Levels of Human Awareness

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Notice that you are part of a group of similar species, then follow them.

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This is used to the advantage of gyms, communities, trainers and indeed all organisations (including unions) all over the world.

It’s often more effective to work together towards a common goal and is definitely safer when there are numbers of animals around you.

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The coaching cue is to work together and *not get left behind*.

The downside of this level of coaching is that it doesn't honor individual differences – thus, some thrive, others are thwarted.

It's hit and miss.

You win some, you lose some.

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Coaches and academics at this level are like sheepdogs nipping at the heels of the sheep.

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The typical behaviour of a person at this level of awareness is that they are *noticing that they are part of a group of similar species, then they are simply following them*.

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Awareness Level	All individuals…	Cues
2. Mass	**Go with the mass.**	Don't stand out or get left behind. Work together. Safety in numbers.

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The third level of awareness separates the individual from the group. This level is called “aspiration”.

Aspiring to be more than just a number in the masses.

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Animals and people in the group become aware that there *might* be something beyond the group and this becomes attractive, or at least interesting.

The animal/individual will aspire to seek out that which is beyond the normal group circumstances.

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In specific terms, a student will aspire to stand out, to grow, to get better grades.

Similarly, a training individual will ***aspire to attain qualities not yet attained, to display outputs not yet displayed***.

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It’s at this level of awareness that a supervisor in academic studies should reinforce competency, minimum standards, accountability.

Similarly, a coach should reinforce quality of movement over quantity of movement, that is, to move well before moving often.

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This is the first step on the road to improving durability, and durability is a key ingredient in the cake of great students, then professionals, as well as great athletes.

Without durability, the most an individual can expect to be is an occasionally exciting athlete.

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Try these messages, “practice as if you’re the worst, compete as if you’re the best.”

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This level of awareness is fragile, the pull of the mob is strong and aspiration can quickly diminish.

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Encourage individuals to “envision the possibility of improvement.”

This requires small steps to demonstrate success.

Those who don’t rise into this level of awareness are what I call “trainees” – they don’t progress to becoming “athletes ”.

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Awareness Level	Trainees…	Athletes…	Training Cues
3. Aspiration	Sacrifice quality for quantity. Content with status quo. Aspire when convenient.	Seek to **move well before moving often**. Recognise **quality before quantity**. ***Aspire*** to be more than they are, via adaptability and durability ***Aspire*** to attain qualities not yet had, to deliver outputs not yet seen.	Practice as if you are the worst. Compete as if you are the best. Independent of circumstance, ***envision*** the possibility of improvement.

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The fourth level of awareness is “individual”.

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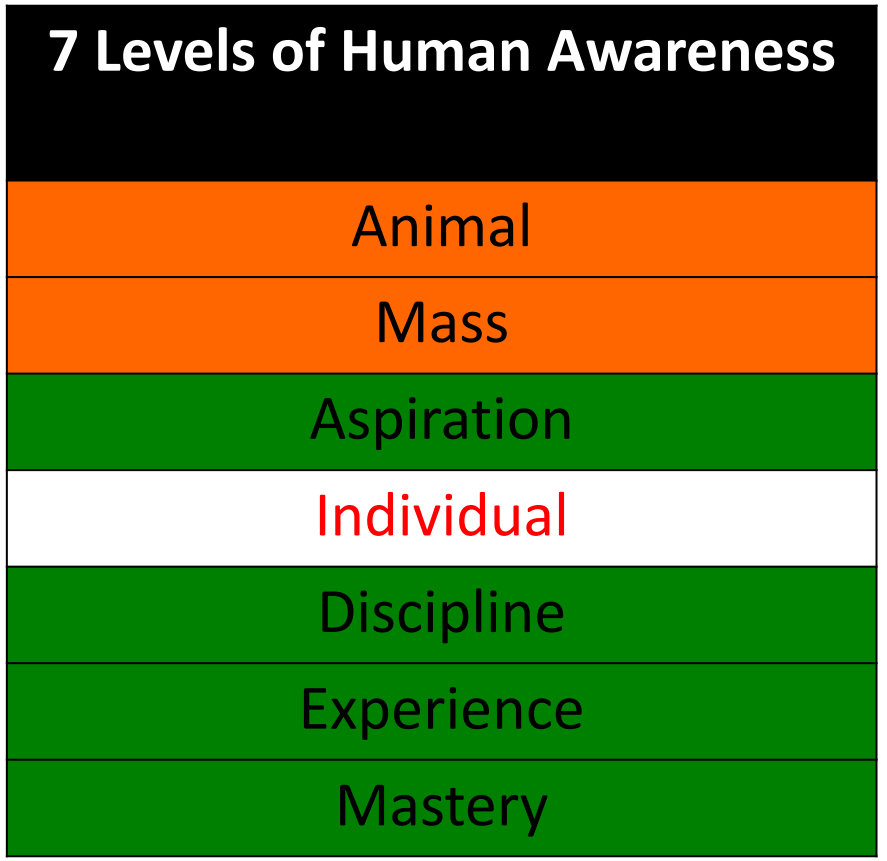
Aspiring to be an individual with your own optimal experiences.



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Here, an individual who has aspired to attain qualities they aren't displaying in the mass has recognized they are different from every other athlete.

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They'll desire to work on their own individual weak links and strengths.

Work with them on that, and encourage them to develop their own individual program, not someone else's.

The trainees will adopt programs that aren't based on individual evaluation.

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Awareness Level	Trainees…	Athletes…	Training Cues
4. Individual	Adopt programs that aren't based on individual evaluation.	Recognise that they are different from every other athlete so **they work their plan based on individual weak links and strengths**.	Develop your individual program, not someone else's.

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It’s beyond this point that aware individuals need to step up to the next level of awareness – “discipline”.

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Using discipline of action to forge optimal experiences.

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The trainees around them will be inconsistent.

The discipline will develop integrity through behaviors that make them trustworthy.

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It’s possible that the most important characteristic an athlete can bring to their coach or trainer is trustworthiness.

So, cue them, and YOU to do what they said they/you would do, when they said they/you would do it.

This is consistent integrity.

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Awareness Level	Trainees…	Athletes…	Training Cues
5. Discipline	Are inconsistent.	Have **integrity**. Acknowledge **trustworthiness** as a great characteristic to bring to their coach.	Do what you said you would do, when you said you would do it.

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When discipline of training is in place, *targeted* towards individual weak links and strengths, towards attaining qualities yet attained, it is the reflection and monitoring of training and the response to training that develops experience.

Experience is the sixth level of awareness.

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Reflecting on the results of your actions, to refine your optimal experiences.

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Being able to see what the disciplined and individualized training has brought makes the athlete aware of their success and temporary failures.

This level accelerates the process of improvement.

Cue the individual to monitor their response to all stressors and to assess, not guess.

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Awareness Level	Trainees…	Athletes…	Training Cues
6. Experience	Fail to use feedback systems to improve training.	Monitor training load and response to load ➔ develops experience quickly.	Reflect and monitor. What gets measured gets done. If you don't assess, you guess.

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Mastery

When an athlete has been individualizing training, applying disciplined practice and monitoring the results of that training, they will refine their improvement towards the highest level of awareness – mastery.

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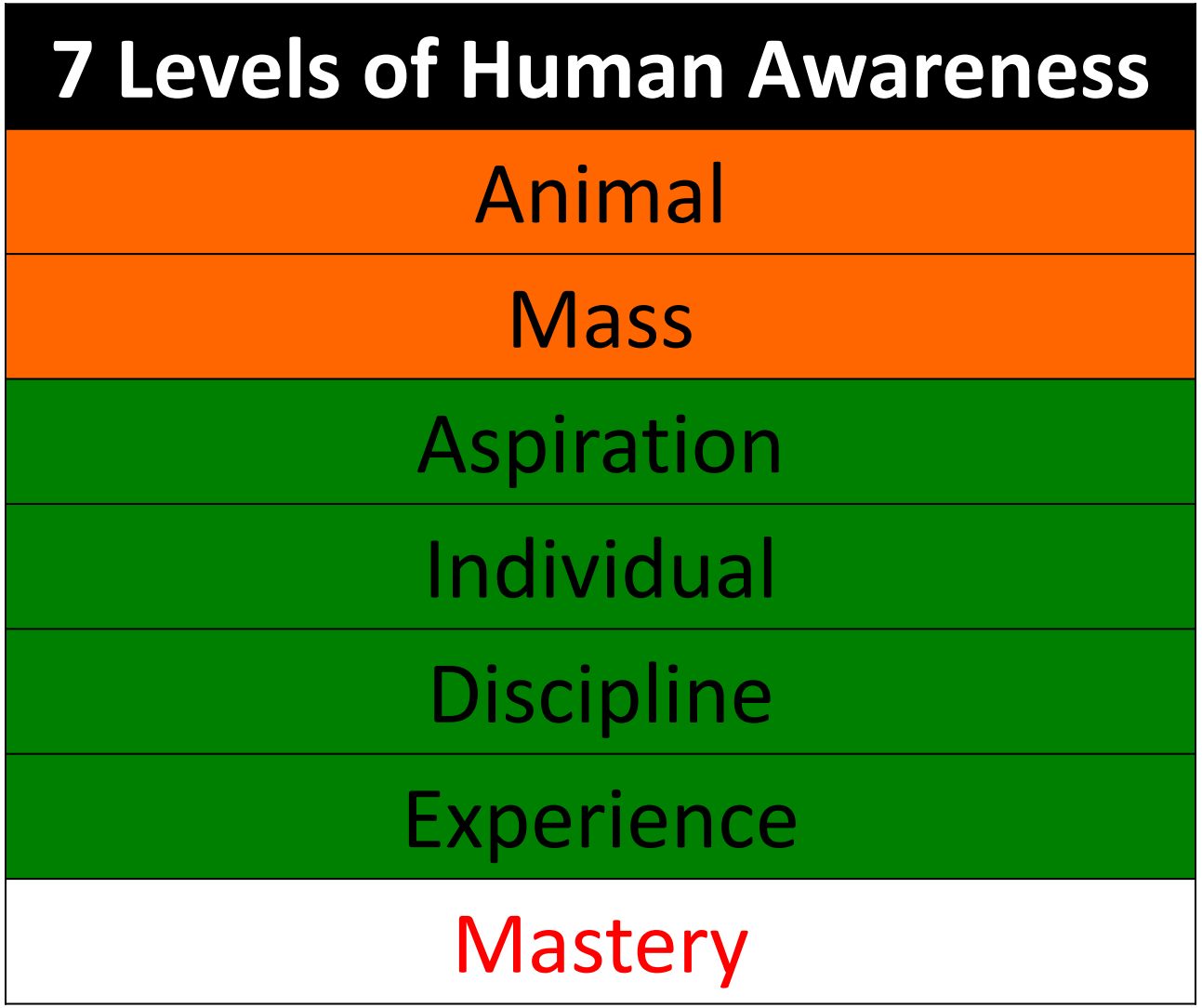
7 Levels of Human Awareness



Continuing this refining process of thinking, feeling, acting, reflecting on results, to be better, to do better, to serve better.

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Masters evolve.

They are prepared to perform – cue them as such.

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Encourage them to use the animalistic instincts reflexes they've sharpened when it comes to competition, and life.

Encourage them to trust that they've done the simple things savagely well.

Encourage them towards an individualized goal, repeated and refined towards trustworthy excellence.

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Trainees will fail to respond, they'll continue to react.

Awareness Level	Trainees…	Athletes…	Training Cues
7. Mastery	Fails to respond. Continues to react.	Makes use of adapted reflexes and instincts (of animal level) with keen awareness developed through aspiration, individually directed discipline and reflection guided evolution.	You've prepared to perform. You've done the simple things savagely well. Go.

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