

# **Meaning Conference Summit Symposium on From Suffering to Flourishing - Introduction**

Dr. Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D., C.Psych

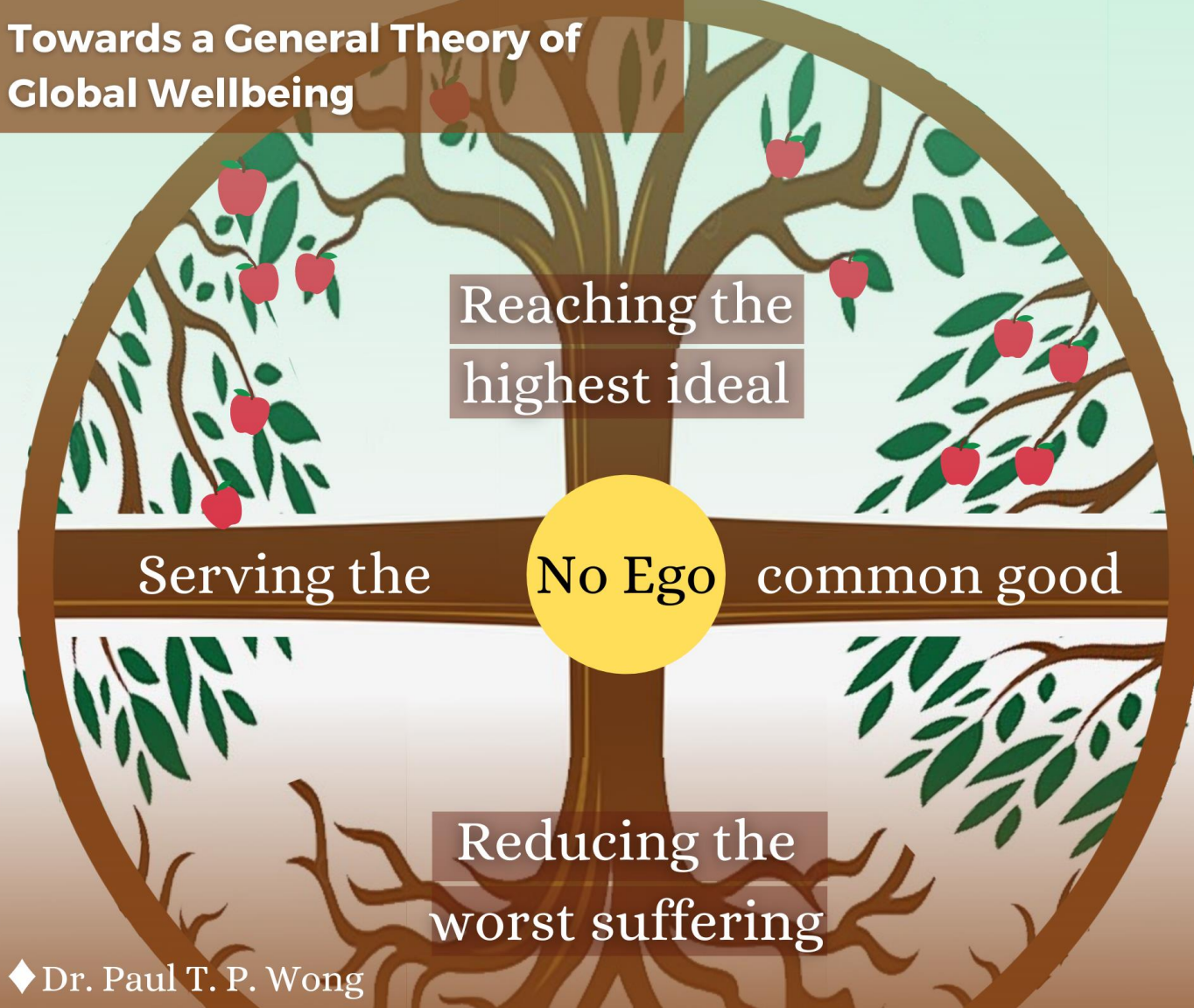
# Sources of Suffering

	Internal	External
Controllable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Natural Consequences to bad decisions and behaviours</li><li>• How to respond to negative emotions, thoughts, and events</li><li>• Unrealistic expectations</li><li>• Bad habits and attitudes</li><li>• Character defects</li><li>• Overthinking</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoiding toxic people and situations</li><li>• Avoiding unnecessary danger.</li><li>• Some viruses</li></ul>
Uncontrollable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Childhood aversive experiences</li><li>• Genetic causes</li><li>• Aging</li><li>• Death and dying</li><li>• Losses</li><li>• Separations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Natural disasters</li><li>• Wars</li><li>• Discrimination</li><li>• Unknown viruses and toxins</li><li>• Bad government</li><li>• Economic recession</li><li>• Social injustice</li></ul>

## **Five steps to transform suffering into flourishing**

1. Face suffering and learn to embrace it as your forgotten twin.
2. Discover meaning and lessons from your painful experiences.
3. Channel all your negative energy and insights from suffering to fertilize the soil for growth.
4. Transcend your small self and connect with something greater.
5. Produce your unique fruits to feed others.

# Towards a General Theory of Global Wellbeing



◆ Dr. Paul T. P. Wong

Through levels of processing, at the deepest level, all disciplines reach the same conclusion. Through the dialectical process of self-transcendence, at the highest level, all people can reach the same awe-inspiring mystery. Through selfless sacrifice, we can serve the greatest number of people. Through holistic integrative research, we can best approximate the ultimate truth of wellbeing.

## **Self-transcendence can reduce suffering in several ways**

- 1) Losing oneself in the emotion of awe.
- 2) Losing oneself in serving others.
- 3) Losing oneself in worshipping God or a Higher Power.
- 4) Losing oneself in nature.
- 5) Losing oneself in striving towards a higher purpose or the greater good.
- 6) Losing oneself in developing an altruistic character.