Spiral Dynamics
the eight-stage spiral of development

Second Tier “Being” valueMEMES

TURQUOISE Holistic MEME – starting 30 years ago
Basic theme: Experience the wholeness of existence through mind and spirit
• The world is a single, dynamic organism with its own collective mind
• Self is both distinct and a blended part of a larger, compassionate whole
• Everything connects to everything else in ecological alignments
• Energy and information permeate the Earth’s total environment
• Holistic, intuitive thinking and cooperative actions are to be expected

YELLOW Integrative MEME – starting 50 years ago
Basic theme: Live fully and responsibly as what you are and learn to become
• Life is a kaleidoscope of natural hierarchies, systems, and forms
• The magnificence of existence is valued over material possessions
• Flexibility, spontaneity, and functionality have the highest priority
• Differences can be integrated into interdependent, natural flows
• Understands that chaos and change are natural

“What I am proposing is that the psychology of the mature human being is an unfolding, emergent, oscillating, spiraling process, marked by progressive subordination of older, lower-order behavior systems to newer, higher-order systems

First Tier “Subsistence” valueMEMES

GREEN Communitarian/Egalitarian MEME – starting 150 years ago
Basic theme: Seek peace within the inner self and explore, with others, the caring dimensions of community
• The human spirit must be freed from greed, dogma, and divisiveness
• Feelings, sensitivity, and caring supersede cold rationality
• Spreads the Earth’s resources and opportunities equally among all
• Reaches decisions through reconciliation and consensual processes
• Refreshes spirituality, brings harmony, and enriches human development

ORANGE Achievist/Strategic MEME – starting 300 years ago
Basic theme: Act in your own self-interest by playing the game to win
• Change and advancement are inherent within the scheme of things
• Progresses by learning nature’s secrets and seeking out best solutions
• Manipulates Earth’s resources to create and spread the abundant good life
• Optimistic, risk-taking, and self-reliant people deserve success
• Societies prosper through strategy, technology, and competitiveness

BLUE Purposeful/Authoritarian MEME – starting 5,000 years ago
Basic theme: Life has meaning, direction, and purpose with predetermined outcomes
• Use sacrifices self to the transcendent Cause, Truth, or righteous Pathway
• The Order enforces a code of conduct based on eternal, absolute principles
• Righteous living produces stability now and guarantees future reward
• Impulsivity is controlled through guilt; everybody has their proper place
• Laws, regulations, and discipline build character and moral fiber

RED Impulsive/Egocentric MEME – starting 10,000 years ago
Basic theme: Be what you are and do what you want, regardless
• The world is a jungle full of threats and predators
• Breaks free from any domination or constraint to please self as self desires
• Stands tall, expects attention, demands respect, and calls the shots
• Enjoys self to the fullest right now without guilt or remorse
• Conquers, out-flows, and dominates other aggressive characters

PURPLE Magical/Animist MEME – starting 50,000 years ago
Basic theme: Keep the spirits happy and the tribe’s nest warm and safe
• Obey the desires of the spirit being and mystical signs
• Shows allegiance to chief, elders, ancestors, and the clan
• Individual subsumed in group
• Preserves sacred objects, places, events, and memories
• Observes rites of passage, seasonal cycles, and tribal customs

BEIGE Instinctive/Survivalist MEME – starting 100,000 years ago
Basic theme: Do what you must just to stay alive
• Uses instincts and habits just to survive
• Distinct self is barely awakened or sustained
• Food, water, warmth, sex, and safety have priority
• Forms into survival bands to perpetuate life
• Lives “off the land” much as other animals

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>vMEMEs</th>
<th>BEST SOURCE</th>
<th>BEST-FIT APPROACH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEIGE</td>
<td>Caretaker Provider</td>
<td>Biologic senses – touch, taste, smell, see, hear Physical contact rather than symbols</td>
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<tr>
<td>PURPLE</td>
<td>Caring chieftain or shaman Counsel from revered elders from within the tribe/clan group Signals and omens from spirit realm Words of ancestors and their ways Collective sense of supportive peers</td>
<td>Traditional rites, rituals, ceremonies Includes mystical elements and superstition Appeals to extended family, harmony, and safety Recognizes blood-bonds, the folk, group Familiar metaphors, drawings, emblems Minimal reliance on written language</td>
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<tr>
<td>RED</td>
<td>Person with recognized power Straight-talking Big Boss with something to offer Respected, revered, feared other Celebrated “idol” with reputation Someone of proven trustworthiness</td>
<td>Demonstrate “What’s in it for me now?” “Immediate gratification if…” Challenges and appeals to machismo/strength Heroic status and legendary perspective Flashy, unambiguous, reality-based, strong Simple language and fiery images/graphics</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLUE</td>
<td>Rightful proper kind of authority Higher position in the One True Way Down the chain-of-command According to the book’s rules and regulations Person with position, power, and rank In compliance to tradition and precedent As directed by divinely ordained power</td>
<td>Duty, honor, country; images of discipline Self-sacrifice for higher cause and purpose Appeal to traditions, laws, and established norms Use class consciousness, knowing one’s place Propriety, righteousness, and responsibilities Insure future rewards and delayed gratification Assuage guilt with correct consequences</td>
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<td>ORANGE</td>
<td>One’s own right-thinking mind Successful mentors and models Credible professionals and “gurus” Prosperous, successful, elite contacts Advantageous to the self-image Resulting from own observations Tried-and-true experience, experiment</td>
<td>Appeal to competitive advantage and leverage Success motivations and achieving abundance Bigger, better, newer, faster, more popular Citations of experts and selected authorities Experimental data and tried-and-true experience Profit, productivity, quality, results, winning Demonstrate as best of several options</td>
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<tr>
<td>GREEN</td>
<td>Consensual communitarian norms Enlightened friend/colleague Outcome of participation and sharing Result of enlightenment, becoming Observation of events here-and-now Responsive to affect/feeling/emotions Relative to situation and people at hand</td>
<td>Enhance belonging, sharing, group harmony Sensitive to human issues and care for others Expand awareness and understanding of inner self Symbols of equity, humanity, and bonding Gentle language along with nature imagery Build trust, openness, exploration, passages Real people and authentic emotional displays</td>
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<tr>
<td>YELLOW</td>
<td>Any useful information source May adopt BEIGE through GREEN Competent, more knowing person/entity Relevant, more-functional data Merge normal sources and hunches Individualized explorations/discoveries</td>
<td>Interactive, relevant media; self-accessible Functional “lean” information without fluff The facts, the feelings, and the instincts Big picture, total systems, integrations Connect data across fields for holistic view Self-connecting to others and systems successfully</td>
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<tr>
<td>TURQUOISE</td>
<td>Experience of discovery Learning in communal network Holistic conception of multiple realities Any being in the TURQUOISE sphere Knowing systems across the planet Reawakened deep-brain capacities Reliance on holistic consciousness</td>
<td>Multidimensional chunks of insight Use of multi-tiered consciousness Renewed spirituality and sacrifice to whole Ecological interdependency and connections Macro (global) solutions to macro problems Community beyond nationalities or partisanship High-tech and high-touch experiential</td>
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Spiral Dynamics concepts and graphics, especially as expressed in religion and spirituality, used in collaboration with Don Edward Beck, Spiral Dynamics Group, Box 797, Denton, Texas 76201. Contact DrBeck@attglobal.net.