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 as man’s existential problems change.”
Dr. Clare Graves

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 life
• 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 consensus 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

REDAmpulsive/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-foxes, and dominates other aggressive characters

BEIGE Instinctive/Survivalistic 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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