

Spiral Dynamics: Levels of Cultural Psychological Existence

	Level	Color	Name	Period	Attributes	Where Seen	% Pop.	% Power	Upside (Healthy Meme)	Downside (Mean Meme)
First-Tier	1	Beige	Instinctual-Survivalistic	100K B.C. +	Basic Theme: <i>Do what you must just to stay alive.</i> Basic survival: food, water, warmth, sex & safety have priority. Uses habits & instincts just to survive. Form into survival bands to perpetuate life.	1st human societies, newborn infants, senile elderly, late-stage Alzheimer's victims, mentally ill street people, starving masses, shell shock	0.1%	0%		
	2	Purple	Magical-Animistic	50K B.C. +	Basic Theme: <i>Keep the spirits happy and the tribe's nest warm and safe.</i> Thinking is animistic; magical spirits, good & bad, swarm the earth leaving blessings, curses, and spells which determine events. <u>Forms into ethnic tribes</u> . The spirits exist in ancestors and bond the tribe. Kinship & lineage establish political links. Sounds "holistic" but is actually atomistic: "there is a name for each bend in the river, but no name for the river."	Belief in voodoo-like curses, blood oaths, ancient grudges, good luck charms, family rituals, magical ethnic beliefs and superstitions; strong in <u>3rd-world settings, gangs, athletic teams, and corporate "tribes"</u> .	10%	1%		Response to 2nd-Tier: puts a hex on it.
	3	Red	Impulsive-Egocentric (Power Gods)	7K B.C. +	Basic Theme: <i>Be what you are and do what you want, regardless.</i> 1st emergence of a self distinct from the tribe; powerful, impulsive, egocentric, heroic. Magical mythic spirits, dragons, beasts, and powerful people. Archetypal gods and goddesses, powerful beings, forces to be reckoned with, both good & bad. Feudal lords protect underlings in exchange for obedience and labor. <u>The basis of feudal empires--power &amp; glory.</u> The world is a jungle full of threats & predators. Conquers, out-foxes, and dominates; enjoy self to the fullest without regret or remorse; be here now.	The "terrible twos", rebellious youth, frontier mentalities, feudal kingdoms, epic heroes, James Bond villains, gang leaders, soldiers of fortune, New-Age narcissism, wild rock stars, Atilla the Hun, Lord of the Flies.	20%	5%	Dispatch.	Response to 2nd-Tier: ignores 2nd-tier altogether.
	4	Blue	Purposeful-Authoritarian (Mythic Order)	3K B.C. +	Basic Theme: <i>Life has meaning, direction, and purpose with predetermined outcomes.</i> A righteous Order enforces a code of conduct based on absolutist and unvarying principles of "right" & "wrong". Violating the code or rules has severe, perhaps everlasting repercussions. Following the code yields rewards for the faithful. <u>Basis of ancient nations</u> . Rigid social hierarchies; <u>paternalistic</u> ; one right way & only one right way to think about everything. Law & order; impulsivity controlled through guilt; concrete-literal & fundamentalist belief; obedience to the rule of Order; <u>strongly conventional &amp; conformist</u> . Often "religious" or "mythic", but can be secular or atheistic Order or Mission.	Puritan America, Confucian China, Dickensian England, Singapore discipline, totalitarianism, codes of chivalry & honor, charitable good deeds, <u>religious fundamentalism</u> (eg, Christian & Islamic), Boy & Girl Scouts, "moral majority," <u>patriotism</u> .	40%	30%	Conformity produces common languages, standards (currency, weights & measures).	Response to 2nd-Tier: outraged at what it sees as attempts to unseat its given Order.  Big 3 is fused (I, We, It).
	5	Orange	Achievist-Strategic (Scientific Achievement)	1500 A.D. +	Basic Theme: <i>Act in your own self-interest by playing the game to win.</i> At this wave, the self "escapes" from the "herd mentality" of blue, and seeks truth and meaning in individualistic terms--hypothetico-deductive, experimental, objective, mechanistic, operational--"scientific" in the typical sense. The world is a rational and well-oiled machine with natural laws that can be learned, mastered, and manipulated for one's own purposes. <u>Highly achievement oriented</u> , especially (in America) toward <u>materialistic gains</u> . The laws of science rule politics, the economy, and human events. The world is a chess-board on which games are played as winners gain pre-eminence and perks over losers. Marketplace alliances; manipulate earth's resources for one's strategic gains. <u>Basis of corporate states</u> .	The Enlightenment, Ayn Rand's <i>Atlas Shrugged</i> , <u>Wall Street</u> , emerging middle classes around the world, cosmetics industry, trophy hunting, colonialism, the Cold War, fashion industry, <u>materialism</u> , secular humanism, liberal self-interest.	30%	50%	Spirit of Humanism, Learning & Scientific inquiry freed society from ignorance (eg, Earth is flat) and superstition (eg, 'evil spirits' cause illness).  Big 3 is unfused (I, We, It).	Response to 2nd-Tier: aggressively reductionistic; attempts to reduce all interior stages to objective neuronal fireworks.
	6	Green	Communitarian-Egalitarian (Sensitive Self)	1850 A.D. +	Basic Theme: <i>Seek peace within the inner self and explore, with others, the caring dimensions of community.</i> Communitarian, human bonding, ecological sensitivity, networking. The human spirit must be freed from greed, dogma & divisiveness; <u>feelings &amp; caring</u> supersede cold rationality; cherishing of the earth, Gaia, life. Against hierarchy; establishes lateral bonding & linking. Permeable self, relational self, group intermeshing. Emphasis on dialogue, relationships. <u>Basis of value communities</u> (eg, freely chosen affiliations based on shared sentiments). Reaches decisions through reconciliation & consensus. Refresh spirituality, bring harmony, enrich human potential. Strongly egalitarian, anti-hierarchy, pluralistic values, social construction of reality, diversity, multiculturalism, relativistic value systems; this world view is often called <u>pluralistic relativism</u> . Subjective, nonlinear thinking; shows a greater degree of affective warmth, sensitivity, and caring, for earth and all its inhabitants.	Deep ecology, post modernism, Netherlands idealism, Rogerian counseling, Canadian Health care, humanistic psychology, liberation theology, cooperative inquire, World Council of Churches, Greenpeace, animal rights, ecofeminism, post-colonialism, politically correct, diversity movements, human rights issues.  Strongly egalitarian, anti-hierarchy, pluralistic values,	10% (world) 20% (U.S.)	15%	1) Initiatives in civil rights & environmental protection. 2) Positive critiques of conventional religious (blue) & scientific (orange) memes, with their often exclusionary, patriarchal, sexist & colonialistic agendas. 3) Makes 1st-Tier spiral more sensitive & more caring; prepares the leap to 2nd-Tier.	1) Response to 2nd-Tier: accuses 2nd-tier consciousness of being authoritarian, rigidly hierarchical, patriarchal, marginalizing, oppressive, racist & sexist ('Green' literally cannot see 'Yellow'; appears 'Red', mean, arrogant). 2) Interminable "processing" & incapacity to reach decisions. 3) lack of humor. ;-)
Second-Tier	7	Yellow	Integrative	1950s +	Basic Theme: <i>Live fully and responsibly as what you are and learn to become.</i> Life is a kaleidoscope of natural hierarchies (holarchies), systems & form. The magnificence of existence is valued over material possessions. Flexibility, spontaneity & functionality have the highest priority. Differences & pluralities can be integrated into interdependent, natural flows. Egalitarianism is complemented with natural degrees of ranking & excellence. Knowledge & competency should supersede power, status, or group sensitivity. Understands that chaos and change are natural. Good governance facilitates the emergence of entities through the levels of increasing complexity (nested Hierarchy).	'New Thought', Modern Metaphysical Spirituality (MMS) or Gnostic organizations (eg, Science of Mind, Unity Church, Novus Spiritus, Hay House publications); Integral Institute (Ken Wilber, founder); Spiritual Centers (eg, Sedona, AZ). Alternative Medicine; Transcendentalism; Hopi Nation; Indigo Children; New Age Movement (not always, sometimes Red or Green).	1%	5%	Big 3 is integrated (I, We, It).	
	8	Turquoise	Holistic	1970s +	Basic Theme: <i>Experience the wholeness of existence through mind and spirit.</i> Universal holistic system, holons/waves of integrative energies; unites feeling with knowledge, multiple levels interwoven into one conscious system. Universal order, but in a living, conscious fashion, not based on external rules (blue) or group bonds (green). A "grand unification" is possible (ie, Theory of Everything). Sometimes involves the emergence of a new spirituality as a meshwork of all existence. Turquoise thinking uses the entire Spiral; sees multiple levels of interaction; detects harmonics, the mystical forces, and the pervasive flow-states that permeate any organization.		0.1%	1%		