

Spiral Dynamics Integral (SD_i)

- it's Core Principles

A Spiral Compass of Unfolding Consciousness

Rosemary Wilkie, has a long association with SunDial House and is a member of the Group for Creative Meditation. She is an ardent explorer into the field of Spiral Dynamics. She has and is using her studies of the Ageless Wisdom Teachings and her psychosynthesis counselling skills to make this exciting, complex societal psychology accessible and understandable.

Our joint focus now is on The Law of Group Endeavour. The recent G20 talks did not, could not, solve the transform the world economy overnight, though some very useful measures were agreed, notably to ensure funding for the poorest nations, and more co-operation and international supervision of financial institutions. Of huge significance is the willingness of this expanded group of influential nations to meet and talk and agree to work together for a common purpose; clearly manifesting the laws and principles of Right Relations, Goodwill and Group Endeavour.

Grounding these is crucial now to our long term survival. History is full of turbulence, diaspora and profound changes which occasionally erupt into epochal change such as the agricultural and industrial revolutions. We are now experiencing another, a revolution in consciousness, and SD_i is a precious guide, a silken thread to hold on to as we navigate our way through the current maze of chaos, uncertainty, hope and fear.

The elegant form of the spiral connects everything to everything else. It is universal, found everywhere from the double helix of the DNA molecule and tiny seashells to giant distant galaxies. SD_i is about the forces inside human spirals that coil through individual minds, lift organisations to new levels and drive societies to evolve. According to Ralph Aldo Emerson, 'We wake and find ourselves on a stair; there are stairs below us which we seem to have ascended, there are stairs above us which go out of sight.'

In the second article we looked at the peak expression of the vMememes. (These are Value Mememes, not the virus-like mememes of ultra-Darwinism). Movement within and between vMememes is complex, and in the next article we will look at *change*. But first we need to understand the core principles underlying the teachings:

- 1 **Human nature is not fixed.** Professor Graves said, 'It is a *process* marked by the progressive subordination of older behavioural systems to newer, higher order systems.'
In other words we have the capacity to upgrade or re-calibrate ourselves in response to changing life conditions, without losing touch with the older ways of being. Indeed we may be at different levels in our work, family or sporting life.

2 **vMemes are a product of the interaction of our nervous systems with our Life Conditions:** which have four main aspects: Times (in some places changing little, but often viewed as decades in the West), Place (physical conditions, natural and man-made), Problems (needs and fears of the group), and Circumstances (social role, educational level, gender, race, appearance, connections). When these life conditions change, vMemes may emerge, surge, regress or fade in response. When a new system or level is activated, we have the potential to change our psychology and rules for living to adapt to the new conditions.

3 **The vMemes zig-zag between expressive and self-sacrificing themes.** The warm colours **Beige**, **Red**, **Orange** and **Yellow** represent self-expression (focusing on the outside world to master or change it, and, in the First Tier, producing hierarchies). The cool colours **Purple**, **Blue**, **Green** and **Turquoise** are sacrificial (surrendering self-interest for the good of the communal/collective whole).

The ebb and flow of spiritual law manifests in these primary swings between I/We; autonomy/position in group; reliance on external input/trusting internal judgement; exploring and mastering outer world/ exploring and coming to peace with our inner world.

4 **vMemes emerge along the Spiral in a wave-like fashion.** They may seem to be sudden, but they come in like a wave to a beach, overlapping the receding wave of the previous system. They have an entering phase of preparation and excitement, then a peak phase of apparent stability, and an exiting period of disintegration as problems outstrip the capacity to deal with them. During a period such as we are experiencing now, the mass of people and the media focus on what is apparently going wrong, while the new grows strongly, drawing on untapped potential - mostly unseen but sometimes attacked by the previous system - while it prepares to 'suddenly' burst on the scene.

5 **Each new vMeme builds on the foundation of those which went before,** adding new levels of complexity of thinking, more diversity of organisational forms, more alternative ways of doing things, and more freedom in relationships. It is impossible to jump to a vMeme we think we would prefer. The baby is in **Beige**, the toddler in **Purple**, bonding to its family. The two-year old reaches **Red** and demands to be heard. School years pass mostly in **Blue**, then we have to take responsibility for our lives and make a living in **Orange** before we are ready for **Green**. For example every spiritual teacher is badgered by penniless young hopefuls longing for **Green**, but far from ready. When circumstances deprive an individual of a healthy experience of a vMeme, he or she compensates. For example, an unloved child, lacking **Purple** family bonding and loyalty, may seek these in a **Red** street gang.

6 **A 'meme stack' is a cross-section of a human spiral,** showing a profile of the relative strength of each layer nested in the stack. We think about many different things, so may well think in different

ways in various areas of our lives. Participating in competitive sport activates our **Red**, meditating our **Green**, a family celebration our **Purple**. Observing the emergence of these vMememes in oneself and others is a good way to absorb these teachings, always remembering that vMememes are *not* personality types.

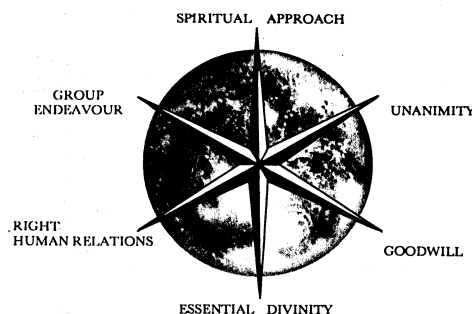
- 7 **vMememes cluster in groups of six.** Beige, **Purple**, **Red**, **Blue**, **Orange** and **Green** constitute the First Tier, where no-one can fully understand or appreciate the other world views in that Tier. The Second Tier, beginning with **Yellow**, constitutes a transformation, a genuine quantum leap, a momentous jump in consciousness. Many great thinkers have remarked on the importance of this shift, and I believe it corresponds to an increasing soul-infusion of the personality – a gradual earned *at-one-ing*.

SDi demonstrates clearly how consciousness unfolds and realises itself, embracing when went before, transcending and including it. The psychological evidence for the existence of these stages in human minds is overwhelming. For the philosophers and academics among you, **Beige** corresponds to Archaic Consciousness, **Purple** to Tribal, **Red** to Warrior, **Blue** to Traditional, **Orange** to modernist, **Green** to postmodern, and **Yellow** to Integral consciousness. As Ken Wilber says, for the first time we can vividly grasp the entire spectrum of development and understand that each wave is crucially important for the health of the overall Spiral.

SDi asks always, 'From what to what?' In 1974, Professor Graves foresaw three possibilities:

- a massive regression to our stone-age beginnings if we fail to stabilise our weapons and endangered resources
- a version of Orwell's *1984*, embodied in **Blue/Orange/Green** tyrannical, manipulative government with glossed over communitarian overtones.
- The emergence of a Second Tier approach to business and society, equipped to act locally and plan globally while acting globally and planning locally at the same time.

We are the first generation *taking conscious control* of human evolution. The choice is ours.



GLOSSARY

^VMEME - ^VMEME reflects a world view, a valuing system, a level of psychological existence, a belief structure, an organising principle, a way of thinking or a mode of adjustment. It represents, firstly then, a core intelligence that forms systems and directs human behaviour. Secondly, it impacts upon all life choices as a decision-making framework. Thirdly, each ^VMEME can manifest itself in both healthy and unhealthy forms. Fourthly, such a ^VMEME is a discrete structure for thinking, not just a set of ideas, values or cause. Fifthly, it can brighten and dim as the Life Conditions (consisting of historic Times, geographic Place, existential Problems, and societal Circumstances) change.