

Introduction - Emerging New Worldviews

By Paul M. Helfrich

The following is an excerpt from my forthcoming book, *Integral Conscious Creation*, Part 1. The excerpt introduces a systems theory that describes *the science of belief systems* on individual, institutional, and societal levels. It's based on forty-plus years of research done by American psychologists Clare Graves, Don Beck, and Christopher Cowan. So it is not just idle speculation. The basic idea is that belief, belief systems, and worldviews are created as we develop through stages mapped by the cognitive psychologists (Freud, Jung, Piaget, Maslow, Kohlberg, Kegan, and many more).

So we're dealing with belief (meme) as it relates to belief systems (memes) as they relate to entire worldviews (values-memes) in individuals, institutions, and societies as they change-in-time.

The result is what I call worldview dynamics, derived from what Graves, Beck, and Cowan call spiral dynamics, because it maps to Jane Roberts' material on belief systems and worldviews. It's a very useful, if still incomplete, roadmap of the mental contents of the collective psyche as it "evolves."

It provides no guarantees that individuals, institutions, or societies will reach subsequent stages, or once reached, stay there. It all depends on what Graves and Beck call Life Conditions, which are the integral impact of changing intentional, behavioral, cultural, and social factors. There are also three sub-stages that occur at each "level": entering, peak, and exiting. Still, it's not a stepladder process because previous stages still remain nested and can reanimate when things change.

The theory shows how issues like racialism, gender, creed, or intelligence become secondary in terms of human diversity. In other words, these factors all traverse the worldview "spiral" but are more clearly seen in the context of "levels" of increasing cognitive complexity. For example, it's not about black, red, yellow, or white people being different or better, as much as what level of complexity any individual, institution, or society is capable of dealing with. So the "spiral" mirrors all races, genders, creeds, and intelligences as they unfold in time. And that means change, not fixed absolutes.

Each major worldview comes with its own benefits and challenges, too. It's not all a bed of roses or some type of utopian scheme that implies one worldview is better or worse, or final, just that they deal with increasing types of subtlety, diversity, and complexity. The problems created at one level cannot be solved by that level alone, and thus prod the emergence of new thinking and solutions that continually produce new worldviews. This is really a synopsis of human "evolution" to date.

The following, therefore, serves only as guideposts, not hard and fast laws. So take it with a grain of salt. It's only intended to ballpark us. The psyche is very dynamic and ultimately impossible to lock in a box or a theory.

Now, the key thing to keep in mind as you work through this is how it applies to individual, institutional, and societal scales as they change-in-time. This multidimensional matrix helps us begin to see why people are so diverse and so similar, and yet, why there is so much conflict between various institutional and societal worldviews. For the first time, we can see an outline of the innate forces of the mass psyche at work as the collective "evolves" to deal with increasing complexity.

Worldview Dynamics

There's one last point to consider before we dig into the spiral model itself: it's crucial to realize that the words we use to describe the stages that societal worldviews evolve through don't have the precision of math. They occur within a linguistic context that's intermeshed within our own individual worldviews. So just because Graves uses the word "magical" below *in a different context* from the way Seth uses it in *the magical approach*, that is no excuse to dismiss the gem of truth in Graves theory. In other words, as we explore various theories it's of critical importance begin to *recognize the subtext because words are always used in different contexts and contexts within contexts*.

Moving on, then, stages 1-6 are called "first tier" and stages 7-8 are "second tier." They unfold according to individual factors and the results reflect the often sporadic, non-sequential, and spontaneous nature of personal and collective reality. Each major stage has its own general Life Conditions that, in turn, create new challenges that spur the development of subsequent stages of *increasing complexity* to handle previous Life Conditions. Also, there is no guarantee that subsequent stages will emerge at all.

Each major stage, then, is characterized by a societal worldview with specific belief systems:

"First Tier" ¹

1. **BEIGE:** Survival Sense / Archaic = as natural instincts and reflexes direct, automatic existence, sharpen instincts and innate senses.



- Automatic, autistic.
- Uses instincts and habits just to survive.
- Little awareness of self as a distinct being (primary narcissism).
- Food, water, warmth, sex, and safety have priority.
- Forms survival clans to perpetuate life.
- Lives "off the land" much as other animals.

Where seen: the first peoples, newborn infants, senile elderly, late-stage Alzheimer's patients, mentally ill street people, starving masses, bad drug trips, and 'shell shock.' Described in anthropological fiction like Jean Auel's *Clan of the Cave Bear*, Ma-ah in the opening of *The Education of Oversoul Seven*.

Core Belief Systems: Do what you must to stay alive: a natural milieu where humans rely on instincts to survive.

Self Identity: Impulsive, egocentric.

How Old? Approximately 1,000,000 years (since the emergence of homo sapiens).

Who? Approximately 0.1% of the adult population, 0% of the power.

Theme Song: Stayin' Alive – The Bee Gees

2. **PURPLE:** Kin Spirits / Animistic/magical = according to tradition and ritual ways of group; tribal; animistic; seek harmony and safety in a mysterious world.



- Obey the desires of spirit beings and mystical signs.
- Show allegiance to chief, elders, ancestors and the clan.
- Individual subsumed in a group, basis of ethnic tribes.
- Preserve sacred objects, places, events, and memories.
- Observe rites of passage, seasonal cycles, and tribal customs.

Where seen: Belief in guardian angels and Voodoo-like curses, blood oaths, ancient grudges, chanting and trance dancing, good luck charms, family rituals, and mystical ethnic beliefs and superstitions. Strong in Third-World settings, gangs, athletic teams, and corporate ‘tribes,’ and “The Charmed Life” from *The Further Education of Oversoul Seven*.

Core Belief Systems: Keep the spirits happy and the tribe’s nest warm and safe: a magical place alive with spirit beings and mystical signs.

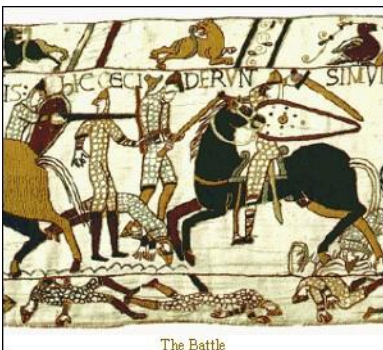
Self Identity: Egocentric.

How Old? Approximately 50,000 years.

Who? Approximately 10% of the population, 1% of the power.

Theme Song: “We Are Family” – Sister Sledge

3. **RED:** Power Gods = asserting self for dominance, conquest, and power: exploitive; express impulsively, break free, be strong.



- 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.
- Live for the moment, be here now.
- Cause of all failures and difficulties are outside of self (“It’s not my fault.”).
- Conquers, out-foxes, and dominates other aggressive characters.
- Grandiose/impulsive self, omnipotent regard.
- Basis of strong rulers and feudal empires.
- The world is full of powerful, God-like figures, Zeus atop Mount Olympus.

Where seen: The Terrible Twos, rebellious youth, frontier mentalities, feudal kingdoms, James Bond villains, epic heroes, soldiers of fortune, 'Papa' Picasso, wild rock stars, Atilla the Hun William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, and Gregory Diggs in *Oversoul Seven and the Museum of Time*.

Core Belief Systems: Be what you are and do what you want, regardless: a jungle where the strongest and most cunning survive.

Self Identity: Egocentric.

How Old? Approximately 10,000 years.

Who? Approximately 20% percent of the population, 5% of the power.

Theme Song: "Eye of the Tiger" – Survivor

4. **BLUE:** Truth Force / Mythic order = obedience as higher authority and rules direct; conformist, guilt-ridden: absolutistic; find purpose, bring order, insure future.



- One 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.
- Basis of ancient nations.

Where seen: Rev. Billy Graham, Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*, Puritan America, Confucian China, Hassidic Judaism, Dickensian England, Singapore discipline, codes of chivalry and honor, charitable good deeds, the Salvation Army, Islamic fundamentalism, Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon, Boy and Girl Scouts, patriotism, and Elgren and Avona Hosentauf in *The Further Education of Oversoul Seven*.

Core Belief Systems: Life has meaning, direction, and purpose with predetermined outcomes: an ordered existence under the control of the ultimate truth.

Self Identity: Conformist, ethnocentric.

How Old? Approximately 3,000 years.

Who? Approximately 40% of the population, 30% of the power.

Theme Song: "Just One Way" – Kerry Livgren

5. **ORANGE:** Strive Drive / Scientific/rational = pragmatically achieve results and get ahead; test options; maneuver: multiplistic; analyze and strategize to prosper.



- Change and advancement are inherent within the scheme of things.
 - Progress by learning nature’s secrets and seeking out best solutions.
 - Manipulate Earth’s resources to create and spread the abundant good life.
 - Optimistic, risk-taking, and self-reliant people deserve their success.
 - Societies prosper through strategy, technology, and competitiveness. Play to win.
- Seek out “the good life” and material abundance.
 - Enhance living through science and technology.
 - Authority lies with experience and experiments, not dogma.
 - Utilitarian, pragmatic, results-oriented.
 - Basis of corporate states.

Where seen: The Enlightenment, ‘success’ ministries, Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged*, Wall Street, Rodeo Drive, The Riviera, emerging middle classes, the cosmetics industry, trophy hunting, Chambers of Commerce, colonialism, TV infomercials, the Cold War, DeBeers diamond cartel, breast implants, fashion, J.R. Ewing and *Dallas*, and Dr. George Brainbridge III in *Oversoul Seven and the Museum of Time*.

Core Belief Systems: Act in your own self-interest by playing to win the game: a marketplace full of possibilities and opportunities.

Self Identity: Conscientious, ethnocentric, also worldcentric.

How Old? Approximately 300 years.

Who? Approximately 30% of the population, 50% of the power.

Theme Song: “My Way” – Frank Sinatra

6. **GREEN:** The Sensitive Self / Pluralistic = respond to human needs; affiliative; situational; consensual; fluid; relativistic; explore inner self, equalize others.



- The human spirit must be freed from greed, dogma, and divisiveness.
- Feelings, sensitivity, and caring supersede cold rationality.
- Spread the Earth’s resources and opportunities equally among all.

- Reach decisions through reconciliation and consensus processes.
- Refresh spirituality, bring harmony, and enrich human development.
- Promote a sense of community and caring.
- Embrace diversity, deconstruction, multiculturalism, gender equity, children's rights, and animal welfare.
- All values are pluralistic and relative, so don't marginalize anybody.
- Do away with all hierarchies; they are oppressive.
- Basis of value communities, affinity groups.

Where seen: John Lennon's music, Netherlands' idealism, Rogerian counseling, liberation theology, Doctors without Borders, Canadian health care, ACLU, World Council of Churches, sensitivity training, Boulder (Colorado), GreenPeace, Jimmy Carter, Dustin Hoffman in *The Graduate*, animal rights, deep ecology, Minneapolis-St. Paul social services, the music of Bruce Coburn, Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Company, Ram-Ram in *The Further Education of Oversoul Seven*.

Core Belief Systems: Seek peace within the inner self and explore, with others, the caring dimensions of community: a human habitat in which we share life's experiences.

Self Identity: Individualistic, worldcentric.

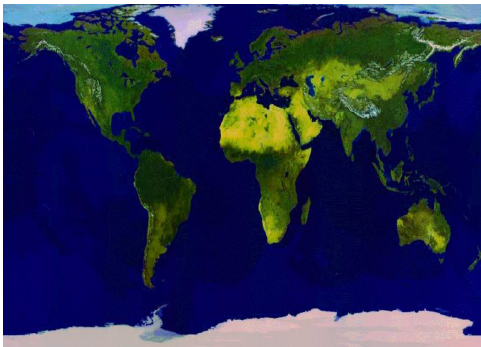
How Old? Approximately 100 years.

Who? Approximately 10% of the population, 15% of the power.

Theme Song: "Everyday People" – Sly & The Family Stone

"Second Tier"

7. **YELLOW:** Flex Flow / Integral = functional; interdependent; existential; flexible; questioning; accepting: systemic; integrate and align systems.



- Life is a kaleidoscope of natural hierarchies, systems, and forms.
 - Understands that each "first tier" worldview is important.
 - The magnificence of existence is valued over material possessions.
 - Grasps big pictures, global flows, universal meshworks.
 - Flexibility, spontaneity, and functionality have the highest priority.
- Knowledge and competency should supersede rank, power, and status.
 - Differences can be integrated into interdependent, natural flows.
 - Understand that chaos and change are natural.

- Discovers personal freedom without harm to others or excesses of self-interest.
- Works for both the enjoyment of self and the good of the entire “spiral of development.”
- Basis of integral commons.

Where seen: Carl Sagan’s astronomy, Peter Senge’s organizations, Stephen Hawking’s *Brief History of Time*, W. Edwards Deming’s objectives, Paul Newman’s version of stardom, chaos theory, appropriate technology, eco-industrial parks (using each other’s outflows as raw materials), early episodes of TV’s *Northern Exposure*, Fel-Pro, Inc. (a gasket Manufacturer), Fred Alan Wolf’s ‘new physics,’ Deepak Chopra’s *Ageless Body*, and Proteus in *The Education of Oversoul Seven*.

Core Belief Systems: Live fully and responsibly as what you are and learn to become: a chaotic organism forged by differences and change.

Self Identity: Autonomous, worldcentric.

How Old? Approximately 50 years (avant garde, leading edge).

Who? Approximately 1% of the population, 5% of the power.

Theme Song: “Yellow Submarine” – The Beatles

8. **TURQUOISE:** Global View / Holistic = experiential; transpersonal (paranormal); collective consciousness; collaborative; interconnected; synergize and macromanage.



- 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.

Where seen: Theories of David Bohm, McLuhan’s ‘global village,’ Gregory Stock’s *Metaman*, Rupert Sheldrake and morphic fields, Gandhi’s ideas of pluralistic harmony, Ken Wilber’s ‘Spectrum of Consciousness,’ James Lovelock’s ‘Gaia hypothesis,’ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s ‘noosphere,’ the work of Jane Roberts.

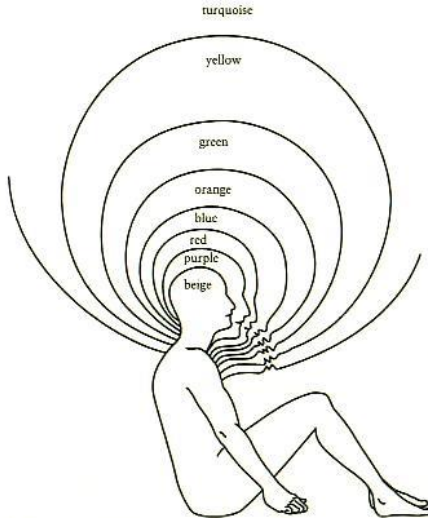
Core Belief Systems: Experience the wholeness of existence through mind and spirit: an elegantly balanced system of interlocking forces.

Self Identity: Autonomous, worldcentric.

How Old? Approximately 30 years (avant garde, leading edge).

Who? Approximately 0.1% of the population, 1% of the power.

Theme Song: “Awaken” – Yes



There is also a ninth stage that hasn't completely emerged called **CORAL** by Graves, Beck, and Cowan. If the achievements of Jane Roberts and the Seth material are any indication, this worldview may be characterized by a multidimensional view based upon our four “dimensions of being,” one that understands the psyche and universe to be expressions of a much deeper subjectivity that is perceived only through the “eyes” of our deep intuition, or what Seth calls the *inner senses*. That is, **CORAL** may be characterized by the collective emergence of an *outer ego* capable of perceiving aspects of its multiple, simultaneous lifetimes in concurrent time frameworks. But we're getting ahead of the story.

On the other hand, these characteristics may be latent within the preceding **YELLOW** and **TURQUOISE** stages, to emerge as integrated subjective and objective perspectives animate more fully. We're just speculating here, sensing our own yearnings. Only time, choices, and probabilities will tell for sure on the collective level. As stated earlier, these deeper stages will indeed seem completely alien to our present worldviews.

Addendum

Ken Wilber added a variation of the above color scheme in *Integral Spirituality* (2006). It is based on the Eastern chakra system, and included here to show how they overlap with Beck's system from Spiral Dynamics integral. The main difference is that Beck selected colored based on the feeling tone expressed at each stage, and Wilber used the color spectrum to match his developmental spectrum of consciousness.

Spiral Dynamics Integral/Beck

AQAL-5/Wilber

- BEIGE
- PURPLE
- RED
- BLUE
- ORANGE
- GREEN
- YELLOW
- TURQUOISE
- CORAL

- INFRARED
- MAGENTA
- RED
- AMBER
- ORANGE
- GREEN
- TEAL
- TURQUOISE
- INDIGO

First Tier

Second Tier

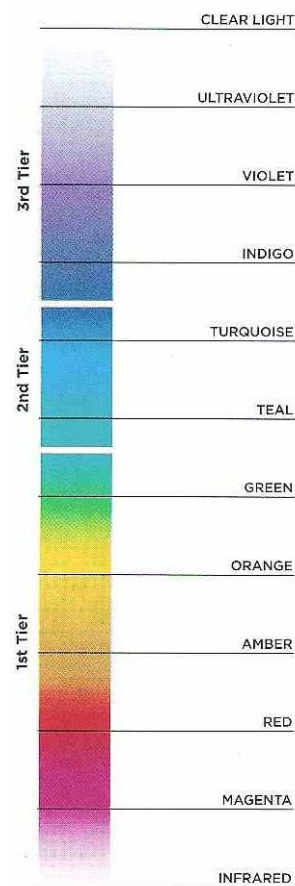


Fig. 1 Wilber's Color Spectrum of Stages

Endnotes:

1. This overview is derived from the following:

- Don Beck & Chris Cowan, *Spiral Dynamics*, Blackwell, Malden, MA, p. 45-47.
- Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything: An Integral Vision for Business, Politics, Science, and Spirituality*, Shambhala, Boston, MA, 2000, p. 9-13.
- Ken Wilber, *Introduction to Excerpts from Volume 2 of the Kosmos Trilogy*, Ken Wilber Email List, September 17, 2002, p. 26.
- Ken Wilber, *Boomeritis: A Novel That Will Set You Free*, Shambhala, Boston, MA, 2002, p. 68-105.
- NYC Consulting, *A Mini-Course in Spiral Dynamics*, http://www.spiraldynamics.org/pdf_resources/SD_MiniCourse_H.pdf, September 17, 2002, p. 3.
- Jessica Roemischer, "A WIE Editor Encounters the Practical and Spiritual Wisdom of Spiral Dynamics: An Interview with Dr. Don Beck," *What is Enlightenment?*, Fall/Winter 2002, p.105-126.
- Jane Roberts, *The Oversoul Seven Trilogy*, Amber-Allen, San Rafael, CA, 1995.

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