

# SPIRAL DYNAMICS® NEWSLETTER

An official newsletter from "The Spiral Dynamics People"

**ISSUE #4 – March 6, 2005**

1. *More Magic of Metaphor* - New Book
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## NEW BOOK!

### ***More Magic of Metaphor: Stories for Leaders, Influencers and Motivators***

Nick Owen has done it again. This time, he's woven Spiral Dynamics into an accessible format via the medium of stories and metaphors about leadership, motivation and influence from a wide variety of sources drawn from every continent, and spanning 5000 years of human development and emergence. Foreword by Chris Cowan. A valuable tool to add stories and metaphor to your programs. Available from Crownhouse!

## INTERVIEW

### **Enneagram Monthly**

Interested in connections between the Enneagram and Spiral Dynamics? This interview broaches the subject and makes some interesting links. Read it in English and in French:

[http://www.ideodynamic.com/enneagram-monthly/2004/EM\\_0409\\_a1.htm](http://www.ideodynamic.com/enneagram-monthly/2004/EM_0409_a1.htm)

[http://www.ideodynamic.com/enneagram-monthly-fr/2004/EM\\_0409\\_a1.htm](http://www.ideodynamic.com/enneagram-monthly-fr/2004/EM_0409_a1.htm)

## FEATURES

### **Save Christianna**

Intra-cultural conflict is not new but what does a country do with a free community designated as a 'social experiment' when it: a) exists in the middle of a city on prime real estate; with b) a housing shortage? Christianna is a remarkable case study of a unique way of life balancing precariously between the past, present, future, between idealism, realism and practicality, and between the politics of the left and right?

### **Everyone is an SD Expert**

It is becoming more and more difficult to sort through various Spiral Dynamics offerings as, it seems, every trainer, consultant and website owner are declaring themselves experts, moreoften without training. How do you sort through the offerings and know what is real and what isn't? 12 tips on spotting the amateur.

### **Premature Integral**

The view of the integral thinker is as an exclusively "second tier" phenomenon is quite a popular though narrow perspective. This article provides four ways to look at the relevance of "being" integral.

### **What Isn't Enlightenment**

Some magazines are focused on fact, investigation and reporting others are based on opinion. *What is Enlightenment?* readers have cause for concern. Find out why ...

## SPIRAL DYNAMICS IN DUTCH

### **The Dutch translation of Spiral Dynamics is now available in the Netherlands!**

*Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership and Change* has been translated into Dutch and is now available to our Dutch speaking customers. It includes many changes with regional examples and updates. Go to <http://www.spiraldynamics.org> and click on the book cover at the bottom of the page for details.

**More inside ...**

## PROFESSIONAL REPRINTS

### Use these to lend credibility to your SD presentations

The “Spiral Dynamics: Layers of Human Values in Strategy” by Chris Cowan & Natasha Todorovic, published in the *Strategy and Leadership* journal (Vol. 28, No.1) makes an excellent handout for clients and training. Emerald offers a second-to-none service, providing high quality, reprints of this article which incorporates logos, photographs and biographies on the article covers as required. To order, send your request (citing title, authors, journal, and volume/number) to:

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## PAID STUDENT INTERNSHIP

The **Nuclear Age Peace Foundation** is offering three (3) paid internships for undergraduate and graduate students interested in peace, nuclear disarmament, human rights, and/or international law. Interns work in a combination of program areas, including research, graphic/web design, outreach/advocacy, and communications. Projects for this summer involve campaign management (UC Nuclear Free), citizen mobilization (Turn the Tide), music promotion (KNUK Radio), public speaking (National Days of Remembrance and Action), event planning (Think Outside the Bomb, national youth conference on nuclear issues), proposal review (Swackhamer Peace Essay Contest), and numerous other leadership skills.

If you are a student currently studying in (but not limited to) the following: Global Peace and Security, Computer Science, Global Studies, International Relations, History, Sociology, Communications, Graphic Design, and Music. Creativity and initiative are appreciated, as are a good sense of humor and positive outlook.

Interns receive \$2,500 for a 10-week period. All internships are in Santa Barbara, California. The application deadline is **April 1, 2005**. Applications are available online at <http://www.wagingpeace.org/youth> Contact Michael Coffey, Director of Youth Programs, at [mcoffey@napf.org](mailto:mcoffey@napf.org) or (805) 965-3443.

## MGM SOURCE & LINK

### The FAQ Page contains updates

The article “The Mean Green Hypothesis: Fact or Fiction?” located on the opening page of the [spiraldynamics.org](http://www.spiraldynamics.org) site continues to be one of the top ten most viewed pages. Now you can learn more with the addition of a new item to the Frequently Asked Questions page at:

<http://www.spiraldynamics.org/learning/faq.htm#mean>

## ABOUT THE NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

Unlike the coming-of-age experiences that are painstakingly familiar to Americans in their 40's and older – including duck-and-cover drills, mushroom clouds from atmospheric testing, and the Cuban Missile Crisis – nuclear threats have little resonance beyond historical trivia with today's teens and twenty-somethings. New generations of Americans have grown up in a much different era after the fall of the Berlin Wall, which signified the end of the Cold War and, in many peoples' minds, the end of the nuclear threat. The newer generations of Americans today are more culturally diverse, more active in their local communities, and have more access than ever before to news from distant parts of the world. Threats to global security today have a much different face, but the threats posed by nuclear weapons remain enormous and daunting challenges.

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation has more than twenty-years of success working with influential national and international organizations and individuals and, most uniquely, a record of inspiring a new generation of peace leaders to carry on into the future. The Foundation's youth programs seek to personalize the nuclear issue, promoting a vision of compassion and personal responsibility, offering a fresh perspective on US foreign policy, and providing opportunities for the development of practical leadership skills. We believe that, in order to make the issue salient with today's youth, a meaningful and healthy approach to confronting the threats posed by nuclear weapons must emphasize ties between nuclear weapons and other social and environmental justice issues. In so doing, the Foundation promotes civic engagement, encourages nonviolence as an effective tool for social change, addresses the disparity between military and social service expenditures, and fosters international law and institutions just to name a few.

## SAVE CHRISTIANIA

"I will take a picture of you," said the dark haired man in a strategically-wrapped towel as he emerged from the doorway of the communal bathhouse. Unfazed, he padded out onto the road, smiling warmly at the stranger who had caught him in the midst of his ablutions. He held out his hand waiting patiently for the camera.

"Oh. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to ..." said Natasha as the digital camera dangled. Then her cold hands fumbled to recover it while Statement #5 of the Christiania visitor's guide echoed in her mind: 'Photos should only be taken where the least disruption is made. Ask people permission before shooting.'



She'd been framing the image of the long, stone bathhouse in the viewfinder while contemplating whether it would be illustrative for SD trainings when the man suddenly popped out. Now, here he was, turning the tables and insisting on helping with a picture that would include her.

His open, friendly and grounded attitude was like other Christianites we (Chris and Natasha) had encountered on this last day of our trip to Copenhagen. We were looking for concrete images of FS/Green (which we never found since ambiguity and relativism are not easily captured in a digital frame).

"Don't worry," he grinned, blinking behind his glasses, head slightly cocked with a hand on his waist. "I won't steal your camera." What could we do? Strike a pose on the bathhouse steps and wait for the flash. Instead, he took the picture and the three of us huddled together for a moment to look at the tiny screen – one in a towel and two in jackets. The photo was good. We shook hands and he disappeared back into the steamy building.

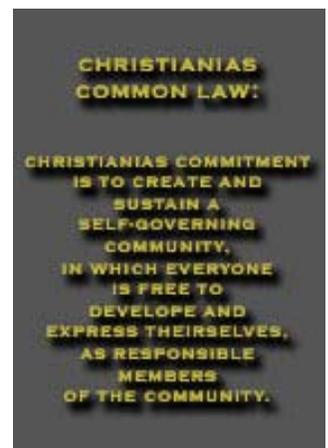
At 21:00 the sun was still bright with no indication of setting. Our afternoon in this Freetown, just minutes from the center of Copenhagen, had slipped by imperceptibly as we wandered through a third-generation social experiment in collective living and communal organizing. Christiania is a self-governed democracy based on dialogue, freedom, and self-rule, a progressive enclave in the midst of what

has been one of the world's most progressive societies.

Christiania is a rich, living, green oasis in the midst of a gray stone and concrete city. But this patch is an enchanting refuge for living things - flowers, trees, plants, dogs, and people. Refreshing in its originality, creative in its welcoming openness, and generous in providing a live-and-let-live environment (and once wide-open to drugs), this funky zone is an inner-city sanctuary for its inhabitants and 500,000 or so yearly visitors.

"We all know one another's children and keep an eye out for them," one of the residents told us. Children, dogs and tourists wander freely in a community that was into self-sufficiency, sustainability and recycling long before those terms became fashionable. The entire place is alive and flourishing with a number of endangered species living safely within its borders, while its diverse population lives without need of property ownership. The mazes of walking paths bring a surprise at every turn, including sod houses, solar panels, windmills, and, our favourite: daisies planted in an old boot sitting on a tree stump left growing out of the road. There are no cars allowed; and Christiania's model of citizen involvement and history of relatively peaceful collective decision-making strikes a Gravesian chord.

They poke fun at their own predilections for numerous (and protracted) working group meetings in their Green Plan, a paper which explains the visions of ecological sustainability guiding their community. Principles in action include: self-administration, solidarity and balance with nature. They have an eco group, a water group, a sewer group, a gardener group, a trash group, and a building group, all having input into a flat umbrella organizing structure.



We watched a young man set out more than a dozen cans of spray paint and focus his attention on a shipping container which had become a home. Over the course of the afternoon, a faded artwork was slowly covered with a new mural in the theme of Christiania - red geometrical shapes outlined in black and the ever present yellow dots in horizontal triplets placed in red squares. Art, sculpture, design and creative work greets every

turn of the head. A few steps along Pusher Street (so named for the open drug trade and dealers



which used to congregate here), a myriad of smells now tickle the nostrils: baking bread, spray paint, fresh flowers, the old moat which is now a lake, wood being sculpted, spilled beer, doggie-doo, coffee, humanity without mask of deodorants, hamburgers on the grill, vegan cooking, pot, cigarettes (a ubiquitous scourge in Europe), grass, and even horse droppings from the local ponies. There simply isn't enough time to see everything, go everywhere, taste everything, meet everyone and sniff or taste every offering.

This 33 year old collective of 800 artists, political activists, hippies, 'social misfits,' and alternative thinkers and their 300 children was founded on an abandoned military base in the early 1970's by squatters in search of a lifestyle alternative to the alienation of self-serving, driving, selfishness they saw in modern capitalism. Grandchildren of the original settlers now attend the schools staffed by residents, a sort of community-wide home schooling. They wanted their own space to be themselves without need to conform to stereotypes and conventional convention. Christiania is like a mini-state inside Copenhagen with its own flag - red field with three yellow circles across it - and its own currency, the lon (with a slash through the o), which represents a unit of contributive work and translates to about \$7 in the regular world. The goal has been to create a mini-world that embodies much of the dream of "social"-ism, anarchism and freedom to be as one chooses without the flaws of oppressive bureaucracy or excessive individualism.



We walked past a container nestled into a hillside opposite the moat with a window and door cut into it. The occupant was drinking amiably with two friends, looked like he might be on the street anywhere else. But his yard was a small, neat sanctuary decorated with carefully placed bottles. We learned that the community is active against hard drugs and

serves as a half-way zone for many victims of alcoholism and addiction unable to re-enter conventional society. Christiania provides them with work and support during rehab in cooperation with social services agencies. (And the police have helped control large-scale dealing and the violence it often produces.) This is a very special place deeply concerned with its ecological niche and making everything and everyone of use.

We stopped in front of a building where a number of small Christiania flags have been popped into a container sitting on a rickety table. The signs in Danish conveyed little meaning to two English speakers; however, we were greeted by a man who recognized our problem invited us into their "Save Christiania" headquarters. The website designer, busily updating the site, showed us her work: we learned that Christiania has been under threat from the Danish government in an effort to "normalize" it. This means the eviction of its residents, their pets, and their businesses, then bulldozing the area to ultimately recapture the valuable land for exclusive urban development, apartments, and condos. If the Danish Minister of Defense and the new, more conservative government has their way, a golf course will be one of the projects to replace this community of organic gardens.

While we were talking, something fell outside with a loud crash. A frightened dog rushed in to hide under a table. Christianites left their work stations to surround the sheepish hound, petting and cooing to him in comfort. Simultaneously, Chris was ushered onto the phone to speak to Christiania's American 'Ambassador'. We met her at the vegetarian restaurant where a bowl of soup is so filling and satisfying that it's a meal. "There are people from more than five countries here now," she remarks in her perfect English as we gaze around the small space that can barely fit a sixth table. She is a copy editor and a native Dane who grew up in Palo Alto, California, and lives in Copenhagen. "We are working on a traveling art exhibit to go through the U.S. to bring awareness of the community and the talents of its inhabitants," she told us.

But legislation is pending in Denmark which will bring Christiania's demise; a modified first phase passed on June 15, 2004. With a conservative, business-minded prime minister with an eye to "development" of Christiania's prime real estate, and a public perception of them

as "hippies" who don't contribute properly to the dominant culture, the threat to Christiania is serious. Conventionality bristles in the face of individualism and the unusual. Entrepreneurialism scoffs cynically when rubbing up against collectivism. Capitalism decries communalism as backward and uninformed, unless it's franchised.

There are many views regarding the importance of the people and the location of Christiania. The social conservative wants to wipe it "clean." The business mind sees the profits. Some Danes, struggling to find housing in a tight market, can't help but wish there were more apartments in a cramped, overflowing city. Sociologists are intrigued and charmed by the functionality of a modern communal structure that seems to work as a laboratory. Tourists love the place, and parents visit with their children who play in the parks and open spaces without manicures. Lovers and joggers enjoy the solitude where Mother Nature is allowed a free hand.

The people of Christiania are in urgent need of international support and have asked for assistance in raising awareness of the pending elimination of one of the few successful shared colonies, a microcosm of what many imagine would be a better way of living, of building peaceful and shared community, distributing shared energy, helping people at the bottom of the social ladder find a way up, and making political decisions that serve the many and not the few. We believe the values and nature of this



place are so unique that it should be preserved. The disbanding of Christiania would represent a real loss to human kind of yet another unique population, living in a unique way, with unique lessons to teach the rest of us about how to live together with our diversity. The Christianites would be the first to admit there are problems, and the solution is to allow them to resolve their problems and learn from the solutions rather than wiping out a vibrant community to convert it to more high rise apartments, and a putting green.

You can help by writing a letter to the Danish government asking them to preserve Christiania. Model letters and contact details for speaking out in support of Christiania are available on their website at [www.christiania.org](http://www.christiania.org). See <http://www.forsvarchristiania.dk/index.php?id=38> for a brief overview of the current crisis. There are also some new English pages at <http://www.christiania.org/folderus/> If any members of this list are interested in Christiania, please send a note to the Christianite collective at [aktion@christiania.org](mailto:aktion@christiania.org), or send a note for more links to [info@forsvarchristiania.dk](mailto:info@forsvarchristiania.dk).



## AN SD EXPERT? A DOZEN TELL-TALE SIGNS OF THE AMATEUR

Five years ago, an Internet search for "Spiral Dynamics" brought up ten or twelve hits; half of those were links to physics websites about galactic movements, whereas the other half linked to our site. Today, a Google search pulls up 462,000 references. Narrow it down to "Spiral Dynamics + Clare Graves" and there are still 9,000. But popularity can be a blessing shadowed by a curse. How so?

When the TV series *Lassie* was at its peak, everyone wanted a collie dog. As a result, many

'backyard breeders' popped up all over the country. (They're called backyard breeders because they do it in the back yard and often have no understanding of genetics, conformation, potential health problems, or professional standards.) Instead, they hold the simplistic view that a bitch and a dog, when mated, will produce puppies that can be turned into quick cash. Some were malicious with dogs kept in deplorable conditions, whereas others were just ignorant. But market demands were met. The same

phenomenon happened when *101 Dalmatians* became a hit.

As a result of the rush to popularize a breed, families took home dogs that were poorly bred – time bombs of health and temperament. This didn't mean an ear hung a little funny or a coat color was bit off; the puppy was cute and cuddly. It meant that as cute wore off, parents had to explain to their children why a beloved pet lost its eyesight, couldn't hear, lost its fur dying slowly of degenerative skin disease, or couldn't play or walk at a young age. In the case of collies, contrary to the breed standard which is to be gentle and protective, some dogs were aggressive biters that had to be put to sleep. In the case of Dalmatians, deafness and aggressiveness were compounded. Families lived through heartache because they couldn't judge what they were buying, facts the backyard breeders either didn't know or concealed. Buyers were taken advantage of due to what salespeople call "the puppy dog close" – once you fall in love you will keep your new-found friend no matter the cost.

There's an interesting phenomenon occurring among those who have had limited exposure to Clare Graves's work through Spiral Dynamics and spin offs. It seems as though everyone who hears about SD believes they are an expert – they want to be a breeder. There are those who are teaching it, writing about it, putting up websites devoted to it, delivering talks and lectures, and even whole courses with minimal understanding but the greatest of certitude. Books, tests, and articles proclaim their authors' great skills and insight – tens of thousands, it seems.

The problem is that there are relatively few people who fully understand both the limits and potential, and who are properly trained in the model compared to the swarms of self-proclaimed experts whose pitch is based upon reading a couple of articles or an error-filled book. The puppy dog close works well; people fall in love with the model in the window. When erroneous but appealing statements are uttered, they spread quickly through established networks, especially cultish ones, as irresistible truths and are taken as matters of faith. Those with expertise and understanding of the foundational theory are already spread so thin that the pool qualified to challenge or refute false statements is fairly small. And some who should be refuting are, instead, enabling nonsense.

Hence, errors end up standing, perpetuated and passed on as truths. The breed is diluted. At

this point, there are so many bizarre claims that it is impossible to respond to them all. Most often, the authors are more invested in their egos, ideas, and/or business than in getting the facts or the model accurately. The puppy dog wags its tail – right? What more do you want?

To make it easier to sort the wheat from the chaff, we've gathered a few very basic and common errors suggestive of an amateur at work. Just as the backyard breeders sounded convincing, these keyboard clowns can send you off digging holes to nowhere. So here are some things to watch for. Don't take these as certain marks of the charlatan; everyone makes mistakes, and there is some wiggle room in interpretation. However, this list is a familiar one to us and should raise flags that say "backyard breeder potential here: check the pedigree carefully."

1. **"Their managing director is a Red."** - **Nope!** If you hear statements like "Red executives" or "Red in the corporate suite," you are most likely listening to complaints about expressive behavior that might include vehement and surprising outbursts, autocracy, and boorishness. But true Egocentric CP thinking, as defined by Graves, is highly unlikely to ever make it into an executive suite. Temper tantrums, hoarding power, and strategic, predatory behavior are not necessarily synonymous with impulsive and uncontrollable acts, particularly if the person in question understands self-control and restraint but can turn it on and off at will. Do they do it when the boss or someone they want to impress is around or not? Is it for effect, or reflexive? Power and intimidation are tactics at several levels. The trap of thinking everything aggressive or violent is "Red" is a mark of the amateur. Think about the criticality and cynicism in Orange (E-R), and the righteous indignation of Blue (D-Q), not just the difficulty with self control in Red (C-P).
2. Calling any of the prominent names in contemporary SD **"Students of Graves"** - **Nope.** Not in the sense of being enrolled in his classes. Bill Lee is the closest to deserving that title since he did attend a number of Dr. Graves's presentations, has studied the work extensively, and taught it in his own psychology classes. But none of the people prominent in SD circles actually took coursework from Graves at Union College when he was on the faculty. Chris

Cowan worked with him for a decade after his retirement and participated in training programs sponsored by our National Values Center, but that doesn't even qualify him as a "student of Graves," only as someone who has studied the Gravesian point of view and had the privilege of knowing the man for the last 10 years of his life. We have met some of Dr. Graves's students and they all recall the experience of his classroom as a powerful and even life-changing one, but none of those "students of Graves" is presently involved with Spiral Dynamics. Indeed, he was developing his theory while he was teaching and using students in his studies, so the work was never presented in full to classes.

3. **"Graves's colors"** - Dr. Graves lived in the world of black and white on a typewriter. The colors in Spiral Dynamics were assigned to the nodal Gravesian systems by Chris Cowan when he was creating title slides for a presentation. They were to be a decorative element, nothing more, to make stark B&W 35mm slides more interesting. He added color with a paint brush after selecting them from a box of aniline dyes – no mysterious deep meaning to it. Dr. Graves was aware of the color code and did not object to it, but he used letter pairs (A-N, B-O, etc.), numbered the levels, and attached various other labels, occasionally resorting to the colors when discussing the slides during joint seminars. Today, being locked into color language is the mark of a novice. It is best used in simple, general presentations because it only identifies the peaks of waves, not the theory moving them. Those with a more sophisticated theoretical understanding generally use the letter pair language with one another, but that's neither easy nor popular.
4. **"Clare Graves' Spiral Dynamics"** - The term was created for the adaptation that became the 1996 book, *Spiral Dynamics*, written by Chris Cowan and Don Beck, our estranged partner. Since Dr. Graves passed away in 1986, how could he have used it or known of it? Readers will not find the term in any of his publications, though both words are used, one reason the pairing seemed appropriate. In fact, the term *Spiral Dynamics®* is a registered US/UK trademark of the National Values Center, Inc., and should be noted as such. If you see it being used without that notation, or

materials from our websites copied without permission or acknowledgement, your caution meter should shoot to 'super suspicion.' There are a number of people in the market playing footloose and fancy free with the term, as well as the materials. We will gladly reply to questions about the authenticity of use and whether we have granted rights or not.

5. **"Since I am a Yellow..." (or Turquoise or Coral)** - Oh, boy, the number of times have we heard that opening phrase and laughed. If you understand the theory, you already recognize how difficult it would be for someone even centralized at F-S to be so glib about categorizing themselves into a single category. You'd know that being "a color" is theoretically unlikely in the first place, and that the aspiration to become whatever is the top of the model is a great marker of E-R (Orange). There are many folks hungry to prove something with minds that prefer the certainty of typology and categorization – being a "Turquoise" makes them feel special and grand. Thus, these labels are used to ingratiate, to form cliques, and to elevate self in the eyes of others. Often, it's an indicator that the individual or group doesn't understand the model, but has bought into some promotional hype – "He told me I'm a Turquoise – ooooooh!" Also, watch out for worship of the "Second Tier," whether as an individual, organization, or state of being. This term also falls in the category of popular errors and misunderstandings. Those using it rarely can explain its characteristics in anything other than idealized and grandiose generalities unconnected to reality. It's a theme overplayed in the SD book and which has become a quasi-religion for many seeking "enlightenment" and "second tier consciousness" rather than the old-fashioned goal it replaces, righteous living and salvation.
6. **"The Graves Test"** – There isn't one. Dr. Graves didn't have a test and was not convinced that a really good pencil-and-paper test for his levels was possible. In the forthcoming book, he comments on efforts that he saw and believed they didn't succeed because developers either didn't understand the theory well enough or that he had failed in conveying it properly. If you are curious about how he conducted his

research, contact us about the book based on Bill Lee's transcription, *Graves: Levels of Human Existence*, where you can examine his approach yourself. There are assessments tied to the theory, and we market some of the original ones, but they were not devised by Dr. Graves nor used by him.

7. **“Graves’s memes (or vMemes)”** - Graves never used either. The vMemes term (also vMEMES – just as difficult) was created for lack of a better symbol with the Spiral Dynamics book in 1996 to differentiate memes (per Richard Dawkins) from Gravesian levels as meme attractors - vMemes with the v standing for ‘value system’. Memetics was becoming popular and there appeared to be a logical connection, as well as a market niche. But the mish-mash of memes and vMemes is one of our historic pet peeves, so watch out for “experts” speaking with great certainty combined with an inability to distinguish between memes and vMemes. This is currently the most common (and annoying) sign of either ignorance or pig-headedness around Spiral Dynamics and Graves – the confusion of memes with vMemes (or levels of psychological existence, to use Dr. Graves’s term). Watch for it: it’s a big one!
8. **“Blues think thus, Green’s act like that, Yellow believes this ...”** - The beginner’s fascination with this material results in a game of ‘pin the color on the person’ (or situation or activity). One simple example of this is the silly proposition that Republicans are Blue and Democrats are Green. Another is that enlightenment is achieved at Turquoise, Coral, or a tiche beyond that. We’ve already referred to the false belief that violence (or terrorism) is attributable to Red, and ranted elsewhere about why we view the “Mean Green meme” to be a false and hurtful hypothesis. Coming up with accurate analysis and sound conclusions is far more complex and difficult than this entertaining pop-the-color game implies. The greatest certainty and most simplistic analyses tend to come from those who haven’t bothered to take training or educate themselves much beyond introductory writings. If you are subjected to this kind of analysis, ask for details of the criteria used to evaluate the situation, person or issue. Ask for specifics; do not accept the broad generalities which do violence to the

richness of the Gravesian point of view. It’s too easy to splash a broad-brush color on everything. It takes work to seek out the nuance of shadings.

9. **“According to the research”** - Be very cautious with those claiming to have done elaborate research, or to have access to vast storehouses of Gravesian/SD information. A great deal of revenue is being generated on assessments claiming to be based on Graves, and many of them are shoddy. At least one prominent author shamelessly fabricated some very large numbers for a database which did not exist, then reduced them by 4/5 when that was pointed out, still leaving an exaggeration in print. The term ‘research’ appears to be used very loosely by those attaching themselves to Spiral Dynamics and Graves. Remember that most of Dr. Graves’s original data is lost – only his conclusions remain. Much of the data gathering since his death has been with assessments of very debatable design, or via inferences. Often when you explore the substance of the claim, “research” means “I read a book” or “I thought about it” or “my right-thinking mind has concluded.” Make sure you ask about the nature of the research, the methodology, and the approach; ask for the number and description of subjects, and study the data before taking any conclusions as givens. There is a serious lack of peer review and cross checks where many SD claims are made, so the field is still in its infancy so far as rigor is concerned. For example, in some recent articles we noticed an opinion that Republicans are blue and Democrats green stated as if coming from “research” which was unreported. Was the source of this comment based in opinion predicated upon a shallow understanding of Spiral Dynamics and Graves, or an actual study that could be replicated? There is nothing wrong with opinionating and making educated guesses, so long as they’re clearly identified as such. But question all claims of “research” until you see it presented.
10. **“Claire Graves”** - C’mon, this one bugs us. It’s amazing how many ‘experts’ can’t even put down the name of the source accurately. (Have they never visited the clarewgraves.com website and noticed the URL? Is what they know about Graves all word-of-mouth?) When you spell C-L-A-R-E

Graves's name, spell it properly. And, no, it is not short for Clarence. (Of lesser note, but also a marker: Cowan is a Scottish name spelled with an A, not an E – thus, the correct spelling is C-O-W-A-N – another sign of the amateur at work!)

11. **SD and Graves as a new age theology** -

There are some popular, comforting, and untrue myths going around. For some, the spiral has taken on an almost sacred character, a metaphor for karma, evolution, and the universal order of things. We've heard the word spoken in almost reverential tones – "the spiiiiiral." Eeeesh! Despite some punditry otherwise, Spiral Dynamics is not a model of spiritual development. "The spiral" is merely short-hand for 'the emergent, cyclical, double-helix model of adult biopsychosocial systems development.' It doesn't describe how to elevate one's consciousness, increase one's vibratory frequency, or map out the path to enlightenment. Graves would be laughing out loud at such talk. It's not the way to "spiral from Blue to Yellow" and skip across that mess in between. It does relate to Value Systems and worldviews, to expansiveness of conceptual space, how people think about religion and metaphysics, and how they become different as their views of life change. It's not a formula for the rapture nor staircase to ascension, to Buddha nature nor Christ consciousness, though it can help understand why such things matter to some more than to others, and how perspectives on religion and metaphysics differ. Perfection is not around the corner just beyond Turquoise or Coral, and "achieving" second tier won't solve all problems; it will just make people aware of the next kind. Please, please remember the basic Gravesian principle: the theory is open-ended and not moving toward a finish line.

12. **"Macleans's magazine refers to Spiral Dynamics as 'The theory that explains everything.'"** - We've actually seen that one in print! *Macleans* magazine, Canada's equivalent to *Time*, published an article by Nicholas Steed in 1967 about Dr. Graves and referred to his theory, as it was emerging, as "a theory that explains everything." This was in reference to a work in progress, never in reference to Spiral Dynamics, or even to Graves's point of view as it eventually developed (Note: Spiral Dynamics in 1996, Macleans article in 1967 – do the math).

How does SD relate to dogs? After forty years, legitimate collie and Dalmatian breeders are still struggling with the consequences of genetic defects and health problems in the breed they've committed themselves to. In our view, what happened to collies and Dalmatians is happening to Spiral Dynamics. Keyboard clowns have replaced backyard breeders, but the results of uncontrolled and irresponsible popularization are the same. One positive result is that the breed is getting lots more recognition. Spin-offs and imitators say something. The negative result, though, is a plethora of online articles, websites and organizations making unsubstantiated claims, both regarding their expertise and what Spiral Dynamics and Graves's work are about, leaving the uninitiated to sort through a great deal of drek.

As you are navigating the chaotic seas of the World Wide Web, please remember the coordinates of the original source for Graves materials and read the original before biting into half-baked second or third hand reports: [www.clarewgraves.com](http://www.clarewgraves.com). If you have questions about Spiral Dynamics, we invite you to go to the FAQ at [www.spiraldynamics.org](http://www.spiraldynamics.org) and/or to email and ask direct questions so we can clean up the breed before it's too late.

## PREMATURE INTEGRAL

“You’ve got to differentiate before you can integrate,” commented Ed Edwards - futurist, physicist and businessman - during a discussion at our SD certification training in Santa Barbara. (The next is April 18-24, 2005.) This remark sheds light on an idea some Spiral Dynamics enthusiasts find compelling. The word “integral” is playing large and loud for many who have come to Dr. Graves’s work via the Wilber-oriented route. Indeed, it’s been tacked onto Spiral Dynamics to market a separated branch of the work from ours by slight rebranding. (The differences go far beyond mere labeling at this point, but that’s another story.) What’s going on?

Integration has a number of meanings and usages depending on what is being integrated and in which field: philosophical ideas, people, mathematics, electronics, social categories, business units or departments (i.e., manufacturing integrated with distribution), political systems, economic interest groups, consciousness, spirituality, etc. Thus, for many people “integral” is merely an adjective describing connectedness and openness to drawing together a range of parts, functions, information/insight. The word “integrative” has been part of Spiral Dynamics for years as a synonym for systemic-type thinking, one of the variations of conception within the open-ended SD model.

For others, though, the adjective “integral” has taken on metaphysical significance and become a noun. It’s an organizing principle to rally their thinking – the flag that flies over their lives. Much as a religion provides the answers for righteous living to True Believers who have adopted other spiritual philosophies, integral becomes a goal of life. This form of integral becomes a state of being, an existential condition: “I am integral!” “Proud to be an integral!” “My child is integral at Thomas Edison Elementary School.” SD turns into articles of faith.

In our experience, many of the people using the word thusly are following a fashion trend, tossing it around without thinking through the implications. The idea that everything connects is alluring; coalescing an eclectic mix of fields into a laser-like focus sounds intriguing; and pulling all the fragmented chunks together and replacing them with holism or a unified field that explains everything has been a dream for many thinkers, including Graves. The catch is, as Ed pointed out, one must also be able to differentiate clearly. It’s

not a matter of integral OR differential – both are important. However, the concentration on integral has blinded many to a broader range of possibilities.

To begin, where did ‘integral’ come from? “Integralism” is an idea which was developed by sociologist Pitirim Sorokin beginning around 1912. Sorokin wrote about a unified set of philosophical ideas (i.e., unification of the true and the good). It was in 1941 that he used the term ‘integral truth’ to embrace a trio of truths he found important: senses, reason, and faith (meaning recognition of the external). Having lived through the Russian revolution and finding inspiration in the thinking of Saint Thomas Aquinas in his search for meaning and purpose, Sorokin created a philosophy that both fit Christian doctrine and ordered the chaos he saw in the world. It captured four aspects he saw in human psychology: biological unconscious, biological conscious, sociocultural conscious, and the supraconscious. Sound familiar?

Where is integral today with regards to SD? Obviously, it’s a brand terminology separating a quadrant-oriented approach from our more Graves-centric point of view. But some consider integral an attribute of a higher moral or ethical base (we don’t). A number of individuals want to mark themselves as ‘integral’ thinkers and leaders, but still have a ways to go putting theory and talk into action so far as we can tell. Still others associate it with a ‘higher’ state of consciousness and increase in vibratory frequency (A verticality versus breadth discussion could well enter here.) Others merely use it to describe an inclusive and eclectic curiosity. Whichever the meaning, there are now entertaining spin-offs linking the word with nearly anything on the marketing bandwagon: integral psychology, integral coaching, integral consulting, integral politics, integral management, integral medicine, integral publications, integral music, integral t-shirts, coffee cups, and art. The arbitrary over-use of “integral” has made it into a catchall phrase for Aristotle’s notion of ‘the good.’

### IS INTEGRAL THINKING THE PRIME CHARACTERISTIC OF MORE COMPLEX SYSTEMS? (THE POPULAR VIEW)

Integral, according to some enthusiasts, is THE characteristic of more ‘complex’ thinking (as related to the GT/HU systems in Graves or

Yellow/Turquoise in SD). Integral is second tier, and second tier is integral. What could be simpler than this circular logic? Spiral Dynamics puts starch in floppy dreams of reaching a higher state. 'Integral' becomes a tangible thing, a way of being that is attainable - a touchdown past the Green-yard line - into the Yellow end zone.

Integral is something to do, to be, or to believe devotedly in. Some frame it like Calvin's elect and damned - some are, some aren't, and that's just how it is. Others, like Sorokin, believe integral thought lies at the intersection of material, mental (inner and outer), and spiritual. A few of those who equate integral with SD's 'second tier' believe the solutions to nuclear war and world peace lie therein, forgetting that the full spiral is always with us so it's not that easy. More common uses of integral suggest taking many disparate ideas from a variety of fields, finding connections, and linking them. Sometimes the complex equivalence is so broad that anything can be force-fit with a little twist or shove, thereby diluting all meaning into fuzzy generalities. It means so much it comes to mean nothing. Fusing it with Spiral Dynamics/Graves appears to bring some sense and directionality to the melee.

But it's an error to indiscriminately connect integral, Spiral Dynamics, second tier, spirituality, and consciousness as equivalent notions. It's a blunder to view SD as nothing but a color scale and miss the theory. Inability or refusal to differentiate among these constructs muddies understanding, just as calling Gravesian levels memes does. SD/Graves is not a measure of spirituality or enlightenment but a way to understand how one conceptualizes those things (and others). A separate gauge - a spiritual-tape-measure - is needed. Spiral Dynamics has been substituted for this needed scale of soulfulness because it appears, on superficial understanding, to be little more than a color-coded yardstick with eight intervals. Turn the graphics properly and it even points to heaven. But that approach deletes the theory and retains only the scalar artifacts.

#### **COULD INTEGRAL THINKING DIFFERS IN STYLE AND FORM, BUT REMAIN PRESENT IN ALL SYSTEMS? (EVERYONE IS ALREADY INTEGRAL)**

Dr. Graves writes in his manuscript: "...Each way-stage of adult man's psychology has, stylistically, its way and time integrating the whole. It is characterized by a period of preparation, a period of achievement of relative equilibrium, and a period of disintegration as preparation takes

place for movement to a higher stage. To understand a personality we must comprehend the totality of his system. This totality is a totality in the sense of the momentary total state of the organism. It is the organization around which the psychological man is centralized in the levels of human existence ...” Like Graves, developmentalist David Elkind also believed that both differentiation and integration are observed at all levels of development. Humans are meaning-makers and creative by nature: we can't *not* make connections between things. Hence, integral is a pervasive and necessary component of all the Gravesian levels. Spiral Dynamics then becomes a model of how different people are integral in particular ways.

This integrative complexity of each system plays a key role in sorting though and combining information. The inner person perceives and responds to the milieu - the outer environment - through structured systems of differentiation, dimension, and integration. Loosely, differentiation is the number of categories, dimension is the form and substance of those categories, and integration is the ordering of them.

How would each system display integrative complexity? AN/Beige integrates around the senses; BO/Purple around the ancestral ways; and CP/Red around the egocentric self. In DQ/Blue, *dualistic integration* results when differentiations are clear and distinct (ambiguity is disparaged or eliminated). It is a hierarchical integration. Dimension comes by understanding *the* truth and knowing the proper categories for sorting things. Absolutistic dualistic integration results in responses such as: "There are two kinds of people in the world - the givers and the takers (or the winners and the losers; friends and foes; 'second tier' or 'first tier')."

ER/Orange produces multiplistic 'integral' with a pluralistic integrative complexity that builds dimension by cross-comparing many possibilities and then assimilating them into wholes. FS/Green generates interpersonalistic integral which fosters relativism, situationalism, and a whole based heavily in social and psychospiritual aspects. The dimensionality becomes transpersonal and transtemporal. The GT/Yellow is more systemically integral, yet carries forth relativistic integrative complexity as it assimilates information. Thus, each system can be known by how it differentiates, understands dimension, and integrates complexity.

Each system has its way of integrating – of being integral. Yet it might well not be a linear progression. If Dr. Graves’s “cyclical” aspect holds up, then there could well be a rise and fall in the need to integrate.

**CAN INTEGRAL THINKING OSCILLATE? DOES IT CYCLE TO BE MORE IMPORTANT IN COOL COLORED SYSTEMS WHILE DIFFERENTIATION IS MORE IMPORTANT IN WARM COLORED SYSTEMS?**

So, where does the worshipful twist on the word ‘integral’ come from? Consider a definition: “Essential or necessary for completion, possessing everything essential, entire, complete, perfect, uninjured, whole, existing as an essential constituent or characteristic.” Integral, it seems, offers a comforting sense of certainty and a finish line. Integration is comforting because it produces order and makes meaning. Spiral Dynamics then becomes the path to completeness, the road to perfection and becoming whole. The promise of integral is like faith in salvation and eternal life. SD becomes the central dogma of a new religion or a mantra for evolution by conscious choice. Consider how attractive that would be to people centralized in the cool-colored systems which prefer order and direction – DQ/Blue and FS/Green, but also to BO/Purple and HU/Turquoise, or its progeny B’O’ if the 6-on-6 holds up.

But there’s another side of the integration coin: differentiation. Differentiation recognizes distinctions, gradations, and variability. It increases choices, adds detail and complexity. The differentiated chunks can look like disjointed fragments, disassembled parts of an incomprehensible thing. The appearance is chaotic, confusing, and difficult to cope with for order-seekers. For chaos-lovers centralized in the warm-colored systems – CP/Red, ER/Orange, GT/Yellow – it’s often more fun to take things apart and create a bit of havoc than to glue them together. While differentiation draws distinctions between disparate parts, dimension shapes comprehension of them elaborating on their quality and quantity, and integration unveils the completed assembly: three interdependent and equally valuable elements form a complex system of relationships swinging from order to chaos.

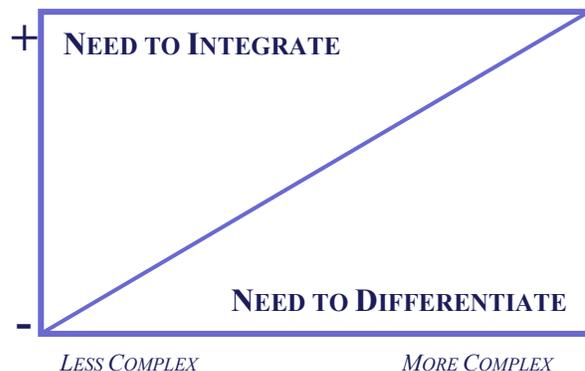
Thus, the need or preference for integral might well be an oscillating phenomenon. If so, it would become important with entry and stabilization into the ‘sacrifice-self’ we-oriented

systems. By the same token, differentiation might well take command with entry then centralization in the ‘express-self’ or I-focused systems.

If integration and differentiation are sides of the same coin, then the cyclical nature of the Gravesian point of view could well be playing out as people become fascinated with integral, then lose interest and sort for differences and greater dimensionality. If this hypothesis is true, then the interest in integral (and differential) should rise and fall as people move through the bio-psycho-socio-spiritual systems.

**CAN INTEGRAL THINKING ACTUALLY BE MORE IMPORTANT IN LESS COMPLEX SYSTEMS, WHEREAS DIFFERENTIATION TAKES PRECEDENCE IN THE MORE COMPLEX SYSTEMS?**

If integral is of a degree and kind, and integration is ‘the process by which the manifold is compacted into the relatively simple and permanent,’ then the need to integrate – to pull



together and make clear and coherent - might actually be stronger in less complex systems than in the more complex ones. Cognitive complexity, a key Gravesian marker, consists of both differentiation and dimension. Many researchers, including Graves, have reported that cognitive complexity (also cognitive capacity) increases with movement “up” the systems, though it matters what’s being thought about since some people mix unidimensional and multidimensional approaches. If cognitive complexity is lower, then the need for simple, straight-forward, clearly-connected answers might well be greater in earlier stages than when a more expansive cognitive capacity allows space for relativism, ambiguity, and paradoxical thoughts.

## INTEGRAL, DIFFERENTIAL, DIMENSIONAL

With the laser-like, quasi-religious zeal to attain “integral” status – a need we question as a marker of elevated consciousness - the elements of differentiation and dimension have been short-changed. Differentiation establishes general and specific patterns and relationships. It’s the process of describing the components, of chunking. As a child, the Dalai Lama took machines apart to see what was in them. He was curious about how they worked. Differentiation breaks things down into component parts and sorts their distinguishing characteristics into finer and finer grades. It’s part of learning.

Dimension is important in understanding and closely examining these parts while seeking to know them intimately. Similar to the Hegelian dialectic, we must differentiate and understand dimension before the grand finale of integration can occur – thesis and antithesis before synthesis – or Larry and Curly before Moe, if you prefer. If one cannot accurately sort distinctions and differences from the similarities, or pick out the confluences and conflicts in multiple sources of data, or evaluate and compare relevant components and their relationships, then integration is crippled. Without careful differentiation, without understanding the dimensions, and without depth of knowledge, then the product of integration is a sham.

In the rush to integral, with the driving need to tie everything together even when the components are sometimes barely differentiated and the dimensions barely understood (i.e., Gravesian systems), people trip themselves up. In the overwhelming compulsion to climb the yellow brick road to the Land of Integral, eyes remain on the prize and minds on the race. In the process, though, they don’t notice themselves tying their own shoes together. Things that shouldn’t be connected are. Differentiation is sloppy and shallow. Dimension collapses into Edwin Abbott’s two-dimensional world.

With the singular focus on becoming ‘integral’ and getting a membership card for the exclusive 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Club (where cosmic secrets are revealed to the initiates), an embarrassing accident occurs - ‘premature integral.’ In NLP there is a metaprogram: sort for difference or sort for sameness. Premature integral sorts for connections and fusion, even before there is clarity about the component parts and what makes them unique. They are forced together too soon into an unnatural fit. So, remember Ed’s admonition: “You’ve got to differentiate before you can integrate.”

**“In the evolutionary process two tendencies which characterize all systems, viz differentiation and integration, go hand in hand. Differentiation is variety-increasing behavior (morphogenetic), leaning towards increasing complexity, apparent randomness, fragmentation, freedom. Integration on the other hand, represents pattern and order ... The two tendencies are complimentary, not contradictory.”**

**(M. E. Dodds, 1994)**

“The Name of the Devil is Sub-optimization”  
38<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ISSS,  
Asilomar, 1994, p. 1417

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*What's wrong with this  
ad?*

*The answer follows ...*

## WHAT ISN'T ENLIGHTENMENT?

In May of last year we approached *What Is Enlightenment?*, the magazine published by Andrew Cohen's spiritual movement, with a query regarding advertising. Knowing WIE readers had an interest in Dr. Graves's work after being shown a couple of articles and finding a display prominently promoting Spiral Dynamics – a carefully edited part of it, anyway - at the IONS conference in Palm Springs, we thought they might be interested in enlightening their readers further about the foundational work. We put together the ad you see on the left announcing the availability of various Gravesian materials and the Graves website. Knowing that plugging our own training track in the magazine, which promotes our estranged former partner, would raise hackles, we kept that low key. Because of the politics in the “Spiral Dynamics community” and the Cohen group's practices thus far, we were curious whether our ad would be accepted, or if our efforts would be sabotaged in some way.

So we called. After saying he saw no problem with taking our ads (though we had advised him there might be some issues), the advertising sales rep for *What is Enlightenment?* phoned back to explain, with some surprise, that his magazine chose to refuse the ad we had submitted at regular commercial rates. “They said they didn't want to do it [publish our advertising] because they don't want to jeopardize their relationship with Don Beck. You obviously knew something I didn't.”

Although WIE magazine has chosen to feature a rendition of Spiral Dynamics a number of times, they evidently don't subscribe to the mission implied by their title. It's obviously a statement, not a question, and they've chosen to present a narrow version. Those readers interested in Spiral Dynamics and Graves are being kept decidedly unenlightened. We cannot help but wonder why.

Why would they want to prevent WIE readers from discovering what Graves actually said rather than rely on second and third hand reinterpretations? Why not let readers learn for themselves, rather than through gurus and filters?

Although WIE is entitled to make any choices they deem appropriate when it comes to accepting and refusing advertising, if you are a Spiral Dynamics fan, if you are a Graves enthusiast, and if you'd like accurate and original information to be made available to others around the world, you might contact WIE owner Andrew Cohen and politely request that Graves material be made accessible to WIE readers so they can make their own choices. Or maybe that's not what Mr. Cohen's version of “enlightenment” is all about.

## UPCOMING SPIRAL DYNAMICS TRAINING – MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### **The Netherlands**

Spiral Dynamics I and Spiral Dynamics II Certification takes place **November 23-26 and 28-30, 2005** in The Hague, Netherlands.

### **United Kingdom**

Spiral Dynamics I and Spiral Dynamics II Certification takes place **May 16-19 and 23-25, 2005** in Stanton Fitzwarren, Wiltshire. Contact The Beyond Partnership at [info@thebeyondpartnership.co.uk](mailto:info@thebeyondpartnership.co.uk) or go to: [http://www.spiraldynamics.org/info\\_pages/Be\\_Prt.htm](http://www.spiraldynamics.org/info_pages/Be_Prt.htm)

### **United States**

Spiral Dynamics I & II Certification Training takes place **April 18-24, 2005** in Santa Barbara, California. The Early bird registration deadline is March 18 – go to [www.spiraldynamics.org](http://www.spiraldynamics.org) and look under the purple tab entitled "Training Schedule" for more information and a registration form.

### **Australia**

Spiral Dynamics and Graves Foundations takes place **July 14-19, 2005** in Melbourne, Australia. Spiral Dynamics Assessment Day will follow on **July 20** (Participation in either the Foundations or SDI & II are prerequisites). For more information, or to register, contact [ParamountTraining@bigpond.com](mailto:ParamountTraining@bigpond.com)



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