



## Spiral Dynamics & Integral Theory: An Introduction

What is it to be human? What is it to be a human being in these times? What does it look, sound and feel like to align what you are with the stories, needs and facts of our world? What do the answers to questions about our individual and collective futures look like? Which actions are appropriate in light of the answers?

### **Welcome**

Welcome to the Center for Human Emergence. You'll find the introductions to a number of instruments to help further your investigation into the above questions on the Welcome Pack CD. Each instrument is world of potentially unlimited depth unto its own. Their choice is not coincidental. It is an expression of the deep felt need to integrate the best a number of brilliant contemporary thinkers have to offer. These thinkers have sought each other out to co-evolve and actively enrich their already firmly established paradigms of human development. We believe their perspectives on existence are presented in ways that facilitate the generation of fresh ideas and courses of action to address the complexity and challenges we face today.

Who are these contemporary thinkers and which theories do they represent in the Welcome Pack? We are proud to introduce Dr. Don Beck, the person who initiated the Center for Human Emergence, Andrew Cohen and Ken Wilber and their respective contributions in Spiral Dynamics, Evolutionary Enlightenment and Integral Theory. More can be found about them in the links referring to their work on the Welcome Pack CD.

In short, Spiral Dynamics offers a view of why human beings see things differently, how this develops, and how we can use this understanding to impact communication, organisational development and even create the conditions for world peace. Evolutionary Enlightenment shows how we can transcend our personal limitations and liberate the Authentic Self through consistent application of the power of choice to create new structures and spaces in consciousness, for the good of the Whole. Integral Theory offers a map that relates all information the world has to offer on human potential, and outlines what the road of development of consciousness looks like. Wilber's "theory of everything" has many yet-to-be-pioneered applications, and is credited for being a genuine world philosophy.

It is our wish these works will inspire the creation of a new level of order in perceived chaos, connection in perceived fragmentation, and an absolute sense of direction while remaining open to the possibility of not knowing!

The following introduction to the Center for Human Emergence Netherlands will give you a sense of what the organisation is about. Have fun!

# Theory: the Basics

## **Spiral Dynamics basics**

[What is spiral dynamics.mp3](#) This 27-minute audio file is a great introduction and overview of Spiral Dynamics by Don Beck.

[Spiral Dynamics.pdf](#) This document is the written transcript of the above introduction by Don Beck.

[Mini course spiral dynamics.pdf](#) This six-page mini course is a wonderfully concise introduction to the essentials of Spiral Dynamics.

[Wie spiraldynamics.pdf](#) This is an excellent, colourful 25-page introduction to Spiral Dynamics which appeared in *What Is Enlightenment?*

Enjoy this detailed audio journey through the memes and their origination with Don Beck, Jessica Roemischer and Andrew Cohen. (total time 94 minutes)

[Spiral Dynamics intro1 – beige & purple.mp3](#)

[Spiral Dynamics intro2 – red blue & orange.mp3](#)

[Spiral Dynamics intro3 – green & second tier.mp3](#)

[Meme-tale.mp3](#) This is the audio from “Original Meme-Tale: The Axioms and Elements of Spiral Dynamics “Spiral wizard” Don Beck with WIE editor Jessica Roemischer in an introductory video providing the basic concepts and concerns of this remarkable “theory of everything.” See <http://www.wie.org/spiral/> to access the streaming video version. (27 minutes)

[vMeme walk.mpg](#) This animation gives a quick audiovisual impression of the vMemes.

## **Integral Theory basics**

[Introduction to integral theory and practice.pdf](#) This 40-page introduction to integral theory and practice is the best I’ve come across...

[A puzzle called AQAL.wmv](#) In this 7-minute video, Ken Wilber describes the context in which Integral Theory can be understood and outlines the essence of the approach.

Steve Self has produced a number of beautiful and informative integral materials on [www.formlessmountain.com](http://www.formlessmountain.com). Here are a number of them.

[Story on quadrants.pdf](#)

[Quadrants.pdf](#)

[Streams.pdf](#)

[Aqal.jpg](#)

## **Evolutionary Enlightenment Basics**

See <http://www.andrewcohen.org/teachings/> for video, audio and written material on the essence of Evolutionary Enlightenment.

# Application: Theory in Action

## Spiral Dynamics in action

<http://www.wie.org/j28/beck.asp> This article by Don Beck, A New Consciousness for a World in Crisis, is a nice example of applied Spiral Dynamics.

For those who want to be challenged by the further reaches of applied Spiral Dynamics and its ability to develop integral solutions and get an impression of Don Beck's vision of the role of the Center for Human Emergence. Lot's of food for thought! (total time: 71 minutes)

[Spiral Dynamics practice1.mp3](#)

[Spiral Dynamics practice2.mp3](#)

The following is an exploration of the green meme and how Boomeritis affects us. This lively discussion posted on Integral Naked is a good example of how Spiral Dynamics can be applied to understand our post modern world. (38 minutes)

[What is boomeritis.mp3](#)

You may feel that a lot of what is said here is familiar if you have listened to "Spiral Dynamics practice 1 & 2". Yet, through the sheer complexity of the subject, and the subtle differences of how the matter is treated by Don Beck, this comprehensive vision of how to approach transforming the world we live in is a valuable listening experience. (total time: 93 minutes)

[SD – cultural codes, global maps1.mp3](#)

[SD – cultural codes, global maps2.mp3](#)

[SD – cultural codes, global maps3.mp3](#)

Here's an exercise you can download to test your understanding of how the first tier vMemos see God, Relationship, etc. (click dragndrop.exe to start the exercise once you've unzipped it).

[VMeme drag & drop.zip](#)

This extremely cool song by Stuart Davis, The Ladder, is accompanied by great images (thanks Nick Drummond at Nordic Integral!) which tell quite a tale. A wonderful example of combined arts and their effectiveness to communicate deeply...

[The ladder.wmv](#)

## Integral Theory in action

Here are two selected discussions from Integral Naked, which is a great resource for "integral theory in action" (see [www.integralnaked.org](http://www.integralnaked.org) for more).

Ken Wilber talks with teachers about Integral Education, and what that means. A rich example of how Integral Theory and Spiral Dynamics are applied to address what is required for human development in an institutional setting. (42 minutes)

[Integral education – Introducing the AQAL approach.mp3](#)

Here Ken talks with Michael Zimmerman and Sean Hargens about Integral Ecology (Things are getting worse, getting better, and are already perfect).

Very inspiring stuff! (total time: 64 minutes)

[Integral ecology1.mp3](#)

[Integral ecology2.mp3](#)

# Integrating Spiral Dynamics and Integral Theory

This final section is intended to help you integrate the information by relating Spiral Dynamics and Integral Theory to your life. I thought it would be fun to receive your answers to these questions and talk about them, and any other questions you have about SD & IT, by phone (+31(0)6 247 179 70). Feel free to do so if you like!

## Applying Spiral Dynamics

[www.spiralized.net](http://www.spiralized.net) Offers a way to wrap systems and themes around the spiral, visualize them, and discover subtle interrelations underlying the various vMemetic manifestations in media, dutch society, indonesia, and leadership.

At a personal level:

- Think about the least resolved situation in your life. Does it involve other people or entities besides yourself?
- When thinking about your relationship to the unresolved issue, which vMememes in yourself seem to be playing the strongest role?
- Can you imagine a perspective from another meme or memes that provide you with new possibilities of relating to the unresolved situation? Which meme(s) would this be, and which perspectives would you find liberating?
- What would these perspectives look like? Feel like? Sound like? Smell like? Taste like?
- If this least resolved situation involves other people or entities, what do you believe the driving forces behind the actions that have led to conflict, dissonance or misunderstanding are?
- Which vMememes could be fuelling these driving forces? How certain are you that this may be the case? Why are you or aren't you certain?

## Applying Integral Theory

The following is an example of how the four quadrants are always present. (source: Matthew Dallman at [www.matthewdallman.com](http://www.matthewdallman.com))

"Let's wear the quadrants glasses to look at the moment when I drink my morning coffee. It is rather simple, of course, and meant to illustrate. I'll describe this experience inclusively, through a one-by-one description of the illuminations framed by the quadrants.

So I get my coffee from the local stand. I feel the coffee in my mouth, its taste and sensual effects. There are interior drives of various kinds that operate as I swallow. My psychological makeup that values and needs this lubrication, as well as feels its effects (thus phenomenology - the philosophy of intuitive experience), is illumined

by a **subjective-singular perspective**. All such knowledge, data, and insight would be what an upper-left quadrant analysis offers.

A person who watches me do all of this sees my overall behavior. I also watch my own behavior, as an object. With bare eyes, one can see that I am a man with Styrofoam coffee cup. My body moves in certain ways. Scientific experiments upon me would show physical data and measurable changes. My bodily responses to caffeine, sugar, and cream, can be seen objectively (biology, scientific empiricism). This kind of perspective is illuminated by a **objective-singular perspective**, and is elicited by a upper-right quadrant analysis.

Furthermore, rather than an isolated event, of course I participate in a larger system as I drink my coffee. The sociology and markets of business distribution provide the means for my purchase of the cup of coffee every morning. There is a coffee economy, interdependent with other forces in the world (various economic/political systems-theories). All of this is illumined by the **objective-plural perspective**, or 'me and the coffee as part of a larger, systemic whole'. This is a lower-right quadrant analysis.

Finally, people regard coffee (its merits, its downsides, its standing) and so values are attached to coffee. These differ to various degrees from culture to culture. Coffee is held differently around the world. There are various kinds of meanings that coffee elicits, and different people will respond differently to coffee, and to me drinking it. Coffee's values and meanings (hermeneutics) are illumined by the **subjective-plural perspective**, from a lower-left quadrant analysis.

And if you put it together, all four of these quadrants come together in complimentary fashion to in large part give an integrated account of the morning coffee occasion. The quadrants ground the starting points of investigations into its nature. It is an outline that shows where to look if you want an inclusive account."

- Think about your favourite organisation, group, or work relationship you have been a part of. What made it inspiring or fulfilling?
- Looking at the inspiring and fulfilling elements, how are your experiences related to Wilber's four quadrants? Can you see how all 4 quadrants are connected to your experience?
- Now think of a less enjoyable organisational, group or work experience. Where would you locate the elements that made this experience less enjoyable in the four quadrants? Are there any interventions you would like to suggest to improve the situation?
- If you could only change one element in the above example, which one would it be? How would it impact the other quadrants?

## **Contemplations**

- Ask yourself "Who am I". Use Wilber's four quadrants to further examine this. Who are you when you examine your relationship to your body, vital energy, emotions, mind, spirit...
- Ponder what is most important in life.
- Ponder what is most important for you in life.
- If there was only one thing you could change, what would it be?
- If there was only one thing you couldn't change, what would it be?
- How do your answers to the above questions fit into and impact the big picture?

## **Evaluation**

If you have used this page to learn about Spiral Dynamics or Integral Theory, we'd be interested to know how it has and/or has not been useful to you. What has helped you learn about the presented topics? What has hindered this? Please send your feedback to [r.long1@chello.nl](mailto:r.long1@chello.nl)

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