

SPIRAL DYNAMICS INTEGRAL | DON BECK, PH.D.

vMeme Mapping: Self-Test

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Also by Don Beck:

Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership, and Change. by Don Beck and Christopher Cowan. Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 1996.

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vMeme Mapping: Self-Test

By exploring and describing the core intelligences and deep values that flow beneath what we believe and do, Spiral Dynamics offers a profoundly incisive, dynamic perspective on complex matters such as *how* people think about things (as opposed to *what* they think, why people make decisions in different ways, and why people respond to different motivators).

A vMeme, or values meme, is a particular values system that has emerged in a given culture in response to life conditions. The vMeme mapping test you are about to take will help you understand the Memes active in your own values systems, and see how they interact with the dominant Memes of your friends, your workplace, your church and other organizations, as well as society as a whole.

Before taking the test, be sure to listen to the first three sessions of this audio learning program, which describe in detail the characteristics of each of the Memes. Each new Meme represents a new stage in the development of human culture, which can be understood as a new level of psycho-cultural emergence with greater evolutionary complexity than the vMeme that preceded it.

Every individual also operates from one or more Memes, which may or may not be in agreement with the dominant Meme(s) of the prevailing culture. Just as a culture or society can have several Memes active at the same time, an individual can also work from multiple Memes, or sets of values, depending on the particular situation or issue at hand.

By understanding the primary Memes operating in yourself, you will be better able to see your own deepest values, your preconceptions, and the general patterns through which you interpret human interaction. By understanding the vMememes that operate most strongly within you, you will have a clearer sense of how you convey messages to others.

In this self test, we will focus on seven core vMemes that shape human choices, establish priorities, and set the tone of families and teams. These are like the basic themes in life's symphony. Sometimes they are harmonious; sometimes in discord. Either way, they are always at the base of why we do what we do. In this self-test you will be asked to complete a series of descriptive pages. This will help you focus on these core vMemes, recognize the roles they play in your life, and see how they impact the decisions others make.

We will begin with the Purple Meme, then move through Red, Blue, Orange, Green, Yellow, and Turquoise. Note that the Beige Meme is not included because it cannot be assessed on paper. The first Meme to emerge, the Beige Meme, is instinctive, automatic, and concerned solely with survival. In this Meme, a distinct self is barely awakened, and the Meme is deeply linked to automatic processes of the brain.

The following key explains the categories by which I want you to rate the strength of each Meme in your life:

ATTRACTION INDEX — How much do you like or dislike the vMeme? What is the appeal of the vMeme to you at this time? Does it make you comfortable or not? Do you view it as a positive force? (Give this Meme a numerical rating from 1, negative, to 9, positive.)

STRENGTH INDEX — The intensity of the vMeme in your life. How widespread? How much of your world does it impact? How powerful an influence in setting your priorities? A motivator? When it is activated, what is the vMeme's potency compared to others? (Give this Meme a numerical rating from 1, negative, to 9, positive.)

RELEVANCE INDEX — How important is this vMeme in your world right now? How essential is it to achieving your objectives? Is it on your personal "radar scope" at the present time or not? Is it near the surface or deeply buried? (Give this Meme a numerical rating from 1, negative, to 9, positive.)

CHANGE METER — Is the influence of this vMeme getting stronger or weaker in you? Is it becoming more apparent, staying about the same, or fading from the scene? (Give this Meme a rating from + + + +, increasing influence, to - - - -, decreasing influence.)

When you have finished the vMeme mapping self-test, you will be able to see more clearly which Memes are operating in your own life, and apply this knowledge to your personal interactions, choosing communication strategies that will benefit all parties involved.

The Purple vMeme

A Clannish "Us"

- Obey desires of mystical spirit beings
- Show allegiance to elders, custom, clan
- Preserve sacred places, objects, rituals
- Bond together to endure and find safety
- Live in an enchanted, magical village
- Seek harmony with nature's rhythms

Circle the positions that fit you best.

Attraction	Strength	Relevance	Change
Like it	Strong	Important	Increasing
9	9	9	++++
8	8	8	+++
7	7	7	++
6	6	6	+
5	5	5	0 (Stable)
4	4	4	-
3	3	3	--
2	2	2	---
1	1	1	----
Dislike It	Weak	Buried	Declining

Positive Side: In balance with nature to maintain existence; attuned to mystical forces; close family bonds

Negative Side: Captive of the group; superstitious and fearful; vulnerable to chieftain's desires and pathologies

The Red vMeme

My Powerful "Self"

- Express self, to hell with others
- Escape domination by others or nature
- Avoid shame, feel no guilt, get respect
- Gratify impulses and senses immediately
- Fight to gain control at any cost
- Not constrained by consequences

Circle the positions that fit you best.

Attraction	Strength	Relevance	Change
Like it	Strong	Important	Increasing
9	9	9	++++
8	8	8	+++
7	7	7	++
6	6	6	+
5	5	5	0 (Stable)
4	4	4	-
3	3	3	--
2	2	2	---
1	1	1	----
Dislike It	Weak	Buried	Declining

Positive Side: Energetic and action-oriented; anxious to break free; unconstrained creativity; not afraid of others

Negative Side: Inflated ego; unrealistic self-image; oblivious to needs of others; exploits guiltlessly to fulfill desires

The Blue vMeme

A Righteous "Us"

- Find meaning and purpose in life
- Sacrifice self to the One True Way
- Bring order, stability, and future reward
- Control impulsivity through guilt
- Enforce principles of rightful living
- Master plan puts people in proper places

Circle the positions that fit you best.

Attraction	Strength	Relevance	Change
Like it	Strong	Important	Increasing
9	9	9	++++
8	8	8	+++
7	7	7	++
6	6	6	+
5	5	5	0 (Stable)
4	4	4	-
3	3	3	--
2	2	2	---
1	1	1	----
Dislike It	Weak	Buried	Declining

Positive Side: Responsible, loyal, dutiful, and obedient to rightful authority; keen moral sense; honorable; charitable

Negative Side: Rigid, intolerant, and judgmental; doctrinaire; punitive; fanatical; believes own way is the only way

The Orange vMeme

My Strategic "Self"

- Strive for autonomy and constant change
- Seek out "the good life" and abundance
- Progress through the best solutions
- Enhance living for many through technology
- Play to win and enjoy competition
- Learn through tried-and-true experiences

Circle the positions that fit you best.

Attraction	Strength	Relevance	Change
Like it	Strong	Important	Increasing
9	9	9	++++
8	8	8	+++
7	7	7	++
6	6	6	+
5	5	5	0 (Stable)
4	4	4	-
3	3	3	--
2	2	2	---
1	1	1	----
Dislike It	Weak	Buried	Declining

Positive Side: Productive; goal-oriented; energized; focused on results and outcomes; creates a "middle-class"

Negative Side: Materialistic and self-absorbed; short-sighted; compulsive to achieve, have more, dominate

The Green vMeme

Our Communitarian "Us"

- Liberate humans from greed and dogma
- Explore the inner beings of self/others
- Promote a sense of community and unity
- Share society's resources among all
- Reach decisions through consensus
- Refresh spirituality and bring harmony

Circle the positions that fit you best.

Attraction	Strength	Relevance	Change
Like it	Strong	Important	Increasing
9	9	9	++++
8	8	8	+++
7	7	7	++
6	6	6	+
5	5	5	0 (Stable)
4	4	4	-
3	3	3	--
2	2	2	---
1	1	1	----
Dislike It	Weak	Buried	Declining

Positive Side: Consensual and inclusive of others; empathetic; sensitive to broader human condition; concerned

Negative Side: Imposes blinding "group-think" approaches; all join or else; feels too much; denies uniqueness; naive

The Yellow vMeme

An Integrated "Self"

- Accept the inevitability of nature's flows
- Focus on functionality, competencies
- Find natural mix of conflicting "truths"
- Self-interest without harm to others
- Experience fullness of living on Earth
- Demands flexibility and open systems

Circle the positions that fit you best.

Attraction	Strength	Relevance	Change
Like it	Strong	Important	Increasing
9	9	9	++++
8	8	8	+++
7	7	7	++
6	6	6	+
5	5	5	0 (Stable)
4	4	4	-
3	3	3	--
2	2	2	---
1	1	1	----
Dislike It	Weak	Buried	Declining

Positive Side: Impacts quality and richness of life; sees complexity in big-pictures; lives in flow without status needs

Negative Side: Aloof; unfeeling and selfish; intolerant of others who appear incompetent; demands own space

The Turquoise vMeme

An Holistic "Us"

- Blending, harmonizing, strong collective
- Focus on the good of all living entities
- Expanded use of human brain/mind tools
- Self is part of larger, conscious whole
- Global networking seen as routine
- Acts for minimalist living so less is more

Circle the positions that fit you best.

Attraction	Strength	Relevance	Change
Like it	Strong	Important	Increasing
9	9	9	++++
8	8	8	+++
7	7	7	++
6	6	6	+
5	5	5	0 (Stable)
4	4	4	-
3	3	3	--
2	2	2	---
1	1	1	----
Dislike It	Weak	Buried	Declining

Positive Side: Operates at meta-levels; global viewpoint; sees many interconnections; complex without complications

Negative Side: Surreal; far away from mainstream; too much, too soon; misses some essential (if mundane) details

Tally Form

1. Transfer your ratings of the seven core Memes onto the table below. Add the three together for each Meme.

Meme	Attraction	Strength	Relevance	Total
Purple				
Red				
Blue				
Orange				
Green				
Yellow				
Turquoise				

2. Now, rank your seven core Meme totals and check off the Change Meter readings you assigned to each.

Meme	Meme	Total	Change Meter Readings								
Sequence	Color	Stack	Much less			No Change			Much More		
(Highest)			---	--	-	0	+	++	+++	++++	
#1											
#2											
#3											
#4											
#5											
#6											
#7											

(Lowest)

27 Pts Max



Don Beck, Ph.D.

... co-founded the National Values Institute and is CEO of the Spiral Dynamics Group, Inc. He has used Spiral Dynamics for over thirty years to find solutions to real problems, including over sixty visits to South Africa between 1981 to 1988 to inspire solutions for a peaceful transition from apartheid. He is co-author with Christopher Cowen of *Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership, and Change*. For more information, visit www.spiraldynamics.net.

