

Why it all matters

The evolutionary process seems to have fallen into regression (example: the election of Trump). Ken Wilber explains¹ that Green Postmodernity got stuck and didn't pick up its role as the next 'Leading Edge', because of its excessive view of subjectivity, in which all is linked to context and truth doesn't exist. In the extreme, in Green nothing is more true and more of value than anything else. Because a clear vision and focused choices are lacking, many people fall into confusion and are looking for strong (Red) leaders.

Now what? Postmodernity has fulfilled her role in the development of the social welfare state, the increasing attention for sustainability, communication, personal growth and solidarity with others. According to the theory of evolution (like Spiral Dynamics integral), the next step is the transition to integral thinking, integral acting and integral (personal and collective) leadership. If this transition from the Green postmodern to the Yellow integral perspective stagnates, the risk of chaos and regression is huge. Available solutions to actual and future problems (e.g. to realize the Sustainable Development Goals) cannot be implemented because we need the integrated benefits of all previous value systems to find requisite solutions for today's complex problems.

If the transition succeeds, we will see people, organizations and societies take the lead based on human-oriented openness and a clear transcending view with a capacity to integrate differences into innovative solutions. These leaders are integral thinkers and actors. They are no longer motivated by their own interests or only one perspective, but are able to see what is functional for the survival and even flourishing of humanity as a whole. Beyond polarization.

The transition from Green to Yellow How to really make it happen

In this article I will describe how the transition from First to Second Tier – and more specifically from the Green level to Yellow/Teal – is taking place in individuals, organisations and in society. Clare Graves anticipated this 'momentous leap'² and various people like Ken Wilber claim that this leap is now actually happening. My question is: how can we experience and see that we are truly making this leap and that we're not still struggling in Green, wishing we were already on the other side of this gap. This article is based on literature as well as on interviews with people in the Netherlands who experienced this transition personally and professionally. It is written on behalf of the Integral European Conference 2018 and my assumption is that the reader is familiar with Spiral Dynamics integral³. I couldn't have written this article without the integral community around me and I deeply thank you all for your support!

1. Introduction

The Netherlands has developed into quite an Orange-Green country in which many inspiring innovative (citizen's) initiatives are arising like Buurtzorg (a new organisation for home care, initiated by Jos de Blok, one of the main speakers at IEC 2016) and The Ocean Cleanup (founded by Boyan Slat who develops advanced systems to rid the oceans of plastic).

At the same time, Dutch society is becoming more and more fragmented, as is seen in an increasing number of political parties; a growing number of inhabitants from different backgrounds (over 170 nationalities); a clear gap between the more agrarian areas and the majority of the population living in the cities; public opinion becoming more polarized between progressives and conservatives, between people living from a Traditional perspective and people functioning from a (Post)Modern view. Society as a whole seems to get stuck in polarities and to fall back in a regression to Blue-Orange.

This is happening in our rich, developed and privileged European country. On a global scale Red and Orange perspectives and structures are in charge in most parts of the world. The Blue perspective is still missing in many regions and where it is operating it is often threatened by non-democratic forces like in some East-European, African and Asian countries. Green is set aside in the places where it once flowered such as in the UK and the US. Why didn't the Green (Postmodern) perspective become a (strong) force in the world, as it inherently includes the seeds for a more productive and human direction? While the triad of Power, Military and Money (the familiar military–industrial complex) is bringing humanity to the edge of the ravine and the possibilities and solutions for a better and more integral world are available, why aren't they being used and implemented? Why aren't we progressing?

Ken Wilber analyzed this question in his essay *Trump and the post-truth world* (2017). He describes the situation in the US, and much of what he observes seems to be valid for The Netherlands and other parts of the world, too. His conclusion is that Postmodernity didn't fulfill its role as the 'Leading Edge' to bring us into the next (Integral/Yellow/Teal) level. For his analysis he draws on Spiral Dynamics integral. In response to the ever changing and challenging life conditions, humanity constantly develops new perspectives which transcend and include the previous ones. These emerging global changes are in a way 'prepared' by the most progressive value system at a given time in history (the 'Leading Edge'). This Leading Edge has the privilege and the responsibility to give birth to new solutions for our most pressing issues and in the process shape our next evolutionary step. Its development is mostly initiated by the cultural elite (priests, philosophers, writers, scientists, artists, rebellious public persons).

For humanity to survive our current global complex and interwoven problems and to shape our future, we desperately need transparent, inspiring and vigorous leadership with an orientation towards the greater whole at all levels of society, that propels us into the Integral perspective.

In the following sections, I first will present an analysis of the reasons why Postmodernity (in the Netherlands) didn't take its leading edge role. Then I will answer the question: how can we progress to the next, Integral level? And finally I will describe how we can actually see and witness this transition from Green to Yellow happening in individuals, organizations and society.

2. What keeps us stuck?

Together with two colleagues I applied Wilber's analysis to the Dutch situation⁴. In our opinion, a clear and shared vision for the future is missing in The Netherlands. In the Green/Postmodern perspective that is still the dominant culture in our country, every voice must be heard and appreciated and everything seems to have the same value.

Therefore, power and focus are lacking while the urgency for change increases: as citizens we are confronted with big problems and challenges like climate change, diminishing social cohesion and integration, a poor organisation of the care sector, increasing poverty, and the necessity for neutral and objective information.

In Dutch society three main factors hold us trapped in ostensible oppositions:

1. either-or-thinking from a one-sided perspective;
2. an excessive belief in equality;
3. insufficient collective and personal leadership.

2.1 EITHER-OR instead of AND-AND

Despite good intentions, many societal problems are approached from only one perspective. Often a new approach is seen as the only solution, while babies are thrown out with the bath water. Knowledge and expertise (especially from the workplace) get lost and the intrinsic motivation of workers is undermined. The idea is to create a better situation for citizens but in fact the underlying drives are often lower costs and more control. The care and education sectors are 'great' examples. Especially after incidents and dramatic events, government tries to avoid risks and repeats by imposing more rules (increasing bureaucracy by fear driven policy).

An example: Costs for care must be diminished, according to the Dutch government. Their way is to decentralise and abolish services, because – in the short run – this seems cheaper. The elderly are stimulated to remain in their own homes and family and neighbours are asked to care for them. In the last decades many institutions for elderly people have been closed. However, new (financial) challenges are arising like: First Aid Centres and general practice services have become overloaded by the elderly with (medical) problems. Elderly people must stay in hospitals longer because they cannot go home (lack of care) and because of increased loneliness. Living together in a home in certain cases has advantages... So, why introduce such an abrupt change of policy without including a real estimate of the (societal) costs instead of keeping what was good, improving what can be better and experimenting with several new approaches?

In other sectors like youth care, psychiatry, migration policy, energy, traffic or housing, the same dilemma is visible. The welfare state has been downsized, policies are more and more based on the belief in self-help and the 'market' has established an increasing role in organising society. The Orange belief in Growth and in the Power of the Market to create the best arrangements leads to all kinds of unexpected and undesired consequences. One of these is a growing gap between citizens living from the more Traditional values who in general need more (financial) support and the entrepreneurial Modern and Postmodern citizens who are able to care for themselves. The tendency is to think in OR-OR: this OR that. The increasing polarisation might cause disruption of society. We are missing an integrating AND-AND approach.

2.2 Excessive belief in equality

The Postmodern perspective emerged in the sixties of the last century as a new way of thinking about society. The second feminist wave; peace movements and anti-war demonstrations; resistance against fascism, racism, sexism; new forms of education; an increasing belief in the possibility to create society; solidarity with the world like the South-Africa movement; international law practice and Human Rights. Also, attention was focused on personal development in therapy, counselling, support groups and spirituality.

The Postmodern view developed in response to the negative sides of the Modern perspective (ratio, science, capitalism, consumerism, drive for individual success) and the corresponding living conditions. It emphasizes the importance of feelings, equality, harmony and sustainability. Each voice is equally important, absolute truth does not exist because everything must be understood within its context (cultural relativism) and any hierarchy is wrong.

This transition is very noticeable in the media arena. This sector has been completely changed during the last decades. Journalism on TV and in newspapers is mainly focused on the experiences of 'the people' instead of giving background information and knowledge. Social media are to a large extent filled with personal experiences and subjective opinions. Citizens claim they have the right to be heard and to produce their own prejudices, irrespective of form and content. An emotional outburst often gets more attention than an accurately formulated and underpinned vision. Negative news about murder and threats get more space than positive events. Characteristic is the way information is being manipulated. E.g. if you look for information on Google, you don't get 'right/objective' information, but you will see the texts that are clicked upon most, have been paid for or correspond with your own former searches.

The tragedy of today is that the Postmodern perspective is no (longer) able to fulfil its role of being the Leading Edge. It is getting in its own way. Indeed, nothing is allowed to be better than anything else (all hierarchy is wrong); no truth exists (only relative truth); every opinion and view must be listened to (the leaders are not allowed to decide what the future direction is); subjective experiences are of more value than objective information (I 'feel' it is like this and therefore that is true). The Postmodern value system has brought us a lot of good and positive insights. However, at this moment it has gone too far and is chasing its own tail.

2.3 Development stagnates by lack of leadership

In Dutch politics and the news and media, politicians on the far right like Wilders and Baudet are given ample space to express their views targeting Muslims, black or 'foreign' people. Whereas from a transcending and integral perspective it is clear that to be able to survive, societies and the world as a whole must be inclusive and encompass the interests of all people. How long will it take until we stop tolerating that power games take precedence over collective action to create a more humane world? Everyone can share their opinions, but it is time to recognize that some visions, opinions and views are more underpinned than others, and to have the courage to express this stance.

We see this not only in the Netherlands, but in all parts of the western world. The evolutionary development of humanity stagnates and takes diversions like a regression to Red-Orange (Trump) or to Blue polarisation, because there is no or too little attractive integrative leadership. People feel lost in the present chaos and start to wish for strong leaders and simplistic slogans. Wise judgment in society seems to fade. Postmodernity didn't succeed in formulating an attractive convincing vision and future direction and, especially, in finding reasons to go for these. What we need are judgments about what is BETTER than the alternative(s). A beautiful example is the tweet of Barack Obama after the riots in Charlottesville: "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin or his background or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love. For love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." The judgment that love is of more value for human beings than hate, is not just an opinion, but is based upon information about the human nature.

In The Netherlands, it is needed to overcome our 'Tall Poppy syndrome' (in Green, people are afraid to stand up and step out of the consensus mode). It is time to speak our Integral truth (that naturally includes the healthy aspects of all previous value systems).

3. Some things are more true and of more value

What can we do to escape stagnation and transcend all those antitheses and forms of polarisation? Scientist Otto Scharmer states that we can deal with the present world in the following three ways:

1. Beavering and keeping the status quo
2. Regression and relapsing into nostalgia of former times
3. Moving forwards: cocreating the future from not knowing.

In view of the unprecedented world issues we are dealing with or need to be dealing with, the third option is the only one that holds promise. But how can we realise this future?

An important first step is: inquire deeply into the various perspectives and judge which direction is the best, the most rightful and the most promising for humanity as a whole. For instance, it is clear that climate change already produces problems for many today and many more will arise in a few decennia. Intensive research and scientific and societal exchange of information led to a 97% consensus among actively publishing climate scientists. Therefore this stance, based on facts and societal exchange, is MORE TRUE and OF MORE VALUE than other opinions about climate change.

MORE TRUE is beyond agreeing with anyone, beyond victimhood and powerlessness, beyond relative truth. It is about quests for the truth (like Follow the Money5) and to unmask what is demonstrably untrue and the reverse: emphasize issues that maybe are coming from 'suspicious' sources, but are verifiably true. It is about recognizing that some views and opinions are more true than other ones, to substantiate that and go for it. Therefore, we need everybody who can think in a wise and clear way to participate in intense inquiries and open communication.

OF MORE VALUE: We need a vision for the long term, a vision that has a longer life than only one term in office; a vision with which people want to connect even if they have to pay for it now. We need Integral thinking and acting, wise discernment. That means listening carefully and being open to each other, inquiring deeply into all issues, forming opinions and taking decisions based on available information, staying flexible and adjusting when needed. We need to rethink the ways the world has been organised up until now: maybe giving cash to people in the third world is more effective than the traditional development aid; maybe we need to stop full time working when robots can do the repetitive labour; maybe investing in lifelong education is more conducive to world peace than control by weapons. We need wise, developed, authoritative and integral leaders like Nelson Mandela (†), Barack Obama, Eberhard van der Laan (†), Herman Wijffels, Emma Bruns, Jos de Blok, Boyan Slat and other inspiring builders of a just and sustainable future. And many other individuals and organisations who (want to) develop Integral Leadership. We need YOU!

4. Characteristics of the Integral/Yellow/Teal6 perspective

What does it look like when this momentous leap will happen and when the transition from Postmodern/Green to Integral/Yellow, from First to Second Tier, becomes reality? Life in Second Tier has Ken Wilber waxing lyrical. "We are heading towards that point where Integral/Second Tier will be the Leading Edge.

And the impact on the world is going to be nothing less than shocking. We never have had a shift in a level and a tier. We don't even know what that will look like. The change could be so dramatic that it will be almost unrecognisable....We are going to have singularities not only in the exterior events like technology but also in interior events like our culture and how we actually view and interpret the world. And the most noticeable thing about Second Tier is that it is very embracing of all levels. And sees them all as having some sort of important role to play in human gross development and evolution. We have never had a society where the leading edge values said: whatever you do, make sure you include that person. We always have had societies that said: whatever you do, keep them out"7.

The main characteristics of the Integral level are:

- Making choices and focusing on a specific direction (formulate purpose and principles). Clear choices based on what is more true and of more value.
- Discerning between what is better for society as a whole and the process of evolution, and what leads to regression. The collective interest and progression are more important than individual interests or profit.
- Important principles are: integrity, inclusiveness, sustainability, effectiveness, including and transcending all previous levels, flexibility, attuned to the greater whole.
- Sometimes painful measures are needed. To progress and enter a new level, as an individual we have to move out of our comfort zone, perhaps feeling bad and suffering, in order to dare to jump into new waters of discovery. In the same way (Dutch) society has to move beyond the present luxurious, and for most citizens, comfortable situation. It is not exactly the way of 'Verelendung', but as long we are living in our small cocoon, nothing essential will change on behalf of the future of humanity.
- AND-AND approach. Including all perspectives, connecting the old and the new and choosing the best from all possibilities is the most productive way. Gauging the contribution of all previous value systems (traditional, modern and postmodern) towards new transcendent solutions. Connecting with all groups in society based on common values, norms and righteousness. A noticeable energy-switch is happening towards deep connection and widening of the perspective.
- Away from the emphasis on consensus and perfection towards finding workable and flexible solutions (good enough for now). More freedom, less rigidity in 'how it has to be'. Focusing on What Works. Experimenting with new working forms, continuous evaluating of policies and adapting flexibly to unexpected situations.
- Integral looks for multidimensional value creation striving towards win-win-win situations (I win, you win and everyone wins). Example: a catering service for the residents of a nursing home, also functions as a nice small restaurant in its garden to make money to finance extra activities for the residents. Or a basic income for anyone under a specific income level financed by cuts in unnecessary control systems and the resulting cost reduction in health systems by less stress and diseases.
- Really entering the Integral level and Second Tier means that time and attention must be invested in increasing spiritual awareness beyond the more traditional forms of religion or postmodern spirituality (see Ken Wilber Modern Religion and Adi Da: Prior Unity). Waking up is equally important as Growing up. In the awakened Integral world things are as they are. No better, no worse. No personal likes or dislikes.

However, there is a clear direction: finding innovative solutions for the complex issues of today's world, creating opportunities for human beings to evolve and become who they essentially are, making the Spiral healthy at all levels and thus paving the way for evolution.

- In the Integral view people have equal value, but they are not the same. Some people are more developed, grown up and awake than others. They are involved in a process of constantly cleaning up their ego-stuff. They show up in their service in the world and for other people and their contribution to the evolutionary process. It is important to use this hierarchy of insight and wisdom. These people can inspire, stimulate and guide others to take their appropriate roles in society at their own level.
- Lifelong learning is important. Experiencing astonishment and pleasure in what is new and unknown, will motivate people to invest in continued education. Learning life skills includes how to communicate with others in a safe, open and effective way and how to take one's own responsibility. Renewed educational structures and simple personal development programs for everyone can create responsible and capable citizens who can build the future of society together.
- Integral beliefs in focused growth in all domains within certain boundaries and based on positive human values, Example: the Doughnut Economy envisioned by Kate Raworth.

5. How can we see this transition happening in individuals?

Not many people in the world have yet had the opportunity to develop towards the Integral Perspective. In the Netherlands, at this moment, as a rich country which has developed Orange-Green and is expressing a relatively healthy Green, several Yellow individuals and organisations can be found. In this section I will describe various characteristics of Yellow/Teal/ Integral persons. What has been changed in the transition from Green to Yellow?

When moving through the Green perspective people get to know themselves better and learn to communicate with each other in an open and inclusive way. They struggle with their ego. They are involved with themselves and with what is happening in the group. Green emphasizes the importance of its own perspective (personal growth, solidarity, harmony, sustainability, open communication, love, etc.). And also the importance of the Left (internal) side of the 4 quadrants of Wilber: Green loves the personal inner quest (UL) and connecting with other people (LL), but doesn't like the systematic view and rules (LR) and is not always practical in implementing actions (UR). Green has a marked preference for its own values, criticizes other perspectives like the Orange one and especially rejects the Blue and egoistic/intolerant behaviour (Red-Blue).

During the transition from Green to Yellow the appreciation for all previous perspectives grows, especially for the Blue value system. Yellow looks at the bigger picture, can see the added value of each of the previous perspectives, and how the integration of the healthy aspects of all value systems leads to advancing insights and new forms of products and cooperation. Yellow has an external focus and wants to achieve concrete results.

Functioning from the Yellow (Second Tier) perspective one is an instrument in service of something that is greater. The goal is not more power, wealth or fame. The contribution is intended to serve the future and the survival of humanity as a whole. As an instrument one is able to formulate what is needed based in not-knowing: "Thy will, not my will, be done" Following a path of one's own, these people have the courage to endure rejection and can deal with the unavoidable fear.

They know themselves, they know where they err and are able to correct that. They start living their soul's destiny.

To be able to develop till this level and to show up at this level, it is important to do our work in Growing Up as well in Waking Up. During our path of awakening we will learn and experience that life is not about (Material) Happiness as the Orange and Green perspectives are trying to promote.

6. How can we see this transition happening in groups/organisations?

Only a few groups and organisations function at the Integral/Yellow/Teal level. Frederique Laloux did good work inquiring into and spreading the idea of Teal organisations. For the new generation of innovative entrepreneurs, Teal works like a magnet. However, to be able to function from Teal/Yellow it is needed that the previous levels in First Tier are fully developed and healthily integrated in the organisation. We can see that in many cases of enthusiastic new organisations and businesses which desire to be Teal, the Traditional (Purple, Red and Blue) and sometimes the Orange perspectives are not yet balanced enough.

The transition starts from the Green level. The Green postmodern organisation mainly looks from one perspective, and solutions for problems are found within this framework. It is focused on relations, harmony, personal growth, dealing with emotions, the group process and mutual relations. Understanding and explaining negative behaviour and events gets a lot of attention. It is felt important to listen to everyone and to take time for exchange of experiences, feelings and opinions. The ideal is to take decisions by consensus. Green likes equality and dislikes power. Often the result is an unclear and hidden power structure and the consensus decision making process is time-consuming. The vision for the future of the organisation depends on this process. What can we observe, what has been changed in the transition from Green to Yellow?

During the transition to Second Tier a tangible energy switch occurs towards a broader perspective and deeper connection. The focus becomes more external and oriented on tasks and results. Choices are made. As a consequence, more conflicts will arise and harmony will be disrupted. Working for the whole might require unpopular measures. There is a growing insight that not all information and opinions are correct and that a clear view is needed to progress.

Characteristic for the Yellow perspective is emergence: observing and sensing how the system moves, then taking the next step, observing and sensing what the effects are, then taking the next step, and so on. Starting interventions in social systems anywhere and following it everywhere. The general future direction is clear and connected to the survival of humanity. Personal development (growing up), spiritual development (waking up) and staying alert for ego stuff (cleaning up) is part of the organisation and the individuals who are working in this context. This development of consciousness is needed to become a good instrument in service of the whole.

The Yellow perspective is consciously operating from the deeper connection that already exists. It looks from various perspectives and sees the potential. Attention to results and relations is balanced. Differences between people are recognized. Dominant hierarchies (based on external characteristics) are seen as wrong, but the hierarchy of developed wisdom and personal growth is seen as necessary for progress. To achieve results various kinds of power are used (CAPI – Coalesced Authority Power & Influence) and elites are embraced instead of broken down (as Green does).

Transparent forms to lead the organisation like Holacracy are adopted to transcend First Tier organisational structure and culture. Decision making is based on substantial objections and looking for a workable next step.

7. Characteristics of an Integral (Yellow/Teal) project

Based on our (limited) knowledge of and experience with the transition from First to Second Tier and what it means to think and act from the Yellow/Integral Perspective, we describe what an integral project would look like. It will be characterised by certain values, a specific structure, leadership and communication. Below are the results of a first brainstorm session.

7.1 Values/principles/energy:

- The Purpose of the project deals with the bigger whole: survival of humanity, the emergence of evolution and increasing awareness. More concretely, it is focused on sustainability, improving the quality of life, finding new solutions for urgent and complex problems, inspiring an integral spiritual life, improving the health of the Spiral for individuals, organisations and society.
- The Integral perspective is leading in the design, development and implementation of the project. It takes into account all previous value systems and integrates the advancing insights into new forms, products and cooperation.
- Emergence is the leading principle: observing the system, sensing what will be the next action, implementing that and observing again. Attuning to the connection that is already there.
- Other important principles are: starting from What Is; working from silence; adjusting the tempo to the DNA of the project; embracing differences; focusing on opportunities and possibilities (instead of on limitations); progressing step by step; sustainability in ecology, people and time. The project is focused on development and opportunities. AND-AND approach. Looking for win-win-win solutions (multi-value creation), like multiple goals in care for autistic youngsters, community building, new recreation opportunities and earning money. It's all possible. The main question is: does it work?
- An integral project is embedded in or oriented to influencing the bigger context. The focus is on having impact. Cooperation with higher structures from the beginning is important. The project can start as a pilot or an experiment, but it has to be connected with other organisations and governmental bodies to be able to spread the results of the project and influence national policy.

7.2 Organization/structure:

- The project is organised using the three Teal principles of Laloux: purpose, self-management and wholeness.
- The first step in the project development is the application of the Stepping Stones of the Chaordic Design process:
 1. Describe the Need, What is the necessity for and the uniqueness and DNA of this project? Why do you want to start it?
 2. Formulate Purpose and Principles,
 3. Think about People, Concept, Limiting Beliefs and Structure.
- The project is always situated between Chaos and Order on the edge of not-knowing, between dreams on one hand and concrete goals on the other. In the interaction between both sides, new ideas will be invited and emerge.

This is an ongoing process, ever developing and renewing, also during the implementation. Again, again and again... This open way of working is new to most people. They are used to working in one direction and want to have certainty. Here the Purpose and Principles provide the focus and grounding. It is all about trust in the process and focus on the harvest.

- All First Tier value systems are present and active in a healthy way. Often the desire of the project owners is to feel free and creative (Red, Green and Yellow) and we can see resistance to Purple (create connection), Blue (structures, procedures) and Orange (be effective and efficient). It is a challenge for them to include all.
- Use transparent governance structures like Holacracy: a clear structure with clear roles connected with accountabilities. Look for people who can fulfil the roles that are defined in service to the common purpose. Strive for consent (workable not-perfect solutions) instead of consensus.
- Attention given to results and relations is balanced.
- The project development is based on the Purpose and Principles. A clear vision, concrete visible goals, a defined project strategy and steps for the short term and clear choices is helpful to make the start. A continued focus on Purpose and Principles gives the flexibility and stability to adapt the strategy when circumstances and opportunities are changing.

7.3 (Personal) leadership:

- The project leaders – the persons who are in charge – need to have developed into Yellow. That is an important condition for an integral project (Laloux). The founders also need ‘shaper’ qualities⁸ to create a successful project. A Yellow project lead or advisor is not only a good process manager, but also has the substantive knowledge to make the project a success.
- Other people who are active in the project may function from other value systems. In fact, people with talents in all value systems are needed. A financial person better be well versed in Blue.
- The leaders must be able to involve people who are functioning from other value systems, using focused, clear language translated in all value systems, and to deal with the conflicts that will arise. In general, tensions are needed to progress the organisation as they hold information on what is not working.
- All people involved have to be willing to communicate in an open way and to reflect on their behaviour. Personal development is an ongoing process and needs facilitation. An important question for all participants is to get clear: what do I need personally and what do I have to learn to contribute to this project? An integral project is built on conscious people who can function as an instrument in service of something bigger than themselves.

7.4 Ways of communication fitting in Second Tier:

Integral communication asks for new methods and working forms like:

- Use moments of silence to stop the exchange of words, to become grounded in the body and then let the words emerge from a deeper wisdom
- Appreciative Inquiry; Appreciation of what is and of the powerful elements which are already present. Start from the resources and qualities which are available.
- The capacity to formulate one’s stance clearly and listen carefully.
- Letting one’s contribution be guided by the larger interest and not by personal ego-controlled interest.
- Meet each other and all differences with respect, wonder and joy. Don’t criticize, but build upon the contribution of the other attuning to the whole.

- As a leader: speak in the language of all value systems in order to be understood by all participants.
- Always listen and speak from an open, curious attitude

8. How can we see this transition happening in (parts of) society?

Currently, a Second Tier society doesn't exist yet. But in some countries like The Netherlands and especially in the world-wide networks of Yellow people, something new is emerging. In my international calls with Integral Coaches, MondoZen practitioners and other integral people, immediately there is an intimacy, openness and understanding, we can easily listen to each other, ask powerful evocative questions, go deep and sometimes give wise advice without having met before. More and more of these networks are emerging like Integral City, The Hague Center⁹ and of course the IEC meetings! It is as if we are speaking a new international language that connects and feeds us. Maybe it is still a tender flower, but hopefully it is a strong one and a kind of weed multiplying quickly.

What might we see in these parts of society and the world?

Most societies are still functioning in the Traditional (Purple/Red/Blue) and Orange realms. The Netherlands is one of the Greener countries. The Green perspective believes in boundless possibilities and self-development for everyone. It is focused on good and open communication, including people, caring for each other, investing in 'underdogs'. It strives for harmony, happiness and a good life for everyone and doesn't like conflicts and painful measures. It cannot deal with (Red) aggression/action and dislikes (Blue) judgments, hierarchies and procedures. Green looks for solutions that fit its vision and takes the time to find them. 'Polderen' (seeking a compromise (particularly within a political context) in order to come to an agreement) is a typical Dutch word. Equality is a very important value.

In section 3 we already saw that listening to all voices without discernment leads to stagnation in society. In order to progress, Green has to take the lead. And taking the lead at this moment in history means taking unpopular measures like abolishing petrol cars; diminishing the number of personal and business flights; changing eating patterns (less meat); buying sustainably made clothes; fast transition to renewable energy sources; looking for mixed strategies to deal with migrants; building energy-neutral greenhouses; lowering the power consumption in industry; stopping with using gas from Groningen; making sharp choices in any domain. We are confronted with difficult dilemma's like:

- expensive surgical operations for a few <-> healing many people with cheap medicines
- individual freedom of choice <-> banning petrol, meat or guns
- admitting more migrants <-> more costs and less public support
- better education <-> higher public costs.

Of course this might arouse conflicts and disrupt harmony which Green doesn't like.

Another big obstacle is that implementing the Green agenda seems to become prohibitively expensive. So, Blue-Orange tends to take over again leading to more money-driven policies and more bureaucracy. (Wow!) How can this regression be transcended and how can we use the powerful Yellow tendencies in our society to progress to the Integral level and Second Tier?

To support society to enter Second Tier much needed steps can be taken like sharing knowledge about the evolutionary view, deep inquiry and slowing down.

8.1 Sharing knowledge

The first step in the transition to Integral is to recognize the value of all previous perspectives as we need all value systems integrated in a healthy way to function at a higher level. It means that people need to know about the integral map and that what is happening in the world, can be explained better by using this map. We must learn to observe what is going on from an evolutionary perspective.

8.2 Inquiry

Then, just like individuals need to get to know themselves in all their (developmental) layers, to discover what colours their shadows have, to deal with their oppressed and underdeveloped parts, to do their personal work with an open heart and develop their spiritual line in order to learn to live honestly and in peace with themselves and their fellow humans; similarly, organisations and societies have to take on the responsibility to do this deep work. We have to formulate inspiring purposes for policies and activities in all realms of society, including all citizens (this is one of the principles). E.g. the realisation of more sustainable energy systems is not only interesting for implementing a Green agenda, but can be very profitable for (new) enterprises and will provide new employment opportunities. We have to find out where new ideas and possibilities get stuck and how to get the stream flowing again. This can be compared it with getting the water under control: building dikes and bridges, making more space for abundant water, digging new canals, thinking about new flood defence strategies. We have to discover what views and actions are hindering the evolutionary progress of society and find out in which ways we can start rowing in the same direction. Often we have to learn to become humble and to wait for the moment that new openings become visible.

8.3 Slowing down

An important condition for inquiry and change is to slow down like is being done in the application of the U-process. CHE-NL is developing a new tool for meetings called the Development Forum in which we try to find answers to a specific question/issue starting with slowing down and speaking from our inner wisdom. We call it the Art of Second Tier Communication. Practicing slowing down and speaking from the heart is an excellent way of introducing the Integral perspective and can be done in many different situations. Slowing down opens the access to connection with all people, all beings, all things, the whole cosmos. The connection is always there but most of the time we forget it and tend to act from separateness. Slowing down facilitates deep listening to inner wisdom, surrender to what emerges, and organising in a natural way. Solutions then arise from the morphological field of endless possibilities.

9 Finally

Looking from the Integral Second Tier perspective creates more connectivity between people, more clarity about the next steps needed to solve our problems, more energy and action leading to concrete results based on dialogue with all parties involved. The Center for Human Emergence in the Netherlands (CHE-NL) wants to contribute to this transition from First to Second Tier together with all organizations and individuals who see the benefit of it. We already see in various places how this perspective works to transform organizations into places of purpose.

Everybody's personal development as an integral leader is important and needed to meet the current challenges. As SDi-scientist Dr. Don Beck says: "No more prizes for predicting rain, only prizes for building arks".

1 See Ken Wilber: Trump and the post truth world, 2017

2 See Clare Graves: Human nature prepares for a momentous leap, 1974

3 See www.spiraldynamicsintegral.nl/en

4 Toine Leroi, Rob van Drunen and Leida Schuringa: Nederland is een dictatuur van gelijkheid geworden. En nu? (The Netherlands has become a tyranny of equality. Now what?), March 2018

5 Follow the Money is a movement researching people, systems and organisations which show (financial-economic) misconduct in society.

6 In Spiral Dynamics, this first Second Tier level got the colour of Yellow. Ken Wilber calls it Teal or Integral.

7 See Human OS audio.

8 See the teamroles of Belbin

9 The Hague Center for Global Governance, Innovation & Emergence exists to help align necessary resources for the current human and planetary transition. This transition is, in its essence, about moving from separation and polarisation, towards coherence and complementarity. This same transition is playing itself out across all sectors — ecology, economy, and governance, to name a few key ones.

Utrecht, April 2018, Leida Schuringa, leida@humanemergence.nl

About Leida



Leida Schuringa is a coach, author and SDi-trainer. She is very interested in applying SDi on societal issues. She worked in the non-profitsector and international development (at this moment in projects in Malawi and Czech Republic) and is involved in the Center for Human Emergence (CHE-NL). She wrote books about project management, handling diversity and community empowerment. Her passion is to contribute to cooperation between people from many different backgrounds. She is especially involved in the issue of integration of refugees.