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An Integral Approach to Global Awakening



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KOSMOS

An Integral Approach to Global Awakening

The mission of Kosmos is to inform, inspire and engage individual and collective participation in shaping our global future. This we endeavor to do through new ways of thinking about our commonality and diversity, and through transforming and connecting the objective world of global realities and the inner world of spiritual values.

We are the first generation called to the task of building a sustainable and compassionate global civilization. The task has become urgent as we awaken to the radical choice – either extinction or survival with a more enlightened consciousness. We believe the leading edge integral worldview is the most comprehensive approach to personal, cultural and global transformation today and holds the promise of shaping our emerging global civilization in a direction worthy of human dignity.

“Kosmos takes an integral approach to global emergence that stimulates the mind, awakens the heart and inspires global engagement. It has magnetized experienced leading edge thinkers in global governance, economics, institutional transformation and contemporary spirituality who are committed to evolutionary global change through transformation of self, culture and institutional structures. Highly recommended.”

Ken Wilber, Integral Institute

“The thoughtful reading of Kosmos brings both light to the mind and warmth to the heart. What unifies its contents is also what animates it: the reach toward a new global renaissance of integral values, while honoring Spirit’s longing for beauty. Our planet today is fractured as never before, and we are consciously charged with forging the future. As the first integral journal to explore and engage global affairs, I keenly applaud, endorse and recommend it.”

Don E. Beck, Ph.D., The Spiral Dynamics Group

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INTEGRAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Barrett Chapman Brown

Why care for the environment? Ask this question of people from around the world and myriad responses will return. You might hear, “Do it... For your children * For the technical challenge of achieving sustainability * Because the Glorious Qur’an states that this is man’s obligation * To save Gaia * Because it is the ancestral way * For the opportunity to make money * To preserve the beauty of Nature * So I don’t get cancer from pollutants * Because it is honorable and is our responsibility to be stewards * To stop the greedy industrialists by any means necessary * Because pollution is a sin against Creation * To sacredly express love for all of existence.

What is your answer? Do any of these responses feel true to you and appeal to your deepest sensibilities? Which responses, if any, fail to strike a chord or feel uncomfortable to you? How and where does that discomfort show up in your body?

Place your attention in those areas of your body and feel into how you might be viscerally reacting to one or more of the statements.

These different statements will resonate with different worldviews. If you had even the slightest negative reaction to any of the statements, it may indicate that you have some difficulty relating to the worldview that generated it.

This article is a brief introduction to the art and science of communicating about sustainability to different worldviews. One key ability is to be able to honor all worldviews as they are, even if they differ from our own. Any negative reaction we feel toward a worldview blocks our capacity to authentically communicate and create mutual understanding with someone who holds that lens on life. By focusing conscious attention on where we feel a reaction in our body, we can begin to move through any internal blockage we might have toward that worldview. Effective communication starts with profoundly understanding ourselves.

The Development of Worldviews

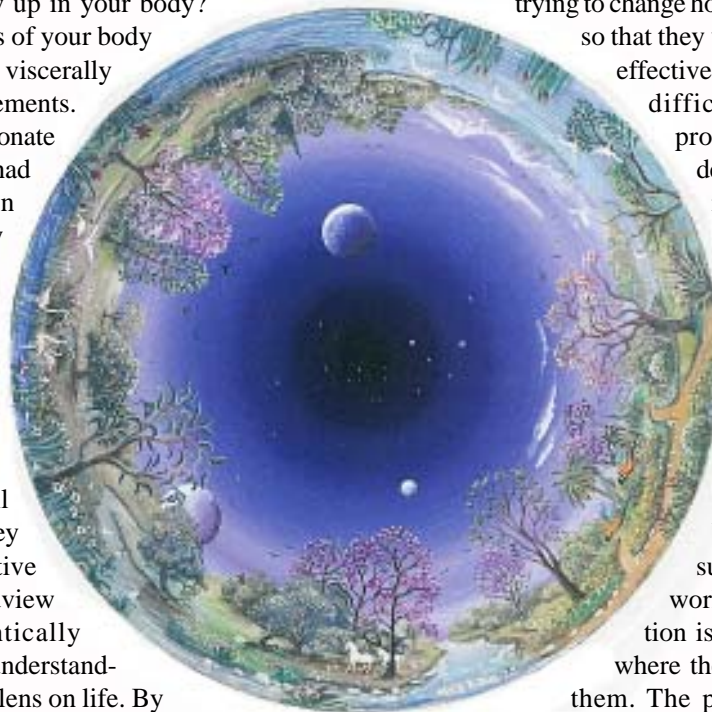
Worldviews change over time, becoming more complex and encompassing. This occurs as an individual’s sphere of care and concern grows. We develop from only caring for ourselves, to caring for our family/group/nation, to eventually caring for all sentient life. Developmental psychology is used to map out worldviews and identify how they change over time. After decades of research in the areas of cognition, morals, values, ego-development, and other facets of human nature, it is clear that

there are at least three general stages of worldview development: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. Each of these worldviews sees the environment—and is motivated to care for it—for different reasons. Some people will be motivated to care for the environment in order to protect and support themselves and their family. Others will feel compelled to act sustainably to support their group, or nation. Still others will be inspired to care for the environment in order to serve all life, everywhere, now and in the future.

Complement Transformation with Translation

Many approaches to sustainability education attempt to *transform* a person’s worldview in relation to the environment; trying to change how someone sees the environment, so that they will care for it more. This may be effective at times, but it is often a long, difficult, and resource consuming process. Robert Kegan, a Harvard developmental psychologist, claims in his book, *The Evolving Self*, that it takes approximately five years to completely change a worldview *if* the right conditions are present. A complementary and more efficient approach is to *translate* sustainability messages into the worldview(s) of the population. This article briefly explains how to translate sustainability to the most common worldviews. Fundamentally, translation is a way of truly honoring people where they are, without trying to change them. The process is to carefully frame a sustainability message in a way that resonates with someone’s worldview, with their deepest values and motivations. If framed well, and supported with the requisite prompts and reinforcements that help people establish habits, behaving sustainably *can* become a part of people’s everyday living.

The chart on the following page lays out five different “Ecological Selves.” Each represents a common worldview, has a unique way of understanding the environment, and resonates with a specific communication style. The chart is followed by a summary of how to choose developmentally appropriate imagery for sustainability communications. We will finish with a look at how to use this research and communicate about sustainability to multiple worldviews simultaneously.



FIVE ECOLOGICAL SELVES AND HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEM ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

| | Eco-Self | What's Important | Aspects of Eco-Self May Be Found In... | Best Sources of Communication | Best-Fit Approach (Hot Buttons) | Demotivators (Cold Buttons) |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| PRE-CONVENTIONAL | Eco-Guardian <i>romantic ethos</i> Respects Nature; return to lost ecological paradise; "tribal" | Magic or unseen forces; ancestral ways; customs; rituals and rites of passage to connect with natural world; omens; council of elders; lineage; shamans and witches | Storytelling about caring for land and animals based in animism, magic, or some tribal traditions; naive appropriation of indigenous views and practices about nature | Counsel from revered elders, chieftain, or shaman; from within the family/tribe/clan; through spirit/Natural realm signals; the word and ways of ancestors | Refer to traditional rituals, ceremonies, icons; reference mystical elements, superstitions, magic; appeal to extended family, harmony, and safety; honor blood bonds, the folk, the group, taboos; rely little on written language and facts; use storytelling, emotions, drama, songs, dances, imaginative 2D images | Disrespect chief, tribe, elders, ancestors; desecrate sacred grounds; violate taboos or ritual ways; introduce ambiguity; threaten family |
| | Eco-Warrior <i>heroic ethos</i> Conquer Nature; reject civilization; fight "the system"; macho | Assertion of self over the system or Nature; obtain power and be free; respect; the "Law of the Jungle"; impulsivity and immediate reward; toughness; "hands on/street/survival" skills | EarthFirst!; eco-terrorism; the stoic mountain climber; extreme sports; trophy hunting; frontier mentalities; off-the-grid housing; Monkey Wrenching | Person with recognized power or something to offer; straight-talking Big Boss; respected, revered, or feared other; celebrated "idol" with reputation; someone of proven trustworthiness | Demonstrate "What's in it for me, now?"; offer "Immediate gratification if..."; challenge and appeal to machismo/strength; point out heroic status and legendary potential; be flashy, unambiguous, reality-based, and strong; use simple language and fiery images/graphics; appeal to narcissistic tendencies | Challenge power or courage; shame or put down person/group; move onto turf; be derisive and laugh; taunt as an outsider; appear or talk weak; make excuses |
| CONVENTIONAL | Eco-Manager <i>stewardship ethos</i> Manage Nature from secular or religious framework | Maintain order and follow the law (divine law or state laws); keep harmony and stability; manage Nature for future bounty; follow higher authority and rules to avoid punishment | Earth as Garden of Eden; Puritan ethos; Boy and Girl Scouts; environmental legislation and protection agencies; endangered species regulations | Rightful, proper kind of authority; a higher position in the One True Way; down chain of command; according to rules; person with position, power, and rank; in compliance with tradition and precedent | Invoke duty, honor, country; use images of discipline and obedience to higher authority; call for good citizenship, stewardship, self-sacrifice for a higher cause; appeal to traditions, laws, order, and being prepared; draw upon propriety and responsibilities; show how behavior will insure future rewards; require delayed gratification, assuage guilt | Attack religion, country, heritage, or standards; desecrate symbols or Holy Books; put down the One True-Way; violate chain of command; disregard rules and directives; appear unfair or sleazy; use profanity |
| | Eco-Strategist <i>rational ethos</i> Manage, use, and exploit Nature for profit and play | Progress, prosperity; independence; financial success and the "good life"; science, technology, universal rights, invisible economic hand; improve life through competition | Natural Capitalism; conservationism; the science of ecology; urban planning; utilitarian perspectives; environmental psychology; industrial agriculture | One's own right-thinking mind; successful mentors and models; credible professionals; sources which are advantageous to the self-image, result from one's own observations, or are based upon experience | Appeal to competitive advantage and leverage; draw upon success, progress, and status motivations; inspire to face the challenge; call for bigger, better, newer, faster, more popular; cite experts; use scientific data, calculated risks, proven experience; show increased profit, productivity, quality, results; demonstrate as best option, strategy; show as way to preempt government intervention | Put down profit or entrepreneurship; talk about collectivization; challenge compulsive drives; deny rewards for good performance; force sameness; trap with rules and procedures; seem inflexible or ordinary; treat as one of the herd |
| POST-CONVENTIONAL | Eco-Radical <i>equality ethos</i> Postmodernist; save Nature for humanity and for its intrinsic value | Liberate all humans and life from greed and domination; protect the global commons; promote community and unity; share resources; connect with Spirit; consensus; social responsibility; political correctness | Deep Ecology; Ecofeminism; Social Ecology; animal rights; Biocentrism; Eco-centrism; Ecopsychology; Environmental Justice; green politics; social construction of nature; corporate citizenship | Consensual, communitarian norms; enlightened colleague; the outcome of sharing and participation; the result of self-growth; observation of events; the here and now; appeals to affect/feelings/emotions | Create a sense of belonging, sharing, harmony; show sensitivity to human issues, Nature, and others; call for an expansion of awareness, self-understanding, and liberation of the oppressed; use symbols of equity, humanity, and bonding; use gentle languaging and Nature imagery; build trust, openness, exploration for growth; present real people and authentic emotional displays; encourage participation, sharing, consensus, teamwork, community involvement | Assault the group's goals and ideals; try to get centralized control; reject the collective for individual accountability; deny affect and feelings; degrade quality of life or environment; rely on "hard facts" and exclude people factors; act elitist |

Ecological Selves by Sean Esbjörn-Hargens, based upon values research by Clare Graves, Don Beck and Chris Cowan, and self-identity research by Jane Loevinger and Susanne Cook-Greuter. Communications material (approach, hot and cold buttons) adapted completely, with permission, from *Spiral Dynamics* (www.spiraldynamics.net).

USING IMAGES TO COMMUNICATE TO DIFFERENT ECOLOGICAL SELVES ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY



Eco-Guardian

A major component of the Eco-Guardian worldview is its magical and animistic belief system. Young children often hold this worldview. A similar form of it also makes up part of the complex constellation of beliefs of many indigenous groups, as well as some aspects of the New Age Movement. Therefore, images that anthropomorphize animals, plants, elements,

and natural forces—or show them as imbued with sentient consciousness—are often used to communicate sustainability messages to this worldview. Such an image is that of Yemaya, the Yoruba Mother of the Sea. An example of her use for a sustainability initiative occurs each New Year's Day in Rio de Janeiro when the city launches "Operação Iemanjá" (Operation Yemaya) and mobilizes 3000 workers to clean up the beaches after the previous night of revelry.

Eco-Warrior

This worldview is also expressed differently amongst youth than among adults. Environmental superheroes appeal to the youth of many cultures. *Hibridos del Mar* (Hybrids of the Sea) are Mexican marine superheroes who battle pollution and corruption. This is an image of Boston-based Hawgman. He is "Nature's champion, defender of the outdoors, protector of the environment." He has pledged to fight polluters and he encourages youth to practice "catch and release" fishing and to



keep their fishing areas clean. In order to appeal to adults deeply rooted in the Eco-Warrior worldview, fiery and intense images and graphics are often used. Pictures of extreme pollution or brutal environmental destruction may help successfully

move some people to action. The Earth Liberation Front, for example, has a picture of a torched Humvee on its homepage, symbolizing their intention to "stop [the] continued destruction of life, by any means necessary." Subtler and less extreme imagery, such as pictures of a solo mountain climber or other images showing "heroic efforts to save Nature" are also commonly used to appeal to the Eco-Warrior in us.

Eco-Manager

Images that appeal to the Eco-Manager may be embedded in either a secular or religious context. Usually, these images will show "pure"



Nature, untouched by humanity, flourishing, pristine, and, in the case of Christian environmentalism, reminiscent of the Garden of Eden. This image of an endangered orangutan is an example. The Eco-Manager worldview may suggest the way Nature "should be", according to Divine or state law. Examples of images I have found targeting this worldview are, a lone howling wolf, a simple butterfly, a cathedral of trees, and many images with the sun—God's grace—shining down upon the Holy Land. The "What Would Jesus Drive?" campaign sprouted out of the Christian evangelical movement. It uses images of Jesus looking over a tangled mess of highways and stating, "Transportation is a moral issue."

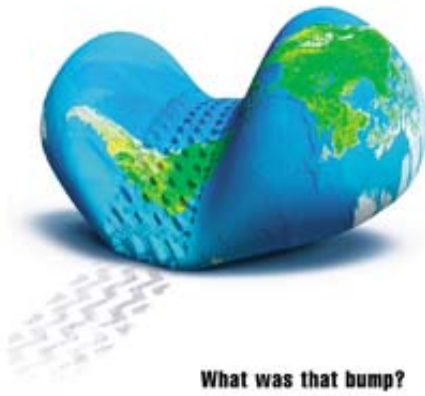
Eco-Strategist

Sustainability images that are used to motivate people who hold this worldview fall into two broad categories: Challenge/Strategy and Nature+Technology. This image, from the book *Winning the Oil Endgame*, shows black "oil" pieces against white "sustainability" pieces. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development uses similar challenge/strategy imagery in its publications: pictures of hurdles, a tightrope, a Rubik's cube, and a maze—all representing the challenge of sustainability.

Also common are images that blend technology and Nature, suggesting that our technology is key to achieving progress in sustainable



development. Eco-Strategist imagery in general tends to communicate a "human control" dynamic. The assumption is that we have control over nature; this is a common theme in the rise of modernism worldwide.



What was that bump?

Eco-Radical

Images that motivate this worldview fall into two categories: cynical/deconstructionist and nurturing/spiritual growth. The postmodern backlash against modernism and its (unintended) ill effects has led to a slew of imagery that challenges our definition of progress and

suggests alternative ways of seeing the world. A vanguard organization in this arena is *Adbusters*, with its “culture jamming” initiatives. *Adbusters*’ website is replete with smart, hip, and cutting edge artistry that appeals to the Eco-Radical. An example is this image of Earth as victim of a hit-and-run accident. Another example is an *Ecologist* cover which shows a malnourished African boy in front of a giant, felled, old-growth hardwood. The headline screams, “Why have you forsaken me?” This worldcentric sensitivity to the downtrodden, which the Eco-Radical embodies, generally emerges alongside a commitment to personal/spiritual growth. This growth motif employs positive, beautiful images of humans communing/meditating in nature, celebrating life outdoors, and serving sustainability while transforming themselves.

Communicating to Multiple Worldviews Simultaneously

These Ecological Selves are the environmental “lenses” of the most common worldviews held by humanity. However, people don’t merely operate with one worldview. While these worldviews may appear to be strict stages—developing from pre-conventional to conventional to post-conventional and beyond—they are more akin to probability waves. This means that although people have a “center of gravity” —the core worldview they tend to operate from, say 50% of the time—they also respond from more complex and less complex worldviews the other 50% of the time. Three other factors make this analysis challenging. The accurate measurement of a worldview is a rigorous process and, in any given population, a variety of worldviews are present. Finally, highly developed adults are often found to value all the worldviews, seeing the importance of each. Given these issues, the best strategy for communicating about sustainability is to use language and images that appeal to multiple worldviews simultaneously.

Experienced, intuitive communicators do this naturally, sensing the appropriate language for their audience. Here’s a simple, 1-2-3 process for crafting these communications. 1) Identify the three dominant worldviews, or Eco-Selves, amongst the target population. 2) Develop a separate sustainability communication (with images if needed) for each of these worldviews, drawing upon relevant authorities and communication sources, and using the “best-fit approach” guidelines.

3) Combine the three separate communications into one, being careful not to use any of the “demotivators” for any of the worldviews. As long as no “cold buttons” are pressed, people will tend to “hear” only that which resonates with their worldview. For example, someone with an Eco-Manager worldview will tune into the Eco-Manager-specific communication yet pass over the part of the message tailored to the Eco-Strategist or Eco-Warrior.

This process demands that we be mindful of our own worldview. If the communication I’ve crafted sounds good to me—yet I haven’t tailored it to the audience’s worldviews—then I am most likely on the wrong track. I may be merely communicating the way I see the world, which might be either a fundamental (unconscious) dishonoring of the audience, or lazy scholarship. Knowing that different worldviews exist, I feel a deep, internal responsibility to learn from and learn about an audience first, and then tailor the message as specifically as possible.

I believe that this depth of conscious communication is requisite for all sustainability education if we are to authentically and intelligently respond to the increasing complexity of our environmental and social challenges. This process is ultimately about 1), profoundly understanding ourselves and how we see the world, and then 2), turning that mindful engagement to our audience and striving for seamless mutual understanding. While this approach is by no means a panacea, it is a vital part of successful communication. For years now, various senior leaders in UNICEF have successfully tailored all their communications to local worldviews. Currently, business consultants, government officials, and civil society leaders from around the world do this as well. If this manner of meeting people where they are resonates in your heart and mind, I invite you to test it, learn more, and eventually use this approach in all your communications about sustainability.

A Note from Barrett C. Brown

Thank you for having taken the time to read this article. It is an honor to share it with you. We at the Integral Sustainability Center are working at the nexus of sustainable development, Integral theory, and developmental psychology. We are attempting to map and design sustainable development theory and practice that address both the complexity of the exterior world of behavior and systems (natural and social) and the complexity of the interior world of psychology, consciousness, and culture. Our intention is to continue sharing our research and growing the Integral Sustainability community in service of effecting global sustainable development. For further information, please visit us on-line through Integral University (www.integraluniversity.org), or contact me directly at bbrown@integralinstitute.org.

Barrett C. Brown is Co-Director of the Integral Sustainability Center at Integral University. He was formerly international development director of The Sustainable Village and is currently studying for a Ph.D. in Human and Organizational Systems. He lives in the green mountains of Vermont, USA.

