



# WHEN THERAPISTS GO WOKE

Dr. Keith Witt ◇ Corey deVos



# Insight Map

## When Therapists Go Woke

Dr. Keith Witt & Corey deVos

### INDIVIDUAL

INTERIOR

- **Recognizing One's Own Conditioning:** Progressing through stages of development enhances self-observation, including the ability to recognize one's own conditioning. This awareness is key to understanding reactions and biases. Healthy versions of things like critical race theory encourage such self-awareness, prompting individuals to examine their conditioning. Unhealthy versions, on the other hand,
- **Embracing Diverse Perspectives:** The ability to remain open to disagreement and differing viewpoints is a marker of psychological maturity and growth. This openness fosters a deeper understanding of oneself and others, promoting empathy, tolerance, and intellectual flexibility.

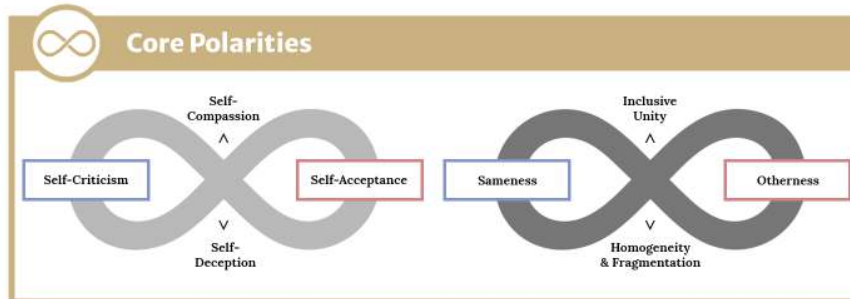
- **Polarity Management as Practice:** Rather than viewing conflicts as problems to be solved, polarity management recognizes them as polarities to be managed. This approach acknowledges that opposing viewpoints often hold partial truths, and the goal is not to eliminate one in favor of the other, but to find a dynamic balance that respects and integrates both.
- **Orange's Dual Role in Bigotry:** The Orange stage of development, while liberating us from ethnocentrism, also introduced new forms of bigotry, allowing judgments to shift from ethnic or cultural characteristics (2nd-person) to physical characteristics (3rd-person) like race. It also led to the rise of "scientific racism" where misapplied evolutionary theories were used to justify ideas of racial superiority and inferiority.

EXTERIOR

- **Client-Centered Therapy:** Therapists should focus on helping clients more fully align themselves with their own values, rather than imposing their own. This promotes individual autonomy and respects the client's unique perspective.
- **Enfoldment in Discourse:** The evolution from debate to dialogue to discourse represents a vertical progression in collective communication. Enfoldment culture at the Teal stage organizes the multitude of perspectives surfaced at the Green stage into a more cohesive model of reality.
- **Danger of Forbidden Topics:** Every forbidden topic is a step towards authoritarianism and fascism. Open dialogue is essential for a healthy society.

- **Ideological Shifts in Psychotherapy:** Psychotherapy training programs are increasingly incorporating ideological mandates, reflecting troublesome societal shifts and the evolving nature of mental health care.
- **Partial Truths in Critical Theories:** Observations coming out of things like critical race theory or critical social justice contain partial truths that are important for cultural understanding. Misuse of these insights can soil the reputation of the work itself.
- **Situationally Appropriate Hierarchies:** Dominator hierarchies, when aligned with growth hierarchies, can be situationally beneficial. They can effectively regulate behavior in educational and parental contexts, and foster efficiency in business environments. However, misuse can quickly lead to harmful outcomes.

### COLLECTIVE



Grow Up				
Amber group-centric	Umber skill-centric	Orange self-determining	Green self-questioning	Teal self-actualizing
<b>Doctrine:</b> At the Amber stage, conversation tends to be limited and controlled, often dictating what topics are allowed for discussion, with little room for multiple perspectives or subcultures within a larger culture. It's often characterized by a set of talking points within a confined box.	<b>Debate:</b> The Umber stage, also known as the Expert stage, introduces the concept of debate culture. Here, it's about one's expertise and principles versus another's. There's an exchange of ideas, but the influence may be limited.	<b>Dialogue:</b> At the Orange stage, debate culture evolves into dialogue culture. This stage is marked by a genuine curiosity and openness to investigate each other's ideas. It's about understanding the world from another's point of view, with objective measures influencing the dialogue.	<b>Discourse:</b> The Green stage opens up to discourse culture, welcoming different perspectives and ways of making sense of the world. However, it can be challenging to organize these perspectives into a shared understanding and action.	<b>Enfoldment:</b> The Teal stage introduces enfoldment culture, which organizes a multitude of perspectives from the Green stage into a more coherent and cohesive model of reality. This stage aims for a collective shared understanding that everyone can find some partial agreement with.

Open Up		
<b>Interpersonal Intelligence:</b> Cultivating interpersonal intelligence is key to building bridges across different perspectives. It enables effective communication and mutual understanding, which are crucial for navigating the complexities of societal norms and values.	<b>Intrapersonal Intelligence:</b> The journey towards personal growth and understanding societal dynamics requires a strong intrapersonal intelligence. It allows us to recognize our own biases and conditioning, fostering self-awareness and personal development.	<b>Ego Development:</b> Understanding the stages of personal and societal development requires an understanding of ego development. It allows us to recognize our own and others' stages of development, fostering personal growth and effective communication.

[00:00:00] **Corey deVos:** Dr. Keith. How you doing, man?

[00:00:01] **Keith Witt:** I'm doing great today. How are you doing, Corey?

[00:00:03] **Corey deVos:** I'm doing awesome, man. It's so good to see you.

[00:00:05] **Keith Witt:** Yeah, as usual. It's good to see you too. Oh boy.

[00:00:09] **Corey deVos:** Oh boy. Yeah. I'm looking forward to today's episode, Keith. So, you know, a couple weeks ago I sent you an article, that was actually passed on to me from a friend, and it was, you know, a little bit concerning. The title of the article was something like, "How Therapists Became Social Justice Warriors", and it's basically about this idea of how we go about sort of both explicitly and sort of surreptitiously, projecting our own values onto other people and really expecting other people to maintain our values for us, and all the different kinds of judgment that can arise when that's not taking place, when you're talking with someone who has very different. value set than you do.

And you know, this is, I think, an issue that is exceptionally important, obviously I think to therapists, right? Because just last month you and I were talking, and one of the things that you were talking about was how you get really super curious when you are working with various clients in terms of figuring out where their values lie. And your sort of metrics of success in a certain kind of way as you described it in that previous discussion, was if you're able to help them more fully align themselves, not with your values, but with their own values. Which to me just seems like such a critical integral impulse.

And again, this is something that's important not only to all the therapists that are out there, but to the rest of us, to all of us integralists, right, who are encountering all kinds of people in our world and in our sort of spheres who, you know, some of them think like us, others think very differently than us. Some of us have, you know, similar or shared values as we do, others have very different values, sometimes even values that we might sort of, you know, impulsively see as being sort of offensive to us or whatever, or offensive to some cause or purpose that we really believe in.

So really I think what we're here to talk about today is sort of strategies of enfoldment is sort of how I think about it. How can we do a better job of actually building bridges with each other and fully accepting and honoring and respecting each other for who we are rather than for some sort of projected ideal of who we think each other should be, that we're putting on each other. Again, I think this is a really critical conversation, I think it's exceptionally relevant right now too politically, culturally,

[00:02:32] **Keith Witt:** that's right.

[00:02:33] **Corey deVos:** So I'm really excited to have this conversation today and to hear what you think, brother?

[00:02:36] **Keith Witt:** Well, yeah! By the way, that's a great setup. Well done!

[00:02:41] **Corey deVos:** Thanks.

[00:02:41] **Keith Witt:** So the article was how psychotherapists became cultural warriors, social justice warriors by Lisa Davis in the Free Press. So I had a lot of, reactions to this. It stimulated an awful lot of, perspectives looking through this, and reactions. I was interested in my own reactions as much as I was interested in anything else.

So let's start with her premise. The premise that she had is that increasingly, according to her, psychotherapists and psychotherapy training programs are including certain ideologies into their training, where therapists have a political agenda, or a cultural agenda that, according to some people, they should be imposing on their clients.

[00:03:28] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:03:29] **Keith Witt:** That they should be coming from that particular place. There's a field of study called Critical Social Justice Theory, that says... and by the way, I'm gonna talk a little bit about this. Their definition of "critical" is different than the definition that we have when we talk about critical thinking, which is very interesting. Okay?

Critical Social Justice Theory says that, racism and oppression is interwoven into the lower left and the lower right. And that, if we are not actively looking for it, actively advocating against it, then we are wrong, we are immoral and unethical. And if you study... and I went into this, I went, "okay, I'm just reading critiques. Let me read something from people who believe in, in critical social..." So I got a few sources, and, it is very much like critical race theory and intersectionality, but with one added component.

And the added component in psychotherapy is, essentially wanting to add another layer to the therapist's code of ethics. They wanna add... like I followed the APA code of ethics pretty meticulously. I think it's a pretty good code of ethics. If anybody ever wants to read what I think is a pretty good code of ethics, read the APA code of ethics. They essentially want another layer, another code of ethics on top of that, that says it's unethical to not bring up oppression or privilege. That it's unethical to not ask about racism, if it's a possibility. That it's unethical to not advocate anti-racism positions.

And Lisa Davis gave a few salient examples. And you know, at first I thought she's catastrophizing. You know, people like to make a big deal about things, cuz there's a subtle note in the article of disapproval of this, just like there is, as you and I talk about it, I mean, anybody's listening, does Keith and Corey agree with critical social justice theory or social justice therapy? And they go, no, they don't. You know, and they're making fun of it and stuff. So, and that's true. So I'm fully acknowledging that it has stirred up defensive and offensive reactions in me, which I'll talk about later.

[00:05:54] **Corey deVos:** Sure.

[00:05:54] **Keith Witt:** So, some of the examples, for instance, there was a black woman therapist with a white woman client, white woman client, wanted to talk about cancel culture. And her therapist says, I can't do that, I won't do that. That's contributing to white oppression, to white supremacy, and I don't feel safe talking about that with you.

Another guy, UCLA professor, was approached by a black student who said, I want you to grade black people more easily this semester or a quarter, at UCLA, because of the Black Lives Matter protests. And the professor wrote a very polite email saying, I'm not gonna do it, and this is why. And there were petitions and attacks and he was

disciplined by the University.

[00:06:36] **Corey deVos:** Hmm.

[00:06:37] **Keith Witt:** University of Colorado, student, in a discussion about safe places, says, well, what about safe spaces for white people who don't wanna offend anybody by inadvertently making a mistake? She was attacked and given a hard time.

And then to a certain extent, crown of her examples was a woman named Leslie Elliot in Antioch, in Washington. Apparently Antioch in Washington has really drunk the pluralistic Kool-Aid when it comes to this kind of stuff. First of all, they have professors that say "you have to bring it up in the first session. In fact, you have to give yourself a score on where you are on privilege and oppression, give your client a score, and notice the discrepancy and bring it up." When she said, "I don't think that's a good idea," she was attacked, where they had a, what they called, it was like a loyalty oath. They had a civility pledge that they were forced to sign. You know, now it was a civility pledge about a lot of great things. We want to be sensitive to culture. We wanna be sensitive to racism, sexism, oppression of minorities. But it was a loyalty oath. Okay? So she did an eight minute video where she says, "I don't like any of this stuff. And I think that this goes against therapy, where we wanna maintain a neutral stance and have it be client-centered. This is ideologically centered therapy."

And instead of engaging her in dialogue, and this is important, instead of saying, "well, let's have a dialogue about it, in fact, let's have a public dialogue about it," the CEO of Antioch Washington, a guy named Fitzgerald, attacked her, sent an email to everybody except her calling her a racist, just going after her. And she was outraged, of course, because once you're in a fight like this, you know, you put your dukes up, and it turned into a big mess. And so she wrote some more videos describing this.

Okay, so all this stuff is going on, and apparently there are organizations, and there are philosophers, and there're all people, writing very dense... it reminded me about why I'm not in academia, Corey.

[00:08:44] **Corey deVos:** That's why I call myself an artist, Keith. I can get away with anything.

[00:08:47] **Keith Witt:** Yeah, you know, I read the academic stuff. So first of all, there were some interesting points. Second of all, you know, if you're writing academia, you have to write so that it's very difficult and painful to read what you're writing. Okay? And I'm going, come on you guys. This is one of the reasons that in all my books, if you read my books, you might have trouble understanding stuff or you might not, but you know, I'm not writing like that. I'm never gonna write like that again. I dislike it.

But besides from how they were doing it, people believe very strongly in these positions. In fact, the "critical" in critical race theory and critical social justice theory doesn't mean "critical" like critical thinking, when you look at different sides and look for truth. "Critical" means, in this case, it is so important that you have to start with it. You have to have it be a foundation of what you do. Okay?

Now, I had a lot of reactions to this. My first reaction was, this isn't the first rodeo for me about this particular kind of energy. Back in the seventies, the humanists were contemptuous of the behaviorists and cognitive and psychoanalyst people, and then the psychoanalysts were contemptuous of the behaviorists and the cognitive people, and you know, everybody was all hostile towards each other, towards the other disciplines. You know, I took great pleasure in the fact that behaviorists, when they looked for therapists, chose psychoanalysts, but then in the literature they would trash psychoanalysts. You know, it was like that.

[00:10:12] **Corey deVos:** Mm-hmm.

[00:10:13] **Keith Witt:** I mean, I was a certified sex therapist with the American Association of Sex Therapists, and then they said, "you can't use the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex classes for continuing ed, because we don't like them." They were a competing organization. So I resigned. You know, gimme a break. In fact, I resigned from APA for similar reasons. It's like, really? Now I'm not much of a joiner and I'm not really a member of any association, which might be a problem, I don't know. But you know, it seems like self-righteous people get caught up in these things. But this was a little bit more than that. Okay? This is really bringing ideology into the therapy realm.



In the Antioch in Washington, a professor told Leslie Elliot, "the therapists that we're training won't be able to work with Trump supporters." And what bothered me about that wasn't just that she said it, what bothered me about that, is she was a professor of psychotherapy who didn't even hear herself say it.

[00:11:14] **Corey deVos:** Right,

[00:11:16] **Keith Witt:** You know, she wasn't listening to what she just said. Because if you're a real therapist and you hear yourself say something like that, alarm bells go off.

[00:11:26] **Corey deVos:** about critical thinking.

[00:11:28] **Keith Witt:** Talk about critical thinking. Okay. And, you know, and the whole thing about the pledge, okay? Political correctness, virtue signaling, all this kind of stuff. Now, what this does, and what stands out about this to me, interestingly, is that first of all, there was the events themselves, the positions themselves, are not inviting conversation, they're not inviting debate, and they're not inviting the dialectic. There's nowhere in there, "well let's talk about the different perspectives to the contrary." In case after case, and there were several of them that they quoted, someone brought up a difficult topic, and they were publicly castigated, humiliated, and told to essentially shut up. Now, whenever you start forbidding topics, forbidding conversations, you're beginning to move towards fascism

[00:12:26] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:12:28] **Keith Witt:** And then for every topic that's a forbidden topic, that's a step towards authoritarianism and fascism.

[00:12:34] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. And real briefly, I think an irony here is that many of the insights and observations that are coming out of things like critical race theory or critical social justice for example, are actually things that in some form we could probably partially agree with. As an integralist, I can make room for certain of these observations, and I can take them very seriously. However, I think we need to remember that the observations themselves are coming from fairly sophisticated Green stage of development that's capable of perceiving systemic realities that prior stages cannot yet



see. And yet what happens is, all sorts of conclusions are drawn about those perceptions that we get at sort of a mature Green, and then those can be wielded, those perceptions, those insights, whatever, can be wielded by any stage of development. And what we often see is this sort of regressive move back to Amber. So when you take high Green sort of insights into sort of systemic dysfunction and all of that, but then you try to reduce it to a pledge, you're taking Green and sort of trying to enforce it with Amber, which as you say is a really, really short slope to full on ideological fascism.

[00:13:50] **Keith Witt:** Yeah. You know, one thing about the value memes is that the healthy aspects of the value meme tend to fit together pretty well, and the unhealthy aspects of the value memes, they tend to fit together pretty well also. And so this, not just refusal, but an antipathy towards conversation.

Okay, that's one problem. They have certain conversations be forbidden conversations. That's another problem. And specifically they have you and me disagreeing, meaning that one of us is morally suspect. Okay?

[00:14:29] **Corey deVos:** Right,

[00:14:30] **Keith Witt:** Now, philosophers disagree. Scientists disagree. Healers disagree. Fanatics attack each other when they don't agree with each other. Okay? So, you know, what we're doing now is we're endorsing fanaticism. Once again, rigid positions are the poison in psychotherapeutic session, because you always need to be fluid moving towards whatever is beautiful, good, and true for your client, and then anchoring in that, and moving it other directions.

And so if you actually are having a conversation and you disagree, and one person believes that you disagree with me as immoral, we need to start examining our worldviews.

Now, the reason why I'm not talking about a real conversation with somebody that I disagree with around this, is that they hardly ever happened. You don't see them happening, they're not invited, they are pushed. And then often when something is set up, like on a college campus, extreme left wing or extreme right wing will come and scream and shout and not let people talk about it. Okay? "We don't even want you to

talk. You can't, how dare you talk about this?" Okay?

But, you know, if somebody thinks that my position is immoral, then my job is to look at my position. The subtle message is that somehow your belief is doing violence or harming somebody. Okay, well, is my belief violent or harming somebody? I'm willing to look at that. If I make an assumption that hurt somebody because I have some kind of preconceived bias, I mean, certainly that's happened to me many, many times. You know, you find yourself projecting yourself into your clients all the time. And so I've discovered this happening with me on endless occasions in therapy, and I've adjusted, you know, to try to be more awake and more, you know, wide open around that.

[00:16:27] **Corey deVos:** Mm-hmm.

[00:16:28] **Keith Witt:** But, if we're not looking at the moral disapproval below the surface when we disagree, if we're not looking at what the nature of our discourse is, if we're actually gonna have a conversation, which is a victory, is it a debate? You know, a debate is, I'm not paying any attention to what's valid in your position, I'm just trying to blow off what's valuable your position, and make a case for my position. Now that's better than no conversation at all. So I'm all for that. The next stage, of course, is if one of us is looking for a dialectic and the other one can't do that or won't, well, one person deescalating, one person looking for what's valid in both positions, certainly takes some violence out of the conversation and leaves some room for growth. Okay, so that's pretty great.

Now, the thing that I noticed about me doing this, was I had an immediate reaction. That's basic attribution theory. Basic attribution theory is, if you see something ugly about another person, you tend to define their character by that one thing, and dismiss 'em. Okay? Now, this is a universal human thing. And I can see how, from an evolutionary standpoint, how strong it's, because I had impulses to do that with all these examples. Think about it. If you are threatened and your nervous system amplifies the threat and then disconnects from the other person, either by fighting, fighting is a form of psychological disconnection, like beating on somebody. You have to disconnect psychologically and empathically from 'em, otherwise you can't beat 'em. Because you know, if I hurt you, I'm hurting myself if I'm empathically attuned, but if I'm not, if I'm disconnected. So that particular thing, that disconnection, feeling that moral disapproval,

amplifying it, and then discounting that person, just happened.

Now that doesn't happen with me all the time, but it happens enough that I think that this is so hardwired that we're not gonna get rid of it in us. You know, our shadow selves can grow to the point, or our adaptive unconscious, so that we do other stuff a lot of the time. But every once in a while it's gonna happen, just like it did for me, reading this article. And then I went, "okay, I see that happening, and now it's my job to look for what's valid about this stuff." This is exactly what you were talking about earlier.

[00:18:45] **Corey deVos:** Mm-hmm.

[00:18:46] **Keith Witt:** And of course what's valid about this stuff is all psychotherapists are anthropologists, cultural anthropologists. Whenever somebody comes in, you are very interested in their cultural experience. And not just... we don't exist just in one culture, Corey. For instance, you and I have our own Keith and Corey culture. Okay? Well, it has its own standards and experiences and memories and anticipations and all that other stuff, that's different from the other cultures that we're embedded in. As a therapist, you're really interested in what the cultures are of your client, and you're interested in your own reactions to 'em.

For instance, I have a client who is now getting involved in ethical non-monogamy. Okay? Ethical non-monogamy is this thing that's happening now, where people that are sexually distressed with their partner, but don't wanna lose their marriage and stuff, so they talk to their partner about it and they have good communication, and they go, "okay, I'm gonna go out and do certain kinds of sexual adventures with other people, and I'm not gonna lie about it to anybody, and I'm not gonna do with anybody who's lying to anybody about it, and that's gonna be our answer to the fact that we're not having the eroticism between ourselves that we want." And it's a big thing. I mean, at least in LA, probably in New York too, I don't know about, I haven't checked it out, you know, you can go online and say "I'm an ethical non-monogamy person," and other ethical non-monogamy people of the opposite polarity than you will hook up with you and you know, you'll come up with your standards, and then you'll go out and have a date and see if you have a good time. All right, well, there's part of me that was a little disapproving of this when I first heard it...

[00:20:20] **Corey deVos:** Sure, it's not my bag.

[00:20:22] **Keith Witt:** ...in that it bothers me that couples give up on their love affair with each other. But, you know, as I was helping my client with this stuff, I was realizing it's a legitimate thing to not wanna lose your marriage, even if it's a companionate marriage and your best friend, and to not wanna betray them. And if you wanna go out and then expand your sexuality in this particular fashion, alright. I mean, in this case people get hurt because we all have the same sexual drives, like jealousy and stuff, but people don't get betrayed.

[00:20:53] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:20:53] **Keith Witt:** and I was observing this with this guy in his marriage. His wife was hurt by some of this stuff, but she didn't feel betrayed. And I developed some admiration, which I still have, for this whole ethical non-monogamy movement. People trying to find an answer to "would I have to leave if somebody's not a great lover?" No, you don't have to. We have other options. That's an example of me feeling that in resistance, and then as I went in it, changing my mind about it.

And ideally we can do that kind of stuff. But basically all of us, if we feel a little bit of threat, are gonna go into that thing, gonna go into that response of separation and attribution stuff. Defining people by a negative characteristic, and then not having the conversation. And it would be great if it was the dialectic, but almost any conversation is better than a forbidden conversation.

[00:21:48] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. Yeah, Keith, real, real briefly on that, geez, a year or so ago I had a conversation, it might have been with you, actually, I'm not exactly sure, but we were actually talking about sort of the different stages of dialogue and discourse and what have you. And one of the things that we noticed was that, at the Amber stage, conversation doesn't really happen. That's actually where conversation gets shut down, right? Because Amber tends to be very totalitarian in how it wants to impose its own views on others. There's not a lot of room for multiple types, there's not a lot of room for multiple subcultures within a larger culture, for example. So Amber tends to like, you know, "here's sort of the talking points, and this is really, you know, you've got this box that you can play in, and that's about it."



And then at, you know, just after Amber, when we get to what we might call the UMBER stage, right? Sort of that little stage, that transitional stage between Amber and Orange...

[00:22:42] **Keith Witt:** 3.5 (in Terri O'Fallon's model).

[00:22:44] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, Suzanne Cook-Greuter calls it the Expert stage. That's right. When you get to that, you actually start getting something like debate culture, where it's like, it's my expertise and my principles versus your expertise and your principles, and that sort of I think dynamic can be a little bit limited sometimes, but at least there's an exchange of ideas. I think it's left to be said how much of an exchange of influence there is, right? But at least there's an exchange of ideas.

And then you get up to the Orange level where debate culture turns into something more like dialogue culture. Right? And dialogue culture, this is where we are actually, with full sort of curiosity and openness, investigating each other's ideas. We're interrogating each other in a certain kind of way, in a healthy, I think fruitful kind of way, because I want to see the world from your point of view.

[00:23:33] **Keith Witt:** With objective measures. In Orange, there are objective measures of a better and worse, because winning and losing, profit and loss, exist. So you know, you have something external to your biases that really influence you at Orange.

[00:23:49] **Corey deVos:** That's right. No, well said. And I think that right there is exactly what then opens us up to the next stage of exchange, which is something like Green discourse culture. So we go from debate to dialogue to discourse. And the major difference between dialogue and discourse is dialogue is predominantly occurring between a handful of parties, two, three, maybe four parties. Whereas discourse culture, I think is opening up to all sorts of different points of view and, you know, perspectives, and different ways of making sense of the world. I think the challenge we run into there is, we don't yet know how to sort of stack these different perspectives together, we don't know how to organize them quite right. It's just sort of like a, you know, open the door, everyone's welcome, everyone say your piece and we'll all share our truths and, you know, and so forth. Which can be tremendously healthy in a lot of ways. But it's hard sometimes, I think, to get real sort of collective shared understanding

and shared action out of that space.

Which brings us up to the Teal stage, and you know, maybe this also applies to the Turquoise stage as well, which I just generally call "enfoldment culture". Enfoldment is what allows us to, okay, you know, at the Green stage we got everything on the table, right? It's all on the table now, we can see every possible point of view. Now let's start organizing this into a more coherent and cohesive model of our reality, one that hopefully everyone involved in this discourse can find some partial agreement with. Chances are no one's gonna fully agree with it, but everyone should be able to find a little piece of agreement in here somewhere.

And that's how I see, anyway, this sort of exchange growing from Amber to Umber to Orange to Green, to Teal and Turquoise. And again, what I noticed there is that Amber is where it all shuts down.

So whenever I start seeing insights that seem to me, right, are coming from more advanced stages, right? Because I resonate with them from sort of those stages that are still alive within myself, that's how I identify what a Green thought is. I never actually know what someone else's interior is, all I can say is, "this resonates with my Green" or "this resonates with my Orange" or what have you. And what I notice is whenever these insights, sometimes beautiful, expansive, and "critical" in the way that you said earlier, critical and very deeply important insights... but when they're used in a way, when they're wielded in a way that shuts down conversation, actually censors other points of view, you are sliding... you're no longer in enfoldment, you're no longer in discourse, you're not even in dialogue and debate anymore. You have just gone full on into top down ideological talking points.

And this is obviously where our culture gets stuck again and again and again, because most of the people out there who are repeating these kinds of Green slogans aren't actually capable of doing the math to generate those points of views in the first place. In other words, they're pre-Green people who are using Green slogans in order to pursue a particular agenda. And just because they're using signifiers that we would associate with Green, doesn't mean that the people themselves are coming from Green, that they're inhabiting the Green space that produces those insights in the first place.

[00:27:09] **Keith Witt:** Well, yes. As you progress, as you grow, you have more capacity for self-observation. You know, that's Ken's thing of, you know, first person and second, third, fourth, fifth, there's just more self-observation. Also there's more focus on interiority. You know, even Orange, because Orange is focusing on the interiority of gratification and satisfaction and winning and all that other stuff. Okay?

One of the blind spots of Green is that we need to have hierarchical understandings of everything. There is more healthy and less healthy, there is better and worse. But green goes "no, we don't wanna be hierarchical," and so their hierarchical stuff goes unconscious, and they impose their hierarchy as if it's, you know, a divine right. For instance, in colleges now where students are viewed more as consumers and colleges are more parents who should protect people from being offended, when your environment's like that, if you see somebody do something that you don't like, you report 'em to somebody. Okay? You know, now I know I'm, I'm doing a Keith gratification story, but I was an undergraduate, I was in this class, a psychology class, it was taught by a psychoanalyst. There must have been 200 people in the class. You know, I was a scraggly-hair barefoot hippie, but you know, I was a good student. And he said, "all gay people are narcissistic and exhibitionistic." I raised my hand and I said, "Hey, look, you know what? You didn't present any supporting data. It feels wrong intuitively. It hasn't been my personal experience. And so in the absence of having data that supports a statement like that, I think that you really made a big mistake." You know, and he and I went back and forth about it a little bit. Dr. Brahms, his name was.

[00:28:52] **Corey deVos:** Hmm.

[00:28:53] **Keith Witt:** Now, I really enjoyed that exchange, and I think he probably did too, and I'm sure the class did. Okay? I didn't go to the administrators to say, "well, Dr. Brahm said this thing." It was like, let's talk about it. Let's have a conversation. And I think that that standard needs to come back with Integral, we're the universal donors after, after all.

[00:29:12] **Corey deVos:** That's right. That's right.

[00:29:13] **Keith Witt:** So we get to observe our own hierarchical response. One of the valid statements of a critical social justice theory is that we are coming from our own embedded ideologies. That's 100% right. I am definitely an integral fanatic. Okay? And

I'll say that. I mean, you know, philosophers can disagree and scientists can disagree, you know, and healers can disagree, but fanatics attack each other, as I said earlier. I'm kind of an integral fanatic. I mean, if somebody tried to tell me that, you know, the upper-left quadrant doesn't exist, you know, I, you know, I'm sorry. You know, you're gonna have to show me some really good data about the upper Left quadrant doesn't exist.

[00:29:58] **Corey deVos:** I don't think I'd be able to be here for 20 years if I didn't have a little bit of evangelicalism in inside of me. You know what I mean?

[00:30:04] **Keith Witt:** Yeah. Yeah. Right. And so I make no bones about it, I wanna serve the highest good. I'm a worldcentric person. I wanna support the evolution of consciousness. You know, when somebody comes in and there's like 18 people in their life where there's some kind of involved in a problem, I want to serve all 18 of those people. And my client might not want to, but I do. And so I, you know, I make no bones about it. And God knows, I mean, I was raised in the fifties, I'm sure I got so much embedded racism and sexism in me. You know, I've been discovering it all my life and kind of correcting for it, but I don't think it's ever gonna stop, you know, showing up one way or another in some weird thing.

Now most of the time, I'm assuming I catch it and make an adjustment, and then, you know, I wake up a little bit more, and I grow up a little bit more. Waking up and growing up is a lot of fun. So it's valid that people have ideologies. It's valid that culture affects stuff. It's valid that oppression happens.

Here's what's not valid. There's not a historical perspective on all this stuff.

[00:31:06] **Corey deVos:** Mm-hmm.

[00:31:07] **Keith Witt:** You can look at all the embedded racism and sexism in American culture right now and go, "oh, ain't it awful." Okay? Well, if you look at the arc of history, starting from whenever to now, it's been getting a hell of a lot better, particularly in those areas, particularly through my life. I've seen it get better, and I've seen people change their perspectives again and again and again. So there's an ongoing process that is



working to address sexism, racism, anti-trans, all that kind of stuff.

By the way, that ongoing process is driven from conversation, is driven from people theorizing, is driven from political action, all that kind of stuff.

[00:31:49] **Corey deVos:** And it's not linear, I think is an important point. Progress is not linear. Like right now, a lot of people are feeling like, wow, you know, a lot of the hard won rights that we've earned over the last 20 years for LGBT people, for example...

[00:32:02] **Keith Witt:** Yeah, there you go.

[00:32:03] **Corey deVos:** ...we're seeing maybe a risk of some erosion there. There's sort of some backward steps that we're taking as a culture right now, here in America. And it's like, well, you know, progress is never linear. I mean, what's happening is those backward steps is going to create, it's gonna generate a new kind of pressure, right? So that somewhere down the line we can take another great big step forward. And this is often how development works, especially when we're talking about a mass population, development across the population. It's never a smooth sequential, you know... well, I should say it's sequential, but it's rarely linear. These things do unfold in sequences, but it's never A to B to C to D.

[00:32:42] **Keith Witt:** You know, one thing that was interesting to me around this was how Biden handled the debt crisis. And what was interesting to me is how my reaction to it completely changed. You know, I was in "don't negotiate with terrorists" mode throughout the whole thing. Biden wasn't. Biden went, "Hmm, okay, I'm working with people. How do I get people to solve this problem with me?" You know, so McCarthy is despised by pretty much everybody. He thought, "I bet if McCarthy, if I could make him look good, then we could get a deal that would avert this problem and give me most of what I want," which is exactly what that deal does for the Biden agenda. And he got together, and they talked and they did this, and he didn't grandstand, he didn't do Ted Cruz bullshit or you know, Marjorie Taylor Greene bullshit. Came up with a deal that made McCarthy look good, and solved the problem. And I thought to myself, "jeez, Joe Biden, all those years in the Senate..." You know, people always say this, you know, "they negotiated deals and stuff." I kind of blew all that stuff off until I finally saw, wow, you just did that. And I'm impressed. It changed how I feel about you changed how I feel about McCarthy. It's changed how I feel about the process. It changed the dynamic of

Congress in that he got people in the center to isolate the people on the edges. I mean, whoa, I'm so impressed with this.

And so the problem when you're a fanatic... Yes, it's enfoldment. The problem when you're a fanatic is you can see real stuff. There's real oppression and real racism and all this other stuff happening. And then you take a snapshot and you go, "this is unacceptable. It's critical that we change this all at once right now. And if you're involved, it's critical that you make this your top priority." In psychotherapy, that can never be your top priority, because you're not client-focused, then you're ideologically-focused, and any kind of ideologically-focused anything over person-focused is gonna run into all kinds of problems.

[00:34:53] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:34:53] **Keith Witt:** So in a way that's, that's my answer to how psychotherapists are becoming social justice warriors.

[00:35:00] **Corey deVos:** Well, Keith, thank you. And I love this reminder to, consciously and deliberately inhabit the universal donor aspect of integral consciousness. Right? Because again, you know, it's amazing how, once you are willing to sort of, well, once you can sort of recognize your own shadows, your own confirmation biases, your own ideologies, your own sort of presumptions that you're walking into the room with in the first place, once you can kind of get those out of your way, it's amazing how much depth and insight and wisdom you can get from other points of view that are very very dissimilar from yours. I mean, I've got a lot of conservative leaning friends who, on the surface, we have so many disagreements, and they're good friends so it's fun disagreeing with each other, you know what I mean? We can sort of maintain a core of sort of, of love with each other while we're just like, "dude, you're a complete idiot when he comes to this. I love you, but you are so completely a hundred percent wrong." And, you know, and we have fun with it. But the great thing is, is once you get through sort of the surface features, right, once you get through the views, and you are able to contact sort of the underlying values that are animating the views, that's where you get this depth of wisdom, and that's where you start noticing "oh, we are agreeing almost every step of the way. But how this gets presented on the surface is very different. I'm on this side of the mountain, and you're on that side of the mountain, but guess what? We're both climbing up the same mountain, right? We have very different views from our

respective sides of the mountain, but we're both ascending the same mountain. We're both sort of coming from a similar kind of amalgamation of different values. And we're all integralists too, so we can identify like, here's my green, here's my amber, here's my... you know what I mean? And here's how they get sort of lit up or when they shut down.

[00:36:52] **Keith Witt:** Here's my regression, here's my peak moment. Here's my unhealthy red, here's my healthy red.

[00:36:58] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:36:59] **Keith Witt:** That awareness of it, that monitoring it with acceptance and caring intent, it moves us forward. And I think interestingly in this country, the polls of this country around values are amazingly consistent. 70% of the country agrees about pretty much everything. Now, the way people get political power, derives from demonization, polarization, mass formation psychosis and all that other stuff. And so you have people sharing values, but being separated by the process, the governing process. And I think that's because we need to mature to meet the promise of democracy.

And if you went back to, if you go back to Greece, where they started all this stuff, democracy was basically people that were educated. Okay? Now, of course, you know, I mean, I'm not, I'm not glorifying Greece, they had slaves, they had people that didn't get to vote and all this other stuff, but the people that voted, which were all the citizens, they were all educated citizens, and they all got together and they debated ideas with each other, and they came up with decisions. And that worked pretty well for Athens. You know, they basically dominated everything for hundreds of years around that until, you know, they got kind of, you know, uh, a Putin type over in Italy, you know, conquering everybody.

And so as we grow in consciousness, we grow into the promise of democracy where there's antibodies to mass formation psychosis, and antibodies to demonization and polarization. And people start looking for those, those solutions, those moving forward steps that help the lower right evolve. The lower right has not been, has not been allowed to evolve in America because of the strategy of abusing the process, particularly the right wing strategy.

[00:38:56] **Corey deVos:** Mm-hmm.

[00:38:57] **Keith Witt:** So what that means is there's a lot of evolutionary pressure in the lower right in the United States. It's pushing, it's pushing to break out around the environment, to break out around individual rights, to break out around income inequality and so on. It's fascinating watching it, and I have a lot of faith in it.

And that brings us back to this whole thing about social justice warriors. Yes, I'm a social justice warrior, absolutely. But also since I'm an integralist and I'm integral most of the time...

[00:39:29] **Corey deVos:** You're an integral justice warrior.

[00:39:31] **Keith Witt:** I'm an integral justice warrior.

[00:39:32] **Corey deVos:** Come on Keith. We have a whole show about this.

[00:39:34] **Keith Witt:** We gotta all show about this. So in, in the therapy session, there's a hierarchy, and the hierarchy is my client's welfare and their value system and their worldviews first. And I can find out what's healthy and valuable about any worldview, pretty much. Well, I shouldn't make grandiose statements. Most worldviews. And show my client how that agrees with what's healthy about other worldviews or other people. I'm very confident about that and I enjoy doing that. Okay?

[00:40:06] **Corey deVos:** Yeah.

[00:40:07] **Keith Witt:** And so that particular form of discourse, that psychotherapeutic discourse is beautiful, it's good, and is true, and it's very effective. Okay? I could not do that if I'm required by a new ethical standard. You know, before we go any further, let's talk about how you've been oppressed and I've been privileged. You know, let's just have a conversation about that, you know, 20 minutes into our first session. I don't think so. You know, I'm I'm not gonna do that. And now if they made that official, I would get in trouble with somebody if somebody reported that.



[00:40:40] **Corey deVos:** So a couple things. First off, anyone who's watching this right now and has any questions, uh, we would love to hear

[00:40:46] **Keith Witt:** Yeah, please.

[00:40:46] **Corey deVos:** I've got a couple questions for Keith while we wait to see if any come in, but you can either type your question into chat, I'll read it on the air, we'll answer it that way. Or there should be a call in button or something like that on your screen if you're here in Riverside with us right now. That'll allow us to turn on your camera, we can do some real time back and forth.

But Keith, I really appreciated what you were saying. You mentioned poles, and you mentioned polarities, because this actually been key for me personally in terms of my own kind of mental ILP, right? This is how I am able to get past a lot of the surface views and disagreements that I might have with someone, and to recontact sort of that shared space of values. It's through polarity thinking, because what I notice is that, nine times outta ten, if we have a disagreement, and it's just a total like, "no I'm right and you're wrong" kind of disagreement, nine times out of 10, what we're looking at is not a polarity, but one of the healthy or unhealthy versions of a given pole in a polarity. And by sort of exploring that a little bit, right, getting more deep into it, you go from the surface level disagreement into a deeper sort of appreciation and acknowledgement of an underlying polarity that we probably can both agree with. And people might notice that for the last month or two on Integral Life, all of our new pieces of content come with polarity maps.

[00:42:07] **Keith Witt:** Oh, you've been doing that. Those are beautiful. You showed 'em to me. Hey everybody, if you check out Corey's polarity maps, I love them. And you know, I told 'em, send me all of them. Uh,

[00:42:18] **Corey deVos:** well,

[00:42:20] **Keith Witt:** Send all of them, because they're really cool.

[00:42:23] **Corey deVos:** They are, and it's interesting, in terms of producing this content, like actually making the polarity map makes me as the producer appreciate and get more out the conversations that I'm having with you and with Mark and, you know,

and so forth. And hopefully our audience feels the same way.

But what's interesting about these, Keith, is I'm not going into the conversation with a set of polarities in mind. What I'm doing is I'm then, I'm taking the conversation as we had it and I'm saying, okay, now what are the underlying or foundational polarities that are running through this, that sort of organically or naturally present themselves.

And usually it feels fairly profound. It's like, "oh, that's what we were doing." Right? And I love having this sort of accompanying all of our ongoing content, because now it's not just like, "here's a podcast for you guys at home to consume and then just go about your day." But it's like every piece of content has a practice, has a reflection, has a contemplation that comes along with it, and hopefully people are able to use those polarity maps in order to, you know, clean up their own sense making or see more in a conversation or, you know, have a better way to sort of walk out of the conversation with a set of insights and wisdoms and takeaways and so forth.

But I wanted to mention polarity training, polarity management, as just critical for this process of getting beneath the surface layers of disagreement. Even when you are, you know... I can feel the polarities oftentimes when I am talking with someone who is a very different stage of me, or just orients to a different stage than me. There are still underlying polarities. And maybe those polarities then get expressed on the surface in ways that are particular to one person's stage versus another person's stage. But there's still something underlying that connects both of them together. And that feels really important to me.

The second piece I wanted to mention real briefly is, again, the partial truths that we see in things like critical race theory, critical social justice, and so forth, because I do, again, I don't wanna throw the baby out with the bathwater here. I think there's a lot of bad actors in terms of how they are trying to bring the stuff into the world, and it's actually soiling the reputation of the work itself. And I do think some of the work remains fairly important. Particularly Keith, you mentioned that as we continue growth and development through these stages of development, one of the things that comes online is this increased capacity to simply look at ourselves, and look at our own responses, and look at our own reactions, and look at our own shadows, and look at our own conditioning. And it's that piece, looking at our own conditioning, that I think critical race

theory has something really important to say.

[00:45:05] **Keith Witt:** Oh yeah. Yeah.

[00:45:06] **Corey deVos:** Absolutely my conditioning right comes from cultural and social conditions that I have no conscious awareness of. They're just, that's just how reality self-organized before I showed up in the world.

[00:45:22] **Keith Witt:** Some of it does. Some of it comes from stuff that you have no awareness of, and some of it actually, you're seeing it happening to you. Yes.

[00:45:29] **Corey deVos:** A hundred percent. All of that I think is true. And it is important, just like critical thinking reminds us, "Hey, be critical, not of other people's points of view, be critical of your own point of view as often as you can, so you can make sure you're staying epistemically clean, and you are, you know what I mean? Critical race theory, critical social justice, is really asking us to do the same thing. Just simply bring awareness to your conditioning, and you might notice, right, as we look at the sources of our conditioning, you might notice that yes, there is progress and that progress should be celebrated, and many of the sins of yesterday are continuing to have repercussions today. There's an inertia to this stuff. And it's not like it all went away as soon as like civil rights happened. Right? There are still colonialist ways of thinking. There are still systems that originated in colonialist mindsets that continue to exert influence in our lives today, and it's good to be critical of these things. The problem people run into is when this lens, this critical lens, or the power lens, some people call it, the problem is when that becomes the only lens that we're looking at reality through. Because then it's really easy to fall into sort of these victimhood cycles. Right? Or one of the things I was talking with some friends about yesterday is, when I was a kid, the green altitude, you know, the main premise of the green altitude was, I hate everyone, cuz man, our species is, you know, what a wreck we are as a species. We've always been terrible to each other. And yeah, there's been some progress, but most of that progress is pretty recent, right, historically speaking, pretty darn recent, and we've just always been brutal towards each other. Today's Green is actually a little bit more ethnocentric Green, again, in a weird kind of way, where it's like, "I can't hate everyone, but I hate my group. As a white person, I hate, you know, being white because look what we did to the world." And it's like, you can still have your self hatred, you can still have that. Just bring it from an ethnocentric sort of theater into a worldcentric theater

and then congratulations, you get to hate everyone, which is a lot more fun. And is the gateway towards learning how to love everyone once you start stepping into teal and turquoise.

[00:47:50] **Keith Witt:** Yes. And that there's several things that you said. Um, so I wanna,

[00:47:54] **Corey deVos:** I said a lot right there? Sorry, it was a bit of a rant.

[00:47:55] **Keith Witt:** Yeah. Well, no, we do that, you and I say a lot. One thing is that, Beena Sharma's work on polarities, polarity thinking, is just brilliant. It's such an operationalization of teal consciousness, I just love it. And we keep on finding new nuances about it. And so it is operationally, whenever you're looking for the polarities, you're looking for, okay, here's one side, here's the other side and so on. But another thing that you said was healthy and unhealthy. Healthy and unhealthy can be measured by physiological measures, social measures, and psycho-social measures. And we've done a lot of that. So we know a lot about what's healthy and unhealthy.

I remember once I was going to a workshop, a two day workshop with guy who wrote *Passionate Marriage*, David Schnarch. He's a narcissistic guy and irritating, but you know, he has a good system. And he was all, he borrowed, Murray Bowen's concept of differentiation. He says, "we're doing differentiation. We're making people fulfilled human beings. And that's how you fix sex. You have two fulfilled human beings." Which is true to a certain extent, but there's always exceptions. And I went up after him and I said, you know, how about the differentiation between healthy and unhealthy? I mean, that seems to me to be a more fundamental differentiator. He said, "no, no." Remember, his first response was I was threatening his system. So his first thing is to dismiss my position. Say, no, no, no, that's just too broad and too general. Now excuse me, David Schnarch, I disagree with you. I think your position and differentiation is pretty great, but when we're looking at the relative merit of something, we can actually look at what's healthier and unhealthier for individuals and groups. And we have lots of social research that supports us in this. And you know, it's not healthy to be depressed. Okay? Sorry. Or anxious. It's not healthy to not make enough money to pay your bills because you have a culture that doesn't help you do that. Okay? This is unhealthy. It's not healthy to be socially disconnected.



[00:50:01] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:50:02] **Keith Witt:** It is healthy to be the opposite of those things. So there's all that.

[00:50:05] **Corey deVos:** You just nailed the polarity. Someone's asking what are examples of polarities that might come out of this conversation? Individual health, collective health. That is a polarity, where they can serve each other, but they can also, you know, get disintegrated from each other. And one of the things that I noticed, Keith, is yes, oftentimes the polarity maps that we're coming up with are variations of the classic individual/collective, interior/exterior, parts/whole polarities that exist ubiquitously at all levels.

[00:50:34] **Keith Witt:** And have existed forever. And if you talk to, say, Chinese students, they say "we suspend civil liberties, we'll give up on them, and we'll accept the unfairness of our system in the interest of moving everybody forward so that we don't go back to the cultural revolution or worse." If you talk to people in the United States, hyper-individualistic United States, you know, my individual rights are more important.

[00:50:57] **Corey deVos:** Agency/communion.

[00:50:59] **Keith Witt:** Part of this is development is never all at once. You know, you went through a green period, of "I hate everyone." Okay? That was a necessary step to the next level, to the place you are now where "I can find something to love about any perspective." And so the culture is like that, government is like that, all that stuff is like that. And when we forget about it, when we become fanatics, we go, "no, no, that natural development, non-violent developmental process, mostly non-violent developmental process, that's too slow for me. We have to do it all at once. And if we have to sacrifice, if we have to be violent to somebody to make that happen, well that's okay because of the higher good." Okay? Now, I certainly think there's a lot of data that supports "we have to sacrifice somebody to for the higher good", that's suspect. I think that happens sometimes, but I don't think, for instance, we should go invade Uganda because they've made being gay illegal. Okay? I think that we should try to influence them to begin to consider that as not a very healthy thing to do for Uganda. So anyway, that's another example. Now are there any questions from anybody else?

[00:52:07] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, I'm seeing a lot of comments, I'm not seeing a lot of questions yet, so again, if folks have any, let us know. But I'll read some of the comments. So Laura says, " I had a young white client who had decided that she hates white people." And yeah, we see this actually, we see this a lot, I think. And, you know, look, I think there are reasons.

This is another conversation I was having with friends today. So there's a debate that we're seeing oftentimes online about the idea that white people invented the concept of race and racism to begin with, and therefore white people are to blame for all of this.

So the first thing I wanna point out is there's a bit of a performative contradiction there, right? Like if you're pointing to the idea of race as being a social construct we shouldn't be using anymore, then you can't say "white people created this construct", because you're participating with the construct. That said, I think there's partial truth to that. Very partial though. Right? I think there is truth that, you know, look, bigotry has existed from the very beginning, right? I mean, from the very beginning. Pre-history.

[00:53:18] **Keith Witt:** 5 million years ago.

[00:53:19] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:53:20] **Keith Witt:** Chimpanzees would wage war on others chimpanzees. That's a form of bigotry. That's fundamentalism in chimpanzees. Yeah, I think it's been there from the very beginning.

[00:53:31] **Corey deVos:** It's an evolutionarily advantageous trait at those stages of development to not trust groups that look different than your group, right? So it's sort of one of those unfortunate remnants of evolution that we're still kind of stuck with. But obviously brutality, bigotry goes all the way back. We have, you know, ethnic cleansing in the Torah. We have genocide, we have slavery from the rise of Babylon on. I mean, you know, we've, we've got a pretty long history of just being terrible to each other. And...

[00:54:05] **Keith Witt:** Well we've been, we've been both extremes. Humans have been magnificent to each other beyond belief in ways that can only...

[00:54:12] **Corey deVos:** Of course.

[00:54:13] **Keith Witt:** And then we've been horrible to each other, because that's what we do. We're humans.

[00:54:17] **Corey deVos:** That's what we do. We're really good to people like us, and less good to people who are not like us. Fortunately, over history, that concept of "like us" has gotten bigger and expanded and expanded, right? Until today, for the first time in history, you can say that about the entire human species, right? Because that's a perspective that's available to us now, that wasn't available to us before. But I think the thing to remember here, Keith, is that bigotry has been here from the beginning, but the forms that bigotry takes evolve over time, just like we evolve over time.

[00:54:50] **Keith Witt:** That's right.

[00:54:51] **Corey deVos:** And for awhile, there was no concept of "race" in terms of, "I'm judging you based on your third-person physical characteristics." That is a fairly recent, I think, emergent in the bigotry line of development. You know, it used to be ethnic differences, and "ethnic" really means "cultural". Which makes sense, because earlier in history, we were predominantly capable of taking second-person perspectives, but we were not capable of taking third-person perspectives. So the types of bigotry that we would see is almost like a horizontal type-based bigotry, right? Like "we are the chosen people." Or, you know, "we are Greek and everyone not Greek is a barbarian." Right? So it's a typological sense of superiority that is just basic ethnocentrism.

But I think what's interesting, and where there's a partial truth that "white people created this", sort of by accident... white people didn't create it, you could make the argument, Darwin created race and racism as we know it. And I don't mean that literally. What I mean is that the emergence of Orange and the emergence of both the primacy of physical material characteristics, the ability to take third-person perspectives on things, so no longer are we judging each other based on our cultures, but now we're judging each other based on third-person traits and qualities, a lot of this, I think, comes from

Amber, Red and Amber, hijacking some of the language that was emerging out of Orange. And even more than sort of the third-person stuff is, now we actually have a new kind of scientific racism that's coming online in like the 17th and 18th centuries, where things like a misapplied theory of evolution is giving a new kind of justification for concepts of "inferior" and "superior".

[00:56:38] **Keith Witt:** It's happening in the 20th century too with eugenics.

[00:56:40] **Corey deVos:** That's exactly right. This is what's ironic to me, Keith, is that Orange simultaneously liberates us from ethnocentrism, but Orange also gave us a whole new language for a deeper and even more insidious kind of ethnocentrism. And that is ethnocentrism in the name of sort of evolution. So if you look at like colonialist history, Whig history, right? White people are at the top of a dominator hierarchy, right? The darker the skin, the lower, the less evolved you are, and you being less evolved means I'm allowed to make any number of judgments about you and to treat you in a very particular way. That is sort of a product of Orange.

[00:57:22] **Keith Witt:** To objectify and then exploit. Now we're going back to health again. You know, anytime one human being starts objectifying another person, and then either extracting from them or abusing them for gratification, that's less healthy, that makes both people less healthy psychologically and physically. Okay? So, you know, as a health measure. Now part of what you're describing is we regress all the time. Now, do we observe ourselves regressing? Increasingly, as you progress through the first tier, increasingly the answer is yes. At teal we can observe ourself regressing a fair amount of the time, but Teal recognizes that the job's never done.

[00:58:09] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:58:10] **Keith Witt:** You know, I'll be discovering racist and sexist stuff in me forever, okay? And it might not be perceptible to anybody else by me. Okay. I mean, that's fine. The less alarmed I am by it, the more interested I am in using it to self-correct it, the better it is for everybody, and the more available I am to have a conversation about you and me and what's healthy and what's unhealthy, generally, the better it is for everybody. Which by the way, there was one question, I was looking through...

[00:58:36] **Corey deVos:** Was it this one? I'll, I'll read it real quick. "Any tips to getting Green to understand and accept hierarchies, for example of competence?" I've got a few thoughts about this, Keith, I wanna hear what you have to say first.

[00:58:46] **Keith Witt:** Well, probably you and I are gonna say the same thing. If you're engaged in a comfortable dialogue with somebody who doesn't like hierarchies, and I've done this millions of times, what you do is you just kind of point out certain kinds of hierarchical relationships. "Boy, I think Hillary would be doing a lot better job being president than Trump." Okay, that's a hierarchical statement. I think it's probably better to not tell your parents to go fuck themselves when they tell you that you can't sleep with your girlfriend in their house. Okay? It is probably a healthier response to do something other like, you know, respectfully disagree for instance. These are all hierarchical responses. And so you don't mention hierarchy, you just point out the hierarchies that people tend to agree with, and every once in a while, then, that leaves you with the option of saying, "well, what do you think is best?" Because if I think something is better and worse, I've created a hierarchy. Okay? What I'm doing is I'm just normalizing hierarchical conversation, hierarchical thinking, people thinking things are better and worse, and so on. Boy, I really like what that person has to say, I really don't think what that, I don't think that person has a lot of good stuff to say. Hierarchical relationship.

[01:00:03] **Corey deVos:** Is it better to be racist or is it better to be anti-racist? That's a question you can ask Green.

[01:00:08] **Keith Witt:** yeah, you can. That's 100%. And, you know, Green has a strong opinion about that. Well, that's a hierarchical relationship.

[01:00:16] **Corey deVos:** They have their own hierarchies. That's right.

[01:00:17] **Keith Witt:** Yeah. Yeah. And so just engaging in them, normalizing them, and so on. And here's the other one. And then every once in a while, people have little peak Teal experiences. Have a little peak moment. When someone has a peak moment. Uh, there is a woman in, Diana Fosha, this is a central part of her therapy, which she calls, Accelerated Dynamic Experiential Psychotherapy. She didn't, obviously didn't talk to me before she named her system, but that's okay. But anyway, one thing that she found was really useful, and I've been doing this forever, even before I heard about it, but I



loved it that she made it a central feature, is somebody has kind of a peak experience, and you go, "well, tell me how you feel about that experience you just had." "What do you mean?" "Well, how does it feel when you notice that you just felt a sense of awe at how beautiful your husband is, you know, trying to love you." Or, you know, "you just were crying tears of joy when you were thinking about how hard your son is working to do right. How do you feel about those tears of joy?"

When you're able to observe those experiences and comment on 'em to yourself, first of all, it increases. It's an easy form of self-observation. But also it strengthens those experiences. And in those moments, when I see somebody, say who's mostly Green, but they're entering a moment where they just see natural hierarchy and how healthy it is in a certain environment, I'll go, "you just had a major insight about your life. You just had a major insight that you and your husband are the healthiest people in the extended family, which by definition makes you the matriarch and the patriarch psychologically, whether other people are giving you credit for it or not. And so that's pretty amazing, isn't it? And so at that particular point, that hierarchy makes super good sense to them, and that's a great opportunity to do it. So those are my two responses, tips, of getting people to understand hierarchy at Green.

[01:02:23] **Corey deVos:** That's great. No, that's awesome, Keith. And we do resonate a lot. So, you know, my response is, you know, Ken sort of gave us a nice little secret decoder ring for this, right? Simply differentiate between dominator hierarchies versus hierarchies. Chances are, Green is gonna be able to recognize some of those growth hierarchies as being valuable, even if they don't quite like the rigidity of the idea of a hierarchy, or this idea of like a grand narrative that is a growth hierarchy or so forth. You can probably make a little bit more progress with them.

That's the sort of the simple answer for Green, but I actually think it's a little bit more nuance in that, sometimes I think Ken was maybe giving green a little bit too much of a bone when he answered in that way. Because, let me put it this way, I think sometimes dominator hierarchies get a bad rap. Now that's not to say there aren't clearly abusive, brutal dominator hierarchies that we should do away with in our society, right? I mean there's, there's very few of those that I wanna keep. And, right, I think that when we think of a dominator hierarchy as a sort of a typical, you know, top-down authoritarian, sort of pyramid structure of how influence and control and power flow, sometimes it's appropriate. And sometimes a growth hierarchy can simultaneously be a dominator

hierarchy. So as a parent, I know this is true, right?

[01:03:46] **Keith Witt:** Yes, yes, yes, yes,

[01:03:47] **Corey deVos:** I have a growth hierarchy relationship with my child, that sometimes requires me to establish a dominator hierarchy in order to regulate her behavior. And sometimes even her emotional sort of, you know, stability. You have to, you sometimes have to do that. Same thing with the school system. I could make the argument that yes, we would all agree that school itself is a growth hierarchy, but I could probably make a good argument that schools these days need more dominator hierarchies in them, because teachers are losing control of their classrooms and kids aren't learning as a result of it. If you watch any of these YouTube videos of kids literally punching their teachers in the face, kids in my generation could not freaking imagine that happening because there was a dominator hierarchy, not only between the teachers and the kids, but also between the parents and the kids, and the teachers and the parents were on the same page and the kid was not on that page. So the kid has to kind of do what they're told. And nine times outta ten, that's probably gonna be good for the kid. It's probably gonna be good for the kid, because dominator hierarchies, nine times outta ten, are gonna be the only things that actually successfully regulate Red. You kind of need Amber structure in order to regulate chaotic, impulsive Red. And we see a lot of that red in our kids. So I would make the argument that our education system should be a healthy combination of bottom-up growth hierarchies as well as fairly strict top-down dominator hierarchies.

[01:05:18] **Keith Witt:** Another great example, by the way, is the criminal justice system. Criminal justice, the whole criminal justice system is a dominator hierarchy designed to reduce violence and protect society and to help people grow. Okay? Now, there is all kinds of offenses and corruption and stuff like that, but that's the purpose. And unfortunately, you know, somebody recently asked me to talk about trauma within a group of educators, and I couldn't do it. And the reason why I couldn't do it is that the system is so beset by wicked, wicked problems that require so much more than we can..., and we're always giving more in a lot of ways, to IEPs with students that diagnosing learning disabilities in ways that we couldn't, recognizing autism and providing special education, providing resources for kids. There's lots of stuff we're doing that we haven't done, it is growing, but there's so much more that needs to happen. And the way the dominator hierarchies often work in schools, is they dominate teachers to stop 'em from being effective teachers. Like the No Child Left Behind Law,

that imposed all this stupid testing on the United States and forced teachers to spend a lot of time trying to essentially help their students cheat on the tests to get higher grades rather than hanging out with them and getting to know 'em. So it's a wicked problem. Socioeconomic stuff, income insecurity, all that kind of stuff. But you are 100% right. We need dominator hierarchies when people need external boundaries. Okay? Some people do. And so when we do, we wanna do it as compassionately and as nonviolently as possible. But there will always be some level of violence when you're not letting somebody do what they wanna do because we've determined that it culturally it's gonna cause problems or it's gonna hurt somebody. And you know, that's just the nature of being human beings.

[01:07:14] **Corey deVos:** Exactly. Well, and Keith, I mean, just to kind of prove the point, you know, I, my sense is that the way most people who own a business, right, most people who own a business run that business more or less the way people have been running businesses for thousands of years. More or less. A few little tweaks, right? More or less people run businesses as really a top down sort of chain of command.

[01:07:38] **Keith Witt:** Yeah. There's always a hierarchy. Yes.

[01:07:40] **Corey deVos:** There's always

[01:07:40] **Keith Witt:** a

[01:07:40] **Corey deVos:** hierarchy there, and it's always gonna be a fairly strict and mostly top down, right? The directives come from the top and they come down. Now a good leader who's sitting at the top in that hierarchy is also allowing for, and even encouraging, bottom-up emergence, right? That would be a good leader. That would be a way to sort of create more of a growth hierarchy, and I think some businesses are doing that. Some leaders are doing that.

[01:08:06] **Keith Witt:** Increasingly more and more.

[01:08:08] **Corey deVos:** Sure.

[01:08:09] **Keith Witt:** So they can compete better.

[01:08:11] **Corey deVos:** Sure. But I would still bet you that over 50% of the businesses in America today are predominantly dominator hierarchies.

[01:08:18] **Keith Witt:** Well, here's what happened.

[01:08:19] **Corey deVos:** And they work, because they can be situationally appropriate. I would say my rule of thumb is a dominator hierarchy applied across an entire society is almost always going to be totalitarian and bad. However, dominator hierarchies can be situationally appropriate in some places in society, and it's another baby that shouldn't be thrown out with the bathwater.

[01:08:40] **Keith Witt:** Well, of course not.

[01:08:41] **Corey deVos:** The most useful integral metaphor ever.

[01:08:42] **Keith Witt:** Of course, it is a wicked problem. You know, if you have a well-managed business, a well-managed business is, you know, type four leaders, tribal four leaders if you follow Dave Logan. And you can have vibrant organizations that are producing really great stuff. But in the United States, what happens with an organization like that, is another organization will see that they're successful and they'll buy them. And they'll offer them so much money that the people in the top have to say yes. And then what they'll do is they'll fire a fifth of the people, they'll degrade the quality of the product by about 10%, increase profit 10 or 15%, and then sell that company to make some profit. So now we have an example of a healthy denominator hierarchy, to a certain extent, where there's a philosopher king or queen has turned this organization into a series of growth hierarchies, and then a much larger dominator hierarchy coming to eat them. I don't know, maybe that'll change, I assume that was one of the reasons that a lot of the laws in the first part of the 20th century were passed against monopolies and so on, because somebody saw this happening and wanted to slow it down.

But before we get too far afield, I wanna come right back to what we're talking about today. Okay? So what we're talking about today is that there's a movement in the field of psychology and psychotherapy to be politically correct rather than client focused. And

that movement has evoked lots of different reactions in people like you and me and other therapists who are working to create conversations. And it reveals certain aspects of the culture that we as Integralists, want to help grow. And that is, whenever there's conversations that are being suppressed, we wanna encourage them. And whenever people are being reduced to their most ugly side, we wanna find out what's beautiful and true about them too. Okay?

And that as we do that, and we look at both sides of issues, instead of doing what is reflexive, spontaneous moral reasoning, which is what everybody does, we don't do that, even though we start doing it. Instead, we do exploratory moral reasoning where we're actually looking at different sides and evaluating them around healthy and unhealthy and what's right and wrong according to our standards. But we're also observing our own moral foundations and evaluating our own moral foundations about what's healthy and unhealthy at the same time. And this is the promise of integral. And when you do it, when you find yourself doing it, it's so much fun and the world opens up, okay? And not just the world, you open up. Your own interior landscapes begin to expand, and there's a lot more acceptance. And that sense of self-acceptance from the inner community, if it's paired with some community of the adequate that we relate to, is a pretty beautiful thing, and is answering one of the main problems of today's culture, which is social isolation. So I just wanted to make that point before we stopped. That's all.

[01:11:54] **Corey deVos:** It's beautiful, Keith. Thank you. And you know, I guess the only layer I'll add onto that, just trying to anticipate some, you know, some ways that this conversation could be criticized by someone listening to this would be, you know, we might run into what we call the paradox of tolerance, right? None of what we said means you need to tolerate intolerance. Right? I think what it means is that, it's a reminder to not allow someone else's ideological standards of what is tolerance and what is intolerance to sort of bake into your own judgment. I think that there's something to the idea that if a person sits at a table with 10 Nazis and doesn't protest, you've got 11 Nazis. Like, I get it. I get sort of the paradox of tolerance when it comes to that. Like, there's certain things that you don't, you know, you have to draw a boundary around when you see it. I think that is totally true and that remains true. However I don't think you can make that kind of judgment based on someone's voting record or having, you know, maybe unpopular ideas or arguments about things like cancel culture and, and so forth.



So, you know, nine times outta ten, when we think we're, you know, we've hit the paradox of tolerance, and we think we're dealing with someone else's intolerance, we're actually dealing with our own intolerance. And I would say the first thing we should do is check that out before making any final decisions about how tolerant or intolerant the person in front of you might be.

[01:13:21] **Keith Witt:** Well, yeah, if I'm sitting at a table with 10 Nazis, which I can't imagine that happening, maybe if I got thrown in prison, who knows? But you know, would I say "you're a bunch of evil fuckers" or would I say "I disagree with you?" I'd like to think I'd say I disagree. Okay? Now if they call me an evil fucker, and I go, "well, you know, all you guys should be eliminated," they've recruited me. They turn me into a Nazi, you know?

[01:13:50] **Corey deVos:** Heather just says, "where does the experience of someone like Daryl Davis, who befriended KKK members, he fit into that table full of Nazis." Remember Heather, what I said was not just sitting at a table full of Nazis, but sitting at a table full of Nazis without protest. So Daryl Davis being willing to interact and engage with those guys in order to convert them, right, to back them off of their, you know, KKK sort of ideals, was him showing protest. He was willing to sit at the table, but he wasn't willing to sit at the table and just sort of accept the KKK beliefs as they were. He wanted to transform them. He saw something deeper in those people and he wanted to transform them, and he actually had a pretty amazing track record of being able to do that.

[01:14:35] **Keith Witt:** Yeah, ironically, anyone that advocates violence to other people requires external constraint of themselves. They're basically requesting from their unconscious, "do violence to me, or I'll do violence to somebody else". Okay. Now, you know, I'm not, I don't particularly wanna be the cops doing that, but I'm glad there are cops that will do it. And again, getting back to our original premise, we looked at ourselves and we looked at the conversations and we want to have the conversations, and we want to be looking at what's healthy and unhealthy for everybody.

[01:15:05] **Corey deVos:** Yeah.

[01:15:06] **Keith Witt:** So on that note,

[01:15:08] **Corey deVos:** Love it. Keith, has been great, man.

[01:15:10] **Keith Witt:** Another great conversation. Thanks for joining us, everybody. Uh, being part of this..

[01:15:16] **Corey deVos:** Thank you. Thank you so much. Yeah. And Keith, thank you, man. I really, I can't, you know, it's funny, whenever I do these conversations now, I just think like, oh, I can't wait to do the insight map and the polarity map for this, and sort of see what all the fruits of, uh, of our discussion here. So I look forward to putting that together. I'm gonna be out of town everyone in the next couple weeks. So there won't be many shows with me in them for the next couple weeks. I'm taking my family for a well earned vacation in Europe. We're going to Rome and Florence and Venice and Switzerland, and Paris and London over a 12 day trip. My first time leaving the country, so I'm very excited at the opportunity to make my own sort of intersubjective... you know, critical social justice here. Right? I wanna be able to see my intersubjective matrix, my conditioning, as an object. I think that'll be pretty cool, just by going and sitting in someone else's intersubjective matrix.

[01:16:10] **Keith Witt:** You'll have a great time. You guys have fun.

[01:16:12] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, we will. And my daughter's at the perfect age for this. She's 10 years old, so she's old enough to be able to remember this for the rest of her life, but young enough to not just be cynical the whole time. So we're in the sweet spot right now of her adolescence and I think she's gonna have a blast.

[01:16:27] **Keith Witt:** Well, she might, you know, a lot of kids make it through adolescence without being cynics. You know, don't, don't sell her short.

[01:16:33] **Corey deVos:** No, I won't. I just, you know, I'm projecting myself onto her.

[01:16:36] **Keith Witt:** Yeah. There you go. we all do to our kids, right. Well, much love to everybody.

[01:16:42] **Corey deVos:** See you guys next month. Thank you guys.