



How Does AIC Mapping Work?

AIC Mapping works because we have found ways to tap into the unconscious image we have of ourselves and of our world. This image has two amazing capacities:

- It contains the wisdom and experience of millions of years of our genetic heritage, the hundreds of thousands of years of our cultural evolution and the scores of years of our own family and personal experience.
- Our unconscious, as the Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist Carl Jung illustrated, can also tap into the original source of all potential that enables us to imagine and co-create with nature new worlds of possibility.

For centuries people have known how to tap into this image through *spiritual* practices such as prayer and meditation; through *psychological* processes and analysis of dreams and now with modern technology—scanners that are capable of mapping the *physical* brain activity.

There is also extensive research that shows we can tap into this image through our preference for *color*. Color is light, and light is the source of our life. It is present and active at every level of our being—from spiritual to emotional to physical. It signals, for example, danger, opportunity, sexual readiness in animals and insects. It affects our moods and the state of our health. It influences our attitudes and behavior, as indicated by the enormous amount of money spent on color in advertising. From lightness to darkness, it shows our preference for the spiritual to the practical; and from warm colors to cold colors, it shows our preference for feeling versus thinking.

How do we use color preference to Map our unconscious?

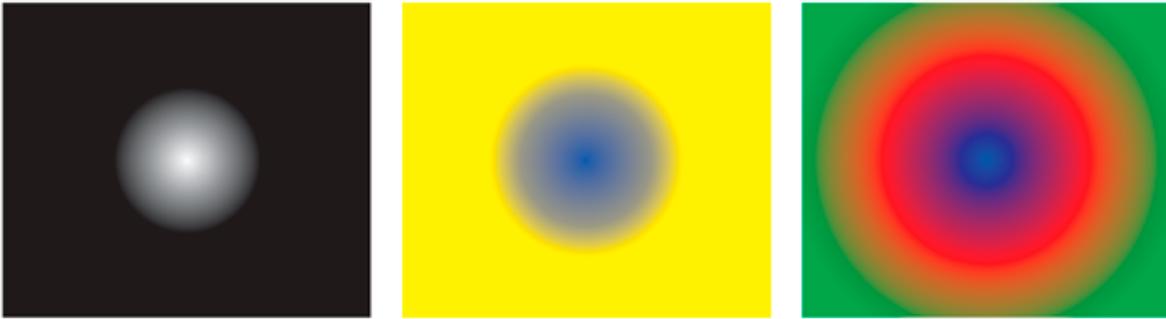
It may come as quite a surprise that color itself does not exist in nature. The blue of the sky and the green of the grass we see are not properties of the sky or the grass. Rather they are a joint creation of the electromagnetic spectrum and our visual system. *See Figure 1.*

We receive light through about 106 million receptor cells organized on the retina of our eye.

- *Rods* account for 100 million of those and primarily discriminate between lightness and darkness.
- One type of the remaining 6 million cells, called *cones*, discerns either yellow or blue light.
- Another type of cone separates green and red light from yellow light.

These colors of light—red, green, blue and yellow—become our *physiological primary* colors that combine to produce all other colors (This is not to be confused with the primary colors of *reflected* light—red, yellow and blue—that we learned about in school.).

The Origin of Color and Its Relationship to Power



White light represents *purpose*, the source of *power*.

Blue is subtracted from the white light and creates a yellow field, the *complement* of blue.

When red light is subtracted from the yellow field it creates green.

Our visual system first sees differences between light and dark. *Cones* in our retina then separate white light into its blue and yellow components. Others separate yellow light into its red and green components.

Using the AIC Model white light becomes purpose. The three primary colors of light—green, red and blue—then represent the three powers manifested as *appreciation, influence and control*.

Figure 1

The graphic on the following page (*Figure 2*) illustrates our basic *passive* and *active* reactions to color.

- The yellow of the sun has a stimulating affect: It causes us to wake up, to open our eyes and get involved with our environment. It increases our metabolic rate and our glandular secretions. Psychologically its presence produces positive visionary effects and its absence negative escapist traits.
- The dark blue of the evening has a calming effect: We rest, close our eyes and reflect on our day. Its presence leads to positive effects such as relaxation, and its absence negative results such as restlessness.

Both yellow and blue colors operate on the *parasympathetic* part of our *autonomic nervous* system, the part that we passively react to.

We also need to affect—and not just respond to—our environment:

- Red increases our blood flow. We override any environmental effects (produced by blue). Red contributes to such positive traits as confidence and to negative traits such as over-confidence.

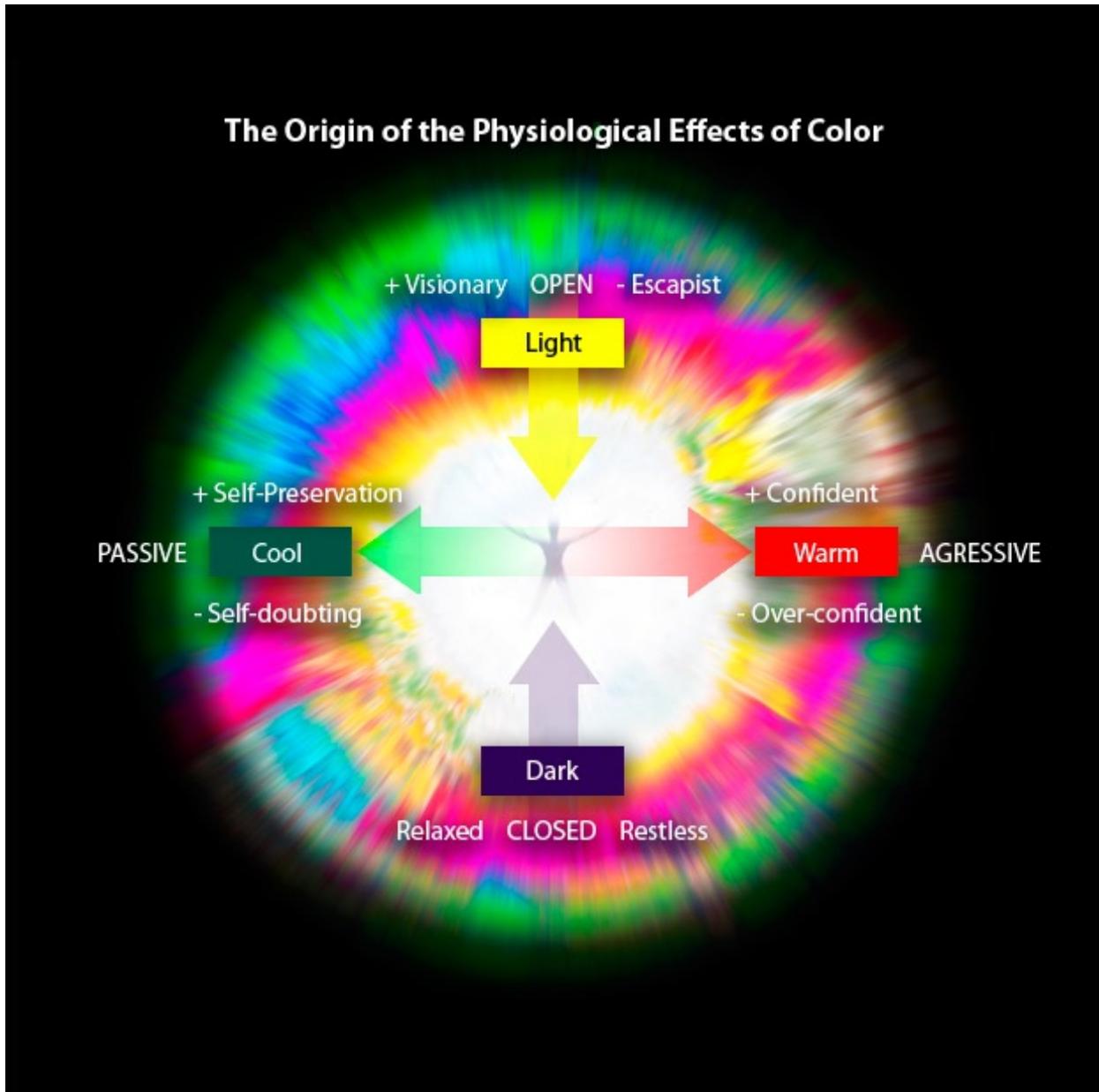


Figure 2

- Green influences us to be more passive and to override any natural effects from our environment (e.g., the effects of yellow). It encourages such positive traits as self-preservation, by relating to nature, and negative traits of self-doubt when not in tune with nature.

Both of these colors, red and green, operate on the *sympathetic* part of our autonomic nervous system and arouse us to action to overcome environmental influences that would keep us passive.

Building the AIC Color Model

When we translate these colors into the AIC system, the three primaries become the three primary powers: appreciation, influence and control (*Figure 3*).

- Green: The lightest, most open of the three becomes *appreciation* (learning).
- Red: The medium color, sometimes open (when in the green field) and sometimes closed (when in the blue field), becomes *influence* (relating).
- Blue: The darkest, most closed of the three, becomes *control* (action).

In constructing the next illustration, *Figure 4—The AIC Model of Color*, we place the three primaries in the center row. We base this on our learning that influence and not control is the central power in organizing for any purpose.

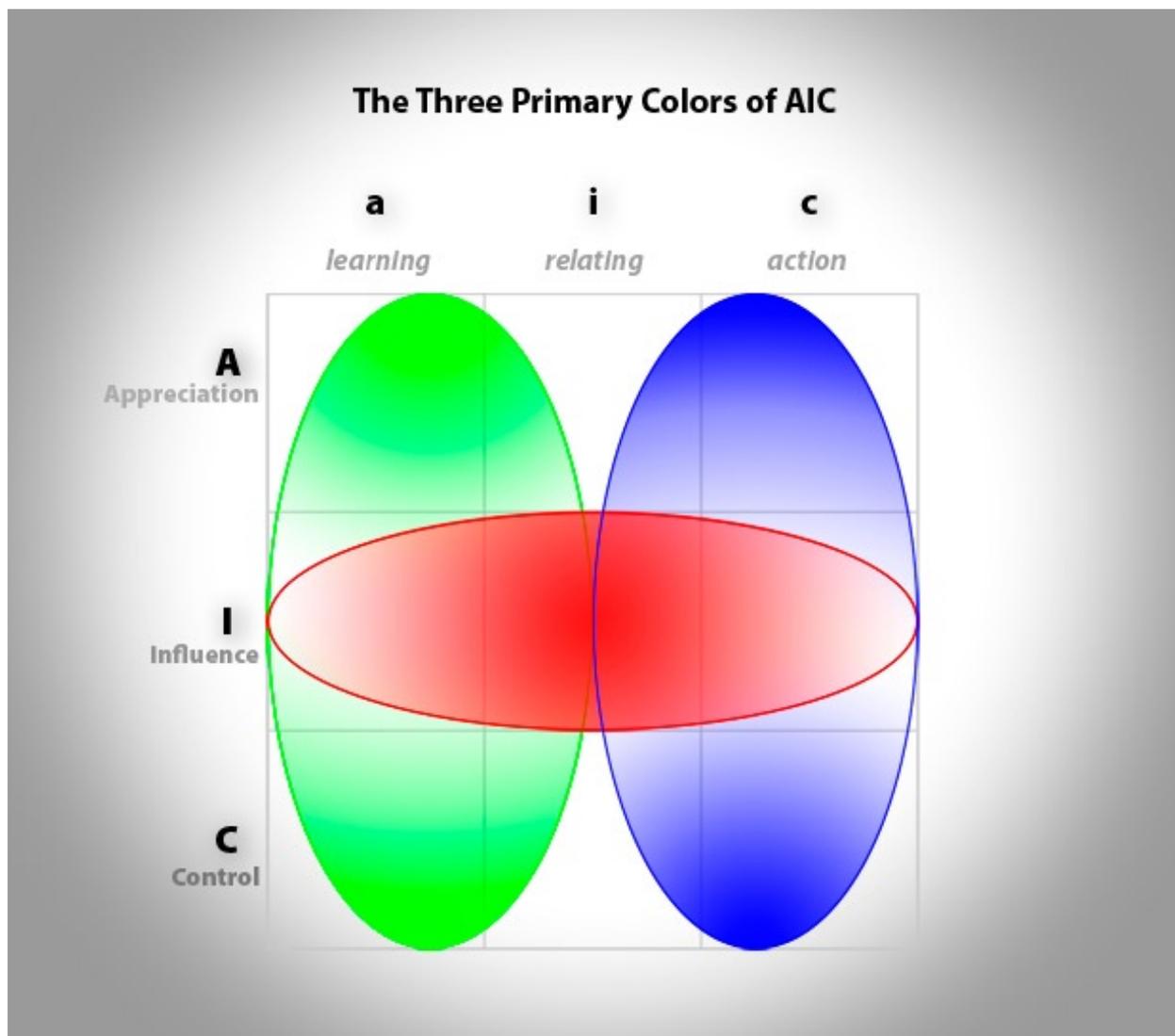


Figure 3

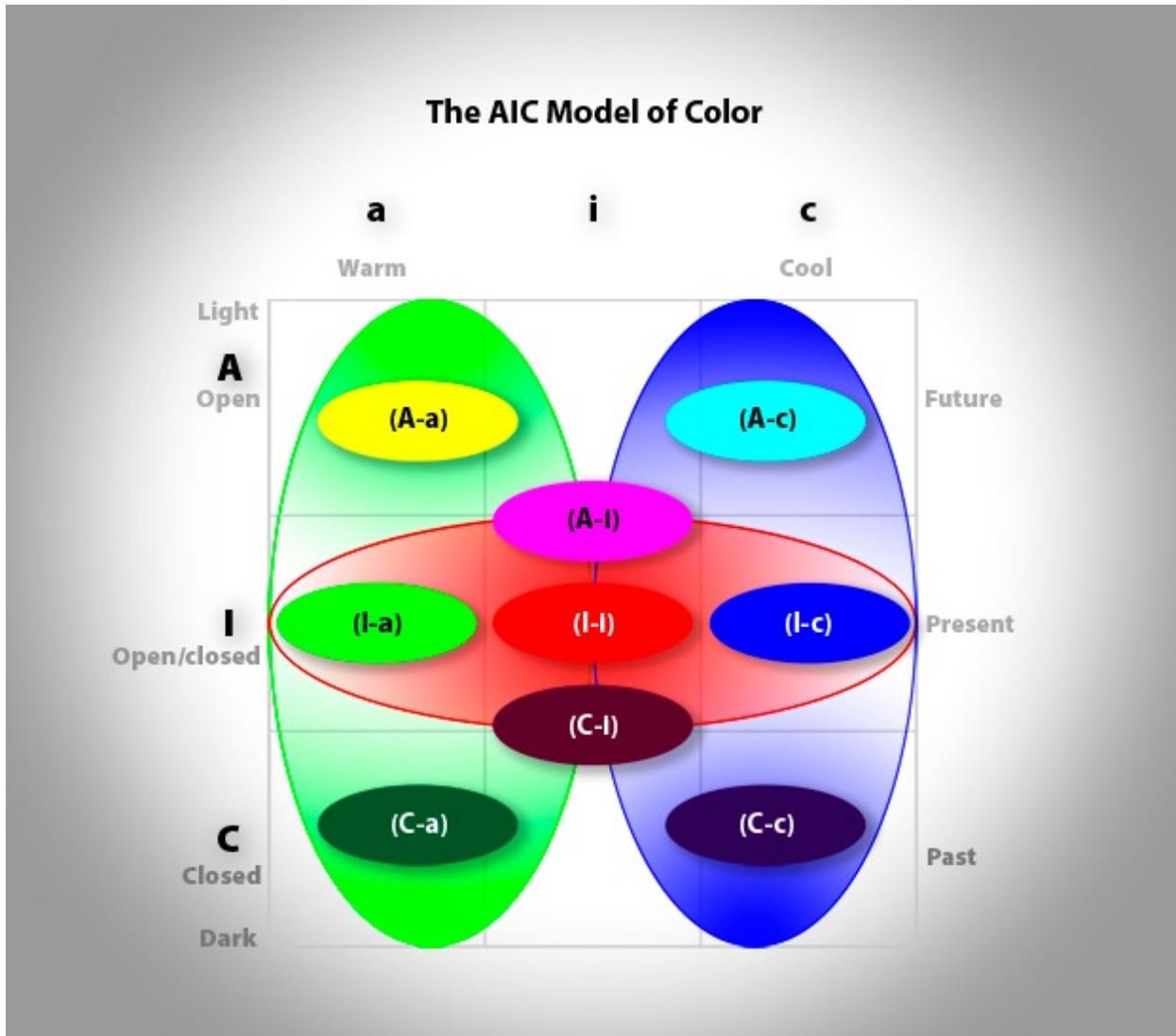


Figure 4

We create appreciative colors (A) by adding more light, i.e., moving towards the ideal of white light:

- We add green light to red light to produce the appreciative color yellow (A-a).
- We add red light to blue light to produce the appreciative color magenta (A-i).
- We add blue light to green light to produce the appreciative color cyan (A-c).

We create control colors by subtracting light, i.e., moving towards black, the absence of light:

- We subtract a combination of green and blue light to produce the control color teal (C-a).
- We subtract a combination of red and green light to produce the control color brown (C-i).
- We subtract a combination blue and red light to produce the control color indigo (C-c).

The top row of the Model provides the set of colors that is the most open to possibilities. It indicates powers that operate on the *future*.

The second row is the base of the *present* that sorts between the top and bottom rows, between the influence of future possibilities and our learning from experience.

The third row draws on the *past*. It represents what we have done, how we related to others in getting things done and what we learned from the experience.

The next step

Through something as simple as nine color preferences, color is able to provide us with a wealth of information about our subconscious. And it does this in two ways: through *complementarity* and *fractal* organization.

Complementarity provides a very simple, elegant and powerful way to provide information about our relationship to the whole, our world. White light, for example, contains all colors and therefore represents the whole. As shown in the first illustration (*Figure 1: The Origin of Color and its Relationship to Power*), when we subtract blue from white light we are left with yellow light. Combine them again; we have white light again. Yellow contains all the colors that are not blue. Blue contains all the colors that are not yellow. They are complements, and this means that any two complementary colors contain information about the whole.

The same principle applies to powers: When we choose yellow as an ideal it translates into *enlightenment*, which means that its complement, blue—*equanimity*, contains all the other powers. So if you can address the issues of equanimity and enlightenment you are addressing all power issues.

A practical illustration of this complementarity expressed through color is the two-party Republican and Democratic political system. The appreciative colors, e.g., yellow, represent the liberal parties; and the control colors, e.g., blue, represent the conservative parties. They are complementary and together they represent *all* political powers. *Together*, they create white light—*enlightenment*. So, as harmful as the polarization of all issues to just two points of view can become, that polarization illustrates the fundamental, natural AIC pattern underlying the system. The independents are, of course, the influencers; they harmonize the polarities. They carry out the influence process of balancing the differences between being *open* (liberal) and being *closed* (conservative). Their influence lasts for one political cycle. Their resolution may be different from the last voting cycle and may be different again in the next voting cycle.

Personal implications:

The understanding of this simplicity—that it takes only two complementary powers to manifest all power—is of tremendous practical value. We can take the complement of any of your personal color choices and abstract a reading of the effect of all colors on that choice. This is why your profile as a whole resonates with you more than any of the individual parts.

Fractal organization is the second quality that accounts for the ability of color preference to generate so much information from so little data.

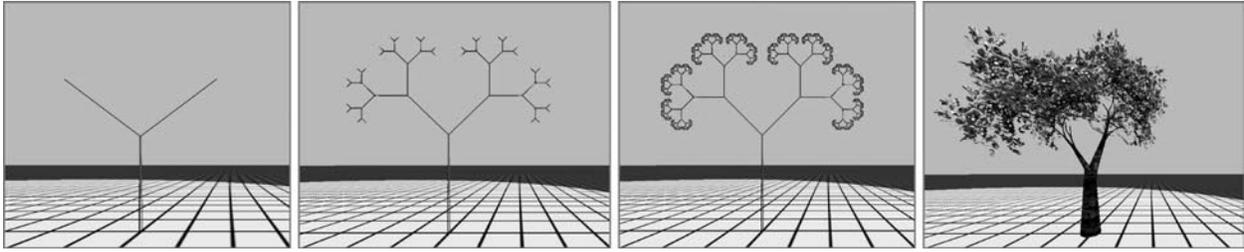


Figure 5

Fractals are simple, basic patterns repeated at an ever-increasing scale; what appears to be a very complex image actually contains very small amounts of information, as illustrated in the graphics below. For example, one small shape is repeated over and over again to produce the complexity of a living tree (Figure 5).

Reduced to its simplest level, the AIC fractal is quite like the “Y” of our illustration of the tree fractal.

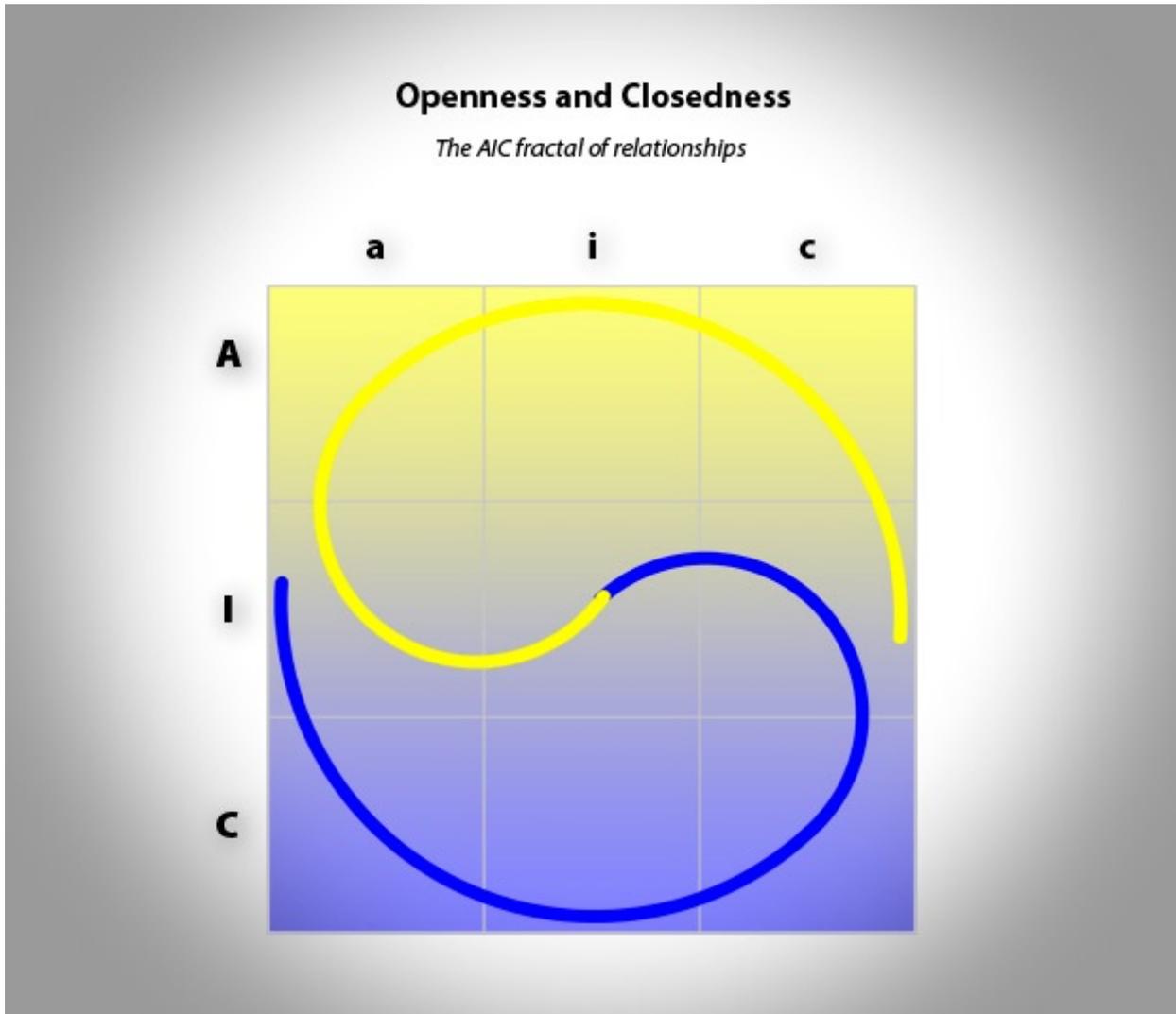


Figure 6

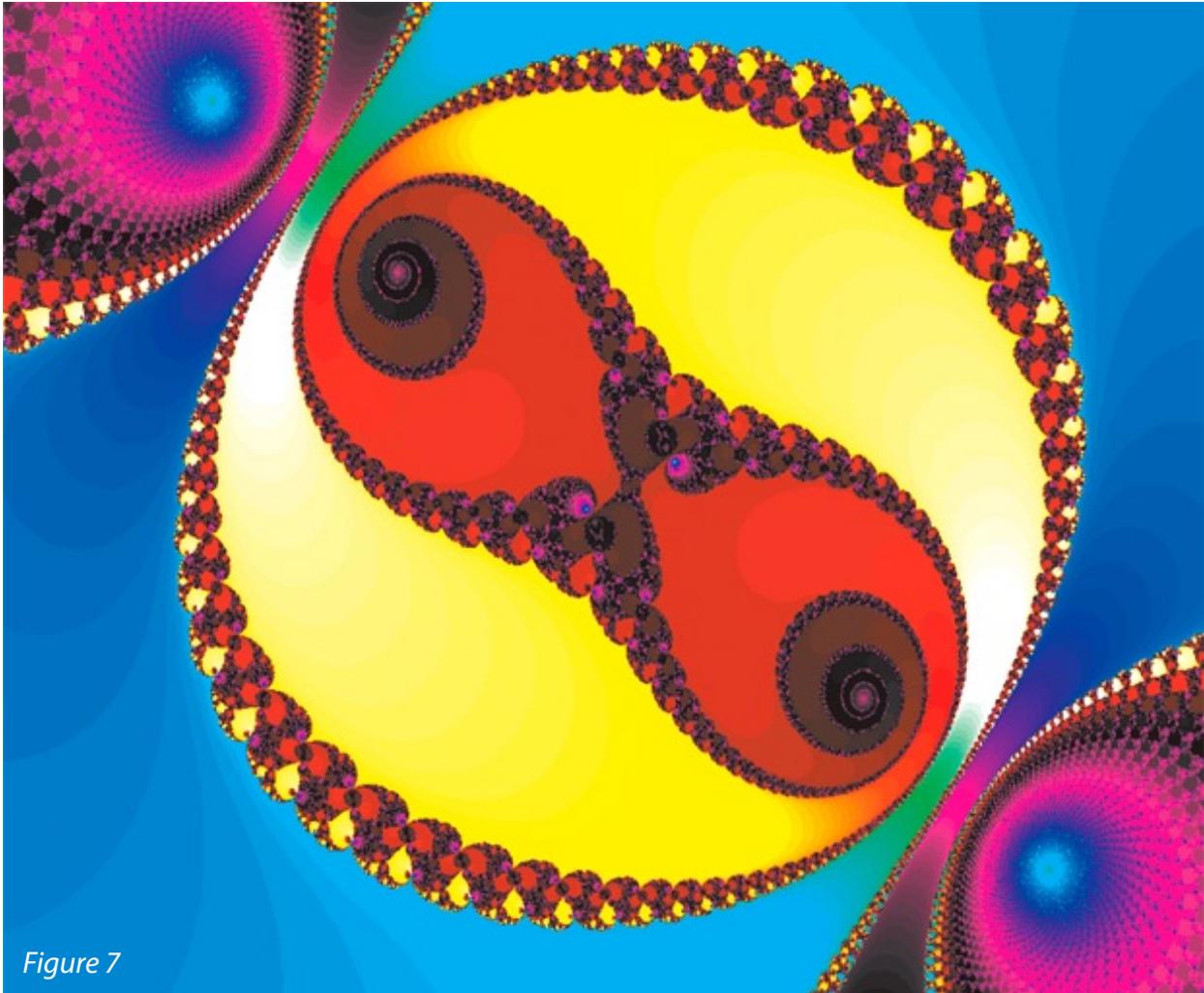


Figure 7

The illustration *Figure 6* shows the base AIC fractal as two curves forming a yin-yang relationship—except that they’re not closed. We have framed them in the two-dimensional AIC matrix so that we can begin to illustrate the inner structure of relationships. The three primary relationships are:

1. Openness: How open are we to all of the possibilities available to us?
2. Closure: How do we close down those possibilities to one action we can control?

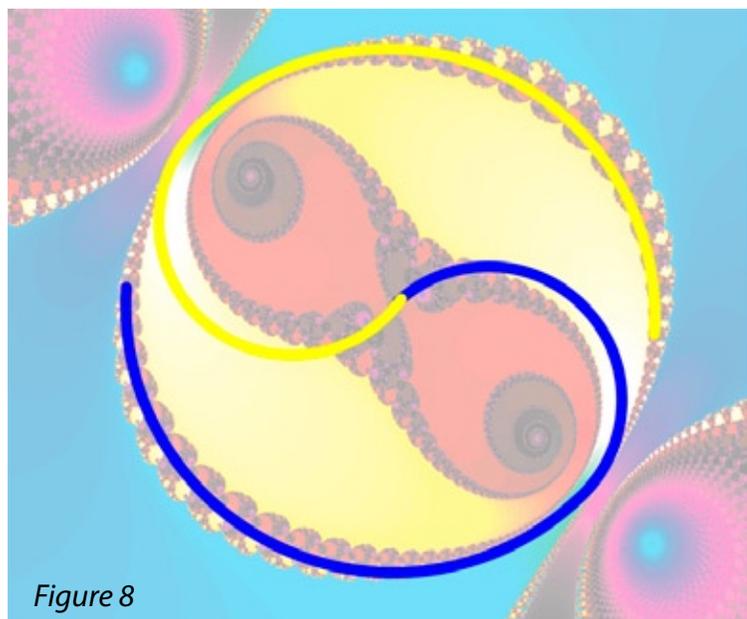


Figure 8

3. Relativity: How do we balance the need for openness with the need for closure?

The yellow curve on the top row of *Figure 6* represents the fractal component of openness (A); the blue curve on the bottom row represents the fractal component of closedness (C); and the middle row the partially open and partially closed (I). The left column has a heavier component of lightness (a); the middle column has an equal distribution of light and dark (i); and the right column has a heavier presence of the dark (c).

Illustration *Figure 7* represents a universe of AIC fractal relationships. To reproduce this image on a computer screen takes several million pixels, i.e., pieces of information. However, the formula that contains all of this information is just one line long. Below that, *Figure 8* shows the simplicity of the AIC fractal super-imposed on its countless repetitions.

The development of AIC

The hardest part of developing the AIC model—more than twenty years' worth—has been to translate the different meaning of each color and its placement in each of the nine cells of the matrix. There are 362,880 possible combinations. In order to find the best fit, we examined all of the major personality and psychological literature and drew insights from spiritual traditions, philosophy and science.

Over the hundreds of possible interpretations for any color in any of the nine positions at any of the three levels—spiritual, emotional and physical—we used the basic AIC logic—openness, relatedness and closure—to find which fit best. This reduced hundreds of possibilities to dozens. We then compared the results to the interpretations of the complementary colors and found the one or two that best fit both.

These combinations were then tested with people, who we knew very well, and further refined. Finally, those results were tested with over 800 volunteers to arrive at the current configuration. The process of refinement continues as we get more results. However, it is clear that we are now at the level of refinement and not of base structure.

In summary, we base our color preferences on what is known about our reaction to and our impact on others and our world. Our emphasis has been much less on trying to define personal attributes and much more on describing the power relationships that are generated by different combinations of purpose, power and leadership. The Maps produced are aids to practice as opposed to personality assessments. The very act of completing the Maps and interpreting them provides a first practice of AIC as an organizing process.

See article [Where Does Power Come From?](#)

For a deeper understanding of the basis of color as a language of power, see article

[The Appreciative Language of Color.](#)