

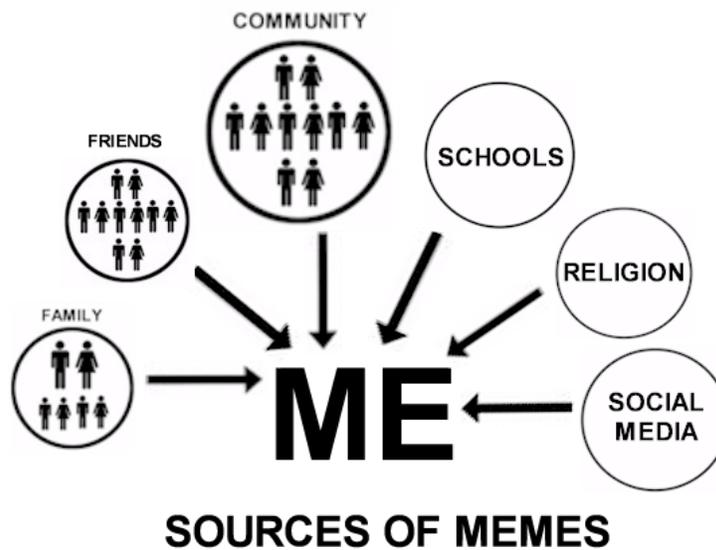
We Are All Memetic Creatures

We are memetic creatures because we have the most complex known object in the universe in our skulls – a *human brain*. The main information processing area of the brain, the cortex, contains about 30 billion neurons. An average *neuron* in the brain has about ten thousand *dendrites* (inputs) and about the same number of *axon terminals* (outputs). If we considered the number of possible synaptic connections in just the cortex, we would be dealing with hyper-astronomical numbers – **10 followed by at least a million zeros**.

Dr. Richard Dawkins introduced the world to *memes* in 1976 when he coined the word *meme* to emphasize commonality with genes.

A meme is a unit of information which only exists in memories recorded in the neural constellations of the human brain. Their existence influences events in such ways that they are replicated in other brains.

When and where do we get our memes? We begin acquiring memes from the moment we become aware of other humans as infants and continue acquiring them for the rest of our lives.



Meme-Structure



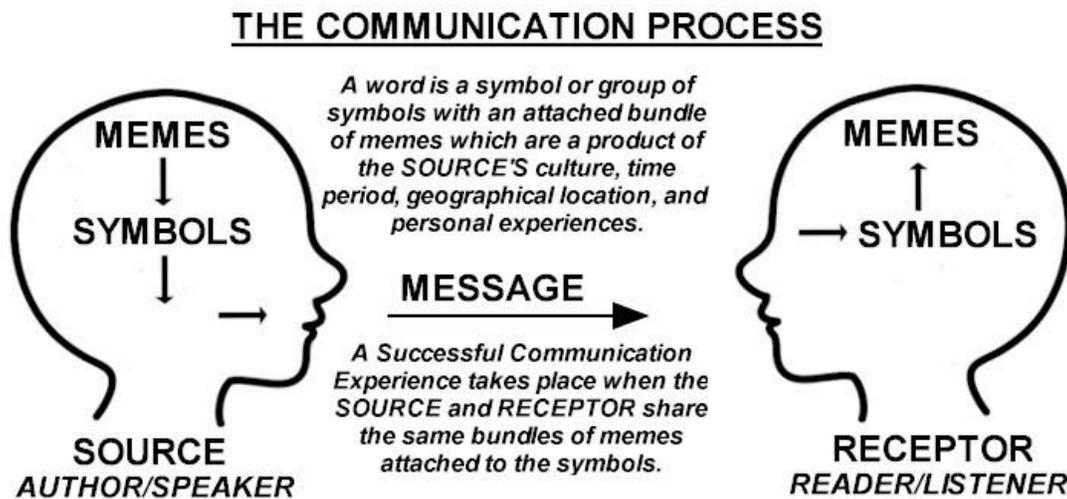
All beliefs are **Meme-Structures**. Working with meme-structures is like working with Legos. A basic meme-structure consist of three types of memes:

- **Identity Memes** are the ones that name things.
- **Distinction Memes** are categorize Identity Memes and make distinctions between things.
- **Strategy Memes** are actions that are taken when we become aware of **Identity** or **Distinction Memes**.

The *Communication Process* has been the primary way memes were spread and replicated throughout a society for most of the history of humankind. The more we understand about human beings, the more centrally important becomes their use of *symbols* in the memetic process.

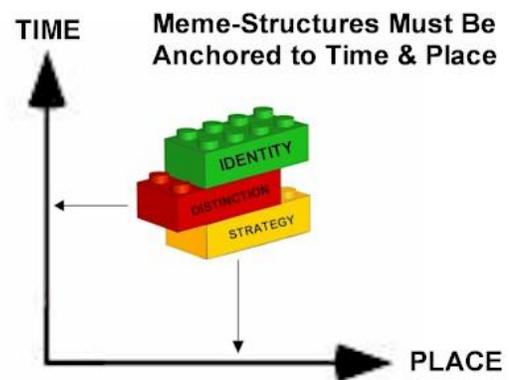
A symbol is something that stands for something else and that we use in place of that something else for purposes of communication.

Although we communicate through the use of nonintentional body language, unconscious facial expressions, and so on, symbols have the additional quality of being understood by the user. Symbolic communication is meaningful: *It represents something to the one who communicates as well as to the one receiving the communication.* Words are the best example of symbols. *They stand for whatever we decide they do.* We use words intentionally to communicate something to others, and we use words to think with.¹



An important **power skill** we develop is *tracking the evolution of meme-structures*. In order to do this we must *anchor them to the world outside the brain by identifying their Sources and when and where the meme-structures appear*.

As we track them we are able to detect specific changes in their component meme parts. There are many cases where an **Identity Meme** remains the same, but there are significant changes in **Distinction and/or Strategy Memes**.



Today, the Internet and powerful computers make it possible for anyone with a smartphone to do more in a few minutes than scholars of the past would have been able to do in a lifetime of research. *This is one reason that we are by far the most powerful individuals of any generation that has ever lived and most of it is literally at our fingertips.*

¹ *What Does It Mean to be Human?: Human Nature, Society, and Culture* by Joel M. Charon; p. 4.