**Steve Spilde:** Today, it is my special pleasure to welcome Trace Bell. I love listening to podcasts, and my all-time favorite is The RobCast. Trace is a regular co-host there with his father, Rob Bell. Last year, Trace and Rob changed how I see life with their four-part podcast series titled, “Me, We, and Everybody.” In the podcast, they provide a great introduction to Spiral Dynamics and helped me grasp an integral perspective on spirituality. I am excited to welcome Trace to this podcast. Trace, I appreciate that series of “Me, We, and Everybody” so much because it helped me understand what has been happening in our politics for the last five or six years. It also helped me understand the path of spiritual growth that I’ve been on, and the spiritual struggles I encounter with many people I meet in spiritual direction. Trace, I apologize for putting you on the spot, but for our listeners who may be unfamiliar with what we mean by “Spiral Dynamics,” how would you describe this theory?

**Trace Bell:** First off, I’m so honored for everything you said; it makes me so happy to hear people’s response to that series. I’m honored. It’s not putting me on the spot. I’ve been explaining this in a lot of ways to a lot of people, and I love it. I love sharing this with people. Spiral Dynamics is a psychological development model that maps the evolutionary patterns of humans and individuals. It models how individuals psychologically develop in collective. It was developed a couple decades ago by guys named Clare Graves and Don Beck, who were psychologists. They found that humans over time, their value systems change as they go through these stages of growth. This is what Spiral Dynamics is ultimately mapping: It’s mapping that there are certain stages of growth the humans go through, and groups go through as well. It’s been a really illuminating and helpful model because it allows you to see your own growth and the certain stages you went through in your own journey. It allows you to understand … A lot of people are simply acting from different stages in this model, and they’re acting from different perspectives. Another way people describe Spiral Dynamics is it maps the evolution of consciousness. Your consciousness increases in its ability for complexity and depth and compassion and empathy over time. That’s what Spiral Dynamics ultimately maps: It maps how humans grow to more whole, aligned, integrated individuals.

**Steve:** [On] The RobCast, everything is spiritual, so it always looks at things through sort of a spiritual lens. How do you connect Spiral Dynamics with spirituality, in particular?

**Trace:** The spiritual implications of Spiral Dynamics kind of hit me in the face when I first learned the model. It describes the growth that people go through on their journeys. And you can see as people grow in this high-level development, spirituality becomes an integral aspect of these higher levels of development. The higher levels on this model of Spiral Dynamics, people at these higher levels are often maturing to a deeper spirituality and taking a very spiritual perspective on things. Spiritual development and spiritual evolution, if you will, is kind of inherent in the design of our reality. A model that maps this development of humans in groups is going to say a lot about the spiritual evolution of the people that it’s mapping. There are a lot of spiritual implications … One of the stages in Spiral Dynamics – which we teach in our class, “Living the Spirals” – [is] actually a stage about your deep connection to your personal connection to spirituality, your personal connection to reality itself. It’s literally a stage … There are actually stages in this model that describe and articulate people’s personal connection to spirituality. In those higher stages – those integrated, integral perspectives – those stages are so intertwined with spirituality, and it takes a very spiritual value of having compassion for everyone, understand that people are coming from different perspectives, meeting people where they’re at.

The spiritual implications are endless. It’s very fun for people to learn the model and kind of take away their own conclusions and find their own “ahas” and insight through the model. I’ve watched people over time learn Spiral Dynamics and take away their own insights that I didn’t even get when I learned it, or I didn’t even realize. I would urge anyone listening to go check out the model themselves and see if they can find any spiritual implications or spirituality within it because spirituality is a language that speaks to us personally. The model speaks differently to different people, and different people have different insights. That’s what so beautiful about it: It has so many different ways to read and understand it.

**Steve:** I would just say for people who are listening to this to do yourself a favor and listen to that series – it’s “Me, We, and Everybody.” If you do a search on The RobCast, it was like last year [in] November. You and Rob just do such a great job of making it accessible. It’s complex material, but yet it’s very understandable. I can see anyone understanding it, especially the way you presented it. I just encourage people to listen to that, and then you’ll want to end up reading more.

**Trace:** Thank you. That was our goal when we recorded it. My dad has been teaching Spiral Dynamics for over a decade, and he [asked], “What forum am I meant to teach this in? Is it supposed to be a video series? Is it supposed to be a book?” And then he [said], “Let’s do a podcast series.” He [asked me], “Trace, will you join me for this podcast series?” He and I were talking about it, and I had learned it a year prior, and [we said], “Yeah, let’s do a podcast series.” We said down and [asked ourselves], “How can we do this in our Trace and Rob language the best that connects with the most people and is the most accessible, and also makes them want to learn more?” To hear that it had that effect on people just makes me so happy. Thank you.

**Steve:** You are relatively young – you’re in your mid-20s, correct?

**Trace:** Yup.

**Steve:** [Talk] about your spiritual journey and how the Spiral Dynamics might fit into that for you.

**Trace:** The first time my dad sat down and taught me Spiral Dynamics, it was a very Rob Bell moment. He sat down at the kitchen counter with two big blank sheets of white paper with a marker. And [I thought to myself], “OK, this is going to be a Rob Bell moment here.” [He told me], “I’m going to teach you Spiral Dynamics.” And boom, he just wrote it out on two big blank white sheets of paper. He just wrote it out in his writing, and it was just beautiful. I had this whole model in front of me, and I ended up actually hanging it in my bedroom because it was kind of like a souvenir almost. When I first learned Spiral Dynamics, it really connected a lot … It really put language in a framework to a lot of the things I had experienced. I grew up with my parents starting a massive megachurch in Michigan. My dad was teaching at the church, my parents were very involved with the church, and that kind of was their project. My dad was very involved in the Christian world. People are kind of surprised when they hear me say this, but I just never really connected with any sort of organized religious structure when I was younger. I just never felt like a deep connection to Christianity, and I didn’t really feel a deep connection to the church or what my parents were doing. My parents kind of kept the kids separate from the church a little bit – they didn’t involve us very much in the church life.

I didn’t really have a connection to any sort of religious structure or consider myself religious at all, but as a kid I had a deep, metaphysical kind of wonder about the universe. [It was] a deep sort of wonder and awe about the universe, and a deep wonder and awe about consciousness. I say that everyone has their own doorway into spirituality, which is everyone has their own way that they came into spirituality, and [their own] way that the universe kind of ushered them into a deeper relationship with God, source, spirit – whatever word you want to call it. And to me, that felt like my doorway. My doorway wasn’t organized religion; my doorway was this deep kind of yearning to connect with reality and to connect and understand who I am and understand the interconnectedness of everything. My growth throughout the years was just kind of following this thread of deep wonder. As a kid, I was reading about consciousness and I was reading about different kinds of religions and I was just reading a bunch of things to satisfy this yearning and this wonder and awe.

My spiritual journey has been reintegrating and following that childlike wonder and awe and exploring that. I had a deep kind of connection to spirituality and this deep spiritual connection. When I learned Spiral Dynamics, I could see the reason it was so illuminating for me on my own personal journey is that I could actually see myself going through all those stages throughout my life. I could actually see myself … There’s a stage called “Orange,” which is very logic-oriented and very associated with the rational mind. When I learned Spiral Dynamics, I [said to myself], “I remember when I went through my ‘Orange’ phase.’ There’s a stage called “Green,” which is all about seeing everyone as equal and having compassion and love for everyone. I [said to myself], “I remember when I went through my ‘Green’ phase.’ I could actually see all of these stages of consciousness within myself and within my own growth journey. And it wasn’t just like stages of consciousness that I had sort of gone through and didn’t have any access to. It was all stages of consciousness that, because I had gone through them, were all accessible and lived within me.

My journey has been kind of interesting. It’s a huge paradox that my dad was a big figure in the Christian world in sort of this massive megachurch, but then his firstborn son never considered himself Christian. It’s totally one of the paradoxes of my journey that I kind of laugh at and kind of love. It’s totally weird and totally great at the same time. I’m so grateful for my parents that they allowed me to have the environment to have my own spirituality and have my own connection and not push anything on me. That’s kind of my journey in a nutshell, if I could condense it down.

**Steve:** One of the reasons I’m excited to talk to you is one, I just find you incredibly interesting. I’ve taken the Spiral [Dynamics] class. It was a great experience, [and] I know you’re going to offer it again. I hope people will sign up for it. I have a sense that you really do represent your generation well. I think you were reading … Like you were saying, you were curious [and] you were doing a lot of reading. [It was] probably extraordinary [because] I don’t think most people your age were reading the same sort of books that you were reading. But yet, I think that sense of your parents were very involved in leading this megachurch [and were] very religious at one point, that I think is common to a lot of people. Maybe the parents’ generation would really identify as being very religious, and you are deeply spiritual, but that label doesn’t really fit for you. I think for a lot of people of your generation, it’s not that you’re not spiritual. It’s just you practice it in a different way where God means something different to people of your generation than maybe of my generation or your grandparents’ generation. Do you think that’s fair?

**Trace:** Absolutely. I think you’re 100 percent spot-on. I think that a lot of people of the older generations, their doorway into all of this was organized religion – like my parents, for example. Their doorway into their spirituality was organized religion. They came up in the organized Christian structure. My parents were born and raised in that; that was all they knew. They even use that same language [and have said], “That was our doorway. Our doorway was organized religion.” As the interest in organized religion declines over time, you now have a new generation – my generation – being born into families where the kind of intensity and the focus on that organized religion isn’t as intense as it was for your generation and the older generations. Now you have people of my generation, there still is that natural human yearning to connect with something larger than ourselves, that natural yearning to connect spiritually and have a deep sort of connection to reality and find out what this all is for – to connect with something larger than just the ego and the individual self. People of my generation are finding different doorways because that organized religion doorway just isn’t as prominent as it used to be. I love the different creative ways people are finding their doorway. For me, it was a fascination with the metaphysical nature of reality itself, and that was my doorway. For other people, I see people really interested in astrology, people really interested in energy. You just see people interested in all the expansive, personal aspects of spirituality, but just not interested in any kind of the structural system aspects of religion, I think. That’s what I see with my generation.

**Steve:** One of the reasons I think I’m finding Spiral Dynamics and integral spiritualty to be so fascinating is in my upbringing, if you didn’t enter this doorway, that was the only doorway to spirituality, where this really explains the whole concept that there may be many doorways, but what’s the deeper activity going on beyond? I really see it as a map, and it helps me see reality, this map. People of my generation may look at people of your generation who go through different doorways and say, “They’re not interested in spirituality.” But that’s missing the point.

**Trace:** I have seen that from people in the older generation, and I think that’s just an incredibly limiting, narrow view of spirituality. I think if your definition of spirituality is that it’s supposed to look one right, certain way, I think that’s a very limiting way. That to me is the big difference between a lot of religion and spirituality. “Religion” is the word that kind of describes the kind of systems and structures around a certain kind of belief system or starting an orientation toward life. There are healthy religions, and there are unhealthy religions. There’s a scale of how healthy a religion can be, and how unhealthy a religion can be. Some people kind of use religion in very a negative way, like it’s all negative, and I don’t think that’s fair. There are beautiful, healthy religions, and there are unhealthy religions that really create that “us versus them” paradigm where it’s, “You’re either with us or you’re against us. You’re either one of the believers or you’re one of the nonbelievers.” It kind of varies in health, and I think there are a lot of beautiful, healthy religions.

But to me, the big difference between religion and spirituality is spirituality is about that personal connection, that direction connection, from me to reality. And when I say reality, again, I mean like God, source, spirit, consciousness – whatever word you want to give it. But the reason a lot of people say, “I’m spiritual but not religious” is because they say, “I am only interested in my own personal connection to this without the intermediary and the system and structural aspects of religion.” The beautiful thing about spirituality is spirituality integrates all the religions. Spirituality sees what all these religions were pointing to and the truth underlying all these religions. That to me is the really beautiful and expansive part of spirituality. My journey has been actually reclaiming a love for religion because growing up I really didn’t have a connection with religion. But when I grew into my more mature spirituality, I was able to have this love for all these different kinds of religions because I was able to see the truth and the heart of what they were pointing to. I was able to see what Jesus was pointing to and how brilliant of a teacher Jesus was. I was able to take the truth of the Eastern spirituality like the Bhagavad Gita and those kinds of books. I was able to see the truth that they were pointing to, and I was able to see how they kind of overlapped and what they were all pointing to. That really was beautiful to me. Spirituality is so much more expansive than just looking one certain way. It integrates all of it.

**Steve:** One of the things I’m interested to hear from you as someone who comes from a younger generation [and] who didn’t come through the doorway of traditional religion … But yet I’m interested to hear from your perspective how you understand some of these words. You’ve already kind of referenced the word “God” … Some of the ways are meaningful for you – spirit, source, the universe. What are some other ways you understand what people label as “God?”

**Trace:** That’s a great question. The word “God” I would say is the underlying essence behind everything. I would say there’s the one that all names are equally inappropriate. We can’t actually ever describe … We can’t ever actually describe God. God is completely ineffable, indescribable. The best we can do is try to be as skillful as possible with the words. I would say that God is the underlying essence of everything. It’s the oneness behind all distinctions. It’s the very isness of existence itself, and life itself. That’s the best I can describe it.

**Steve:** Similarly, some other words … How would you define the word “prayer?”

**Trace:** Prayer is great. Prayer is a great word. I would go to this concept of, you can interact with God in first person, second person, and third person. I’ll start with third person. Third person interacting with God is speaking of God as an “it.” God is here right now in this moment. It’s speaking of God as like an “it.” First person speaking to God is speaking the nature of myself and the nature of God are not different. If God is the underlying essence of everything, then God is the essential identity of what I am – my true nature is God; it’s the underlying essence. Second person interacting with God is talking to God like a “you.” This is where I would say prayer comes in. Prayer is just one form of communicating with God. No way of communicating is better or worse. An actual integral perspective on spirituality uses this first person, second person, third person, so it speaks with the knowing that, I am not different from God, but also can engage in prayer and speaking to God as a “you” – God, I’m praying to you, like in the form of a prayer – and then third person, right here: God is present in this conversation Steve and I are having. To me, prayer is just one of the ways of communicating with God that makes up an integral perspective.

**Steve:** Some other words associated with religion, but also important in spirituality, would be faith. From an integral perspective, how would you define the word “faith?”

**Trace:** When I hear the word “faith,” what comes up for me is living with the conviction that life is being done for us rather than life happening to us. That’s my personal definition of faith. I feel like I’ve had faith my whole life, which is as a kid I had this deep intuition and kind of this deep knowing in myself. And it was a knowing that went beyond the knowing the mind can do. It was like deep knowing that sat in the heart that this whole life experience, this whole reality, is actually being done for us. It’s being done for us to learn and to grow. It’s being done for God to experience itself, and that’s a much different perspective than viewing life being done to us, which is what a lot of people view, [which] is this victimized kind of state of, “Life is constantly happening to me.” That’s a state that a lot of people that have no spiritual connection are in – they’re kind of lost in this kind of maze of life [where they believe], “I’m just this human born in this world and things are happening to me, and I’m a victim to these things.” And to me, faith is believing, “No, this life is actually being done for me rather than being done to me.” That’s what faith means to me.

**Steve:** I like how you describe in “Living the Spiral” the unhealthy aspect of each stage, and also the healthy aspect, or the unhealthy aspect or the gift of each phase. As I listen to that, I’m thinking about the “Purple” phase, which has this, God is this mysterious figure that will strike me with lightning if I don’t do the right thing. That’s kind of an unhealthy phase. But yet, a healthy phase is, “I don’t know how to describe it, but I think there’s something out there, and I think it wants me to grow [and] it wants me to be healthy [and] it wants me to succeed, so how do I connect with that?”

**Trace:** True faith is when that conviction is so strong that even when negative things happen in your life, you’re still seeing them as being done for you and for your growth and for your learning. A lot of people, when bad things happen in their life … It’s very hard. Even the most spiritually evolved people fall into this kind of trap [of] when hard things happen, it feels like we’re kind of victimized by those things, and like life is against us in some way. But to have such a strong faith that even the points in life when you’re suffering, you’re still viewing them in this larger perspective that they’re ultimately being done for you to grow and for you to learn, and seeing that oftentimes we actually learn by contrasts[and] we actually learn and grow by the hard moments and the moments we suffer just as much as the moments that are great. Oftentimes we actually learn more by the moments that we suffer, so it’s just integrating life into this larger perspective of seeing it being done for us.

**Steve:** It’s not just about us, it’s about a larger perspective. It’s not just about what’s good for me, but good for my neighbor. What I mean by my neighbor is not only the person living next door, but the person who might have a different skin color or might have a different sexual identity – that same sense of spirit is for us. It’s for all of us. Sometimes the things that might not seem good for me, it’s like, yeah, because it’s working for all of us. I think that’s one of the aspects that I would say people who identify as religious – looking at people who are spiritual, but not religious – can be judgmental at times. It’s like, to be a good person you have to be religious. But I know you to be a good person. I think you have a strong sense of values [and] a strong sense of commitment to the larger world. Commitment goes well beyond yourself. I think that’s common among many of your generation. How would you respond to that?

**Trace:** I actually remember as a young kid my parents purposely would expose us to people who weren’t religious and people outside the Christian church, because just as parents they wanted us to experience a diversity of people. They didn’t want us to experience only people who identified as being Christians. I remember as a young kid realizing a lot of the people I met who didn’t associate with any particular religion were great people – good people with good morals, good hearts, great orientations toward life, and just very loving people. That idea that you had to be a part of a certain religion to be a good person was just shattered for me as a kid – I saw right through that. I think the idea you have to be part of a religion to be a good person is a very, very limiting and narrow idea. I think there are tons of people in my generation – of all generations – who have done amazing work with such good hearts, and are sometimes more loving than people of certain religions. It’s not about what religion you’re a part of; it’s about actually how much love you’re letting into your heart and how much you’re taking the invitation from the universe every day to constantly love and be more inclusive and have more compassion and more empathy in whatever way that happens and whatever way works best for people. But definitely, a lot of my generation doesn’t associate with a particular religion and they’re still great, fantastic people who are so loving and so compassionate, and [they are] doing amazing work in the world.

**Steve:** That might be a new definition for me of faith: It’s based on how much love you let into your heart. Thank you.

**Trace:** You’re welcome.

**Steve:** Another definition … How would you define a good person? We’ve been talking about good people. What makes a person good?

**Trace:** I think how loving they are. I think humans can really act from two places. If we try to narrow it down as much as possible, humans can act from two places. They can act from fear, or they can act from love. Our world operates on a lot of fear. You look at the wars, the conflicts, the wealth inequality – a lot of actions are motivated by the idea of that there’s a scarce amount of resources, so it’s motivated by scarcity. It’s motivated by this, “I’m trying to ensure my own survival, so if that’s at the detriment to others, I don’t care because it’s just trying to ensure my own survival.” A lot of actions are being done from fear. The challenge in life is, how much can you overcome? How much can you see through that fear and live from love? People who are good people and that I would describe as good people are people who are really living from their hearts and living from that love, and cautiously embodying as much love as possible. Love is the actual … I call it the capital “L” love. The capital “L” love is the actual form … God really doesn’t have a form exactly, but how I understand it is capital “L” love is synonymous with God. It’s pure love itself. The more we’re living like God is the more we’re being loving and the more we’re letting love into our hearts and the more we’re embodying that love. A spiritual journey to me is a journey of embodying more love and just being more love. So yeah, I think that’s how I would describe a good person: how loving they are and how much they’re living from their hearts and how much they’re living from that love in their hearts.

**Steve:** How common would you say that definition is with people of your generation? Or at least your friends, the people you hang out with?

**Trace:** To tell you the truth, I don’t have a lot of friends my age that talk about this. I’ve always connected more with adults, and my best friends growing up were my parents’ friends. My parents have always been my best friends. Now, my girlfriend is much older than me, and I would be lying if I said I knew a lot of people my age who talked about this kind of stuff. The great thing about this work I’ve been doing is I have met younger people who have been into this. Through this work, I have met younger people who are into this. But in my personal life, I don’t really have friends my age who are into this. I have a friend in his mid-30s who’s into this, but he’s technically a millennial. I’m Gen Z. I assume a lot of them are out there in my generation, but I haven’t really found them.

**Steve:** That’s one of my concerns looking at Spiral Dynamics. The “Blue” energy which – you describe it better than I do – the “Blue” energy is when people join a church, a community, and it’s like, “These are my people.” If I’m sick, these are the people who are going to care and bring over food to our house. Or if there’s a death in the family, they’re the ones who are going to call and provide support. That “Blue” energy is really powerful, and that’s one of the reasons why I think people of my generation, if they would move, it was important to join a church because I need to have a group of “my people.” [With] the younger generations, that’s not as important. Where do people find that “Blue” energy? Where do they find that sort of support when they’re going through a tough time in their sickness [or] when I need help babysitting or I need someone to cry at my funeral? Where do people find that “Blue” energy?

**Trace:** I think you’re naming one of the top challenges of my generation. I know from being at UCLA, I was shocked at how little community was valued at UCLA and those “Blue” aspects of community and having that kind of support system and having others who were there and kind of having like your own family [where] people took care of each other, which are beautiful aspects of “Stage Blue,” which is the fourth stage in Spiral Dynamics. Honestly, I think that my generation, because we’re at this weird point where a lot of my generation is moving away from organized religion, there aren’t a lot of communities based on kind of a spirituality without religion. I think that’s something that’s missing from my generation in a lot of ways. I think one of the challenges for my generation is to cultivate that and to build communities and to build those healthy aspects of “Blue” in these other areas. I know from my own personal experience in college, I was really shocked by how little those “Blue” aspects were there. In college, it felt like every person for himself, and there really wasn’t a lot of healthy “Blue.” My parents would describe their college experience, and it sounded like there was a ton of healthy “Blue.” It felt like everyone was kind of on the same page and everyone was there to support each other. There was this camaraderie, and I didn’t feel that. I see that in my generation [as] that’s something that’s missing in a lot of ways.

There are some really beautiful aspects of church and religion and that kind of community that I think my generation is missing, and I think that our challenge is going to be how we build that and how we cultivate that. But it’s tricky and it’s a challenge.

**Steve:** That’s one of the things I get excited about you because I think you are doing it like that group that we did. “Living The Spiral” is an example of creating sort of that “Blue” group, but yet to be talking about deeper issues [such as], what’s it all mean [and] what’s it all about? [It’s a] great model, and I think that sort of community could appeal to people of any generation.

**Trace:** My hope with my work is that when I create a space, whatever age people are at is perfect. My hope is that I’ll start attracting younger people and start having different pockets of people that are looking for certain things. I feel like I’m just beginning [and] I’m just getting started at putting my voice. It’s also harder because of the environment we’re in right now with COVID – people are connecting much more on Zoom and online. It’s definitely a different kind of world, so it’s going to be really fascinating to see … This challenge my generation has, and also the circumstances that we’re in, I think the next decade is going to be fascinating to see the different ways that this stuff changes and evolves.

**Steve:** I think there have been problems that have existed for a long time that people just didn’t notice until COVID came along – this is not working and we need to find something new. That sense of being in community is part of it. People are just desperate to connect. They’ve probably been desperate to connect for a long time, but they’re even more desperate now. I’m hopeful that new communities will come out of this. Where do you find hope looking forward?

**Trace:** Through the people that I work with and through the people that I meet through this work, people like yourself and people that I’ve met through “Living The Spiral” and people who have come to my one-on-one sessions and people who have emailed me. I’ve watched that through my dad, just watching the people who would come to my dad’s events and the people who would interact with my dad. Obviously, there’s a ton of crossover; a lot of people are coming to me through my dad. The people and the work they’re doing and the teachers and the people starting nonprofits and people working in spiritual centers and teaching spirituality. It’s like the amount of amazing people who are doing amazing work in the world. We have this model of Spiral Dynamics and we talk about consciousness evolution and consciousness increasing, and you actually meet people in real life who are actually enacting that and actually raising consciousness in their community and actually growing themselves. It gets me so energized because you can talk about this stuff, but when you actually meet the people who are actually on the ground doing it, it gets me to a different level of excitement and hope.

All the stuff that I talk about – Spiral Dynamics, consciousness – all of it has this underlying pattern that the world moves toward evolution and consciousness and have an upward trajectory moving toward the ability for more intricacy, complexity, depth, compassion [and] love. People kind of do that intellectual nihilist thing where people [say], “The world is going to crap [and] everyone’s gone crazy.” But if we actually look at the research and the data and the statistics and we actually look at the work people are doing, things are getting better and the world is getting better. It might not always seem like it and there might be minor setbacks, but humans are growing in their ability to love. If you look back only a couple hundred years ago, there were horrible atrocities that were being committed that are outlawed today. Progress happens over time, and there’s an upward trajectory. To me, if I can sync into that and have that kind of orientation toward life, it gives me incredible hope. And it’s only exemplified by the incredible people I’m meeting who are really enacting the work. That’s really what gives me the most hope: just how many amazing people that I get to interact with and meet.