

WORKSHOP

# GOETHE THEORY OF COLORS AND ITS THERAPEUTIC USES

**Watercolor practices using six basic colors**

**Perception of physical and physiological  
colors and their effects in our psyche**

**Personal self-knowledge and enrichment**

**Development of artistic skills**

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For more information on the workshop  
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## INTRODUCTION

Goethe's Theory of Colors was published in 1810 and is considered one of his most important work. One of its most radical points was a refutation of Newton's ideas about the color spectrum, suggesting instead that darkness is an active ingredient rather than the mere passive absence of light.

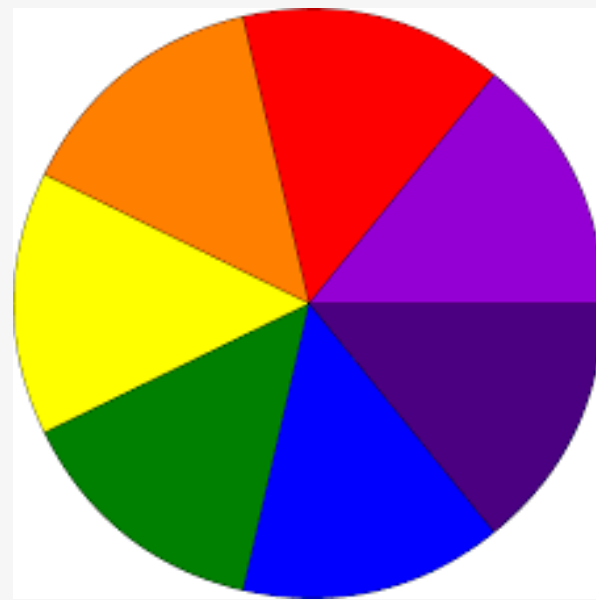
“ Light and darkness, brightness and obscurity, or if a more general expression is preferred, light and its absence, are necessary to the production of color... Color itself is a degree of darkness. ”

# NEWTON

The colors' spectrum is the result of the light observed through the prisma.

Black/darkness - absence of light.

Color circle of 7 colors - violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red.



# GOETHE

Light and darkness are equally important to the creation of color. Colors exist when there is light and darkness'

Goethe created the color spectrum with light in front of darkness and darkness in front of light.

When light lightens darkness there is Blue

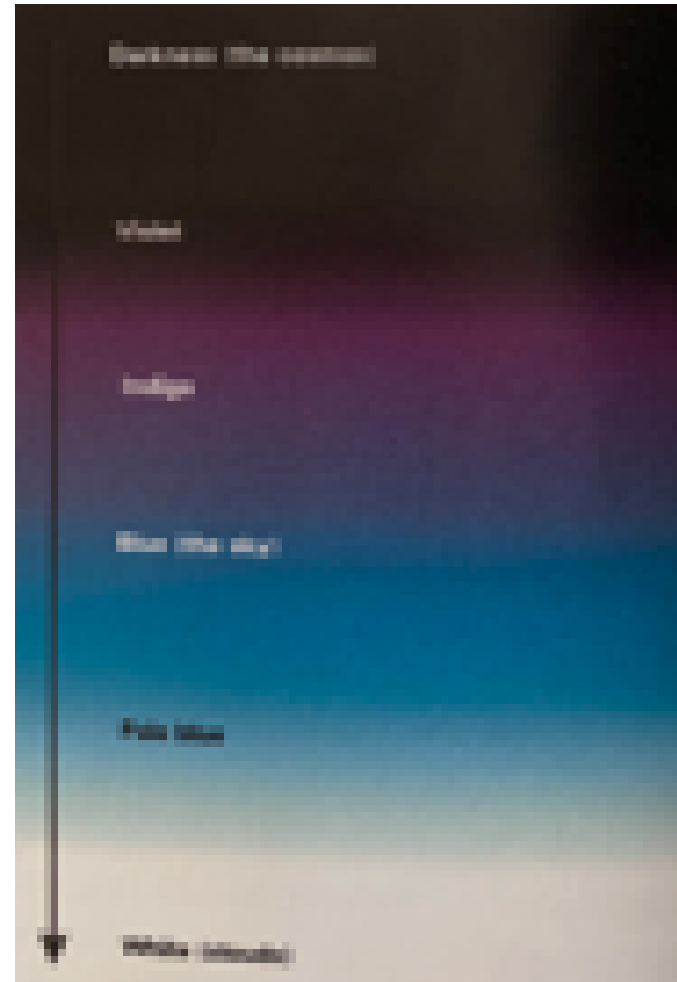
When darkness (turbidity) darkens light there is Yellow.

There are two spectrums that complement each other and a relationship between the eyes and light.



# PHYSICS COLORS

Transitory colors - atmospheric and prismatic. First the sunrise and sunset/ using prism. They are not static colors but they emerge and transform. Experience with the prism.



In color process leading from darkness to an increasingly lightened darkness, the darkness itself is invisible. Only when the violet and blue appear it become visible. The darkness shines through the violet, indigo blue and pale blue. They are the closest to darkness.

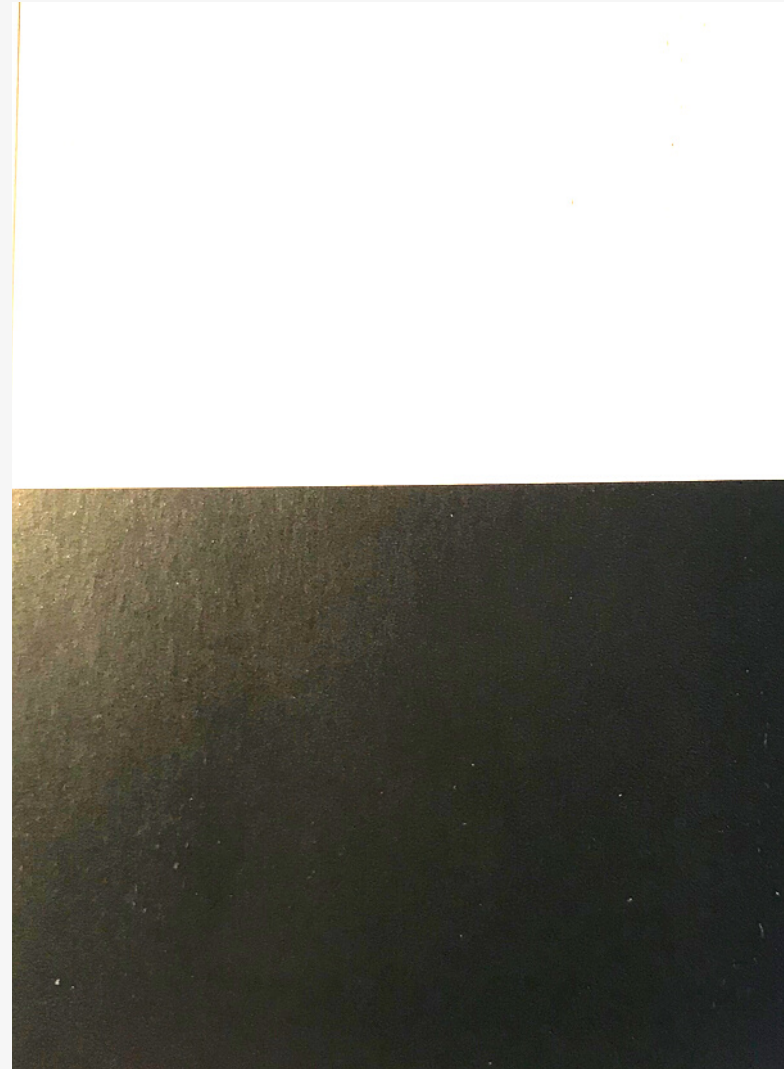
Darkness: Violet, Blue, Blue Green, White.

In color process leading from light to darkness, we see pale yellow, deep yellow, orange and vermillion. When light cannot penetrate we have black. Blackened light leads to yellow, orange, vermillion and black . Sunrise and sunset we can experience this phenomena(atmosphere)

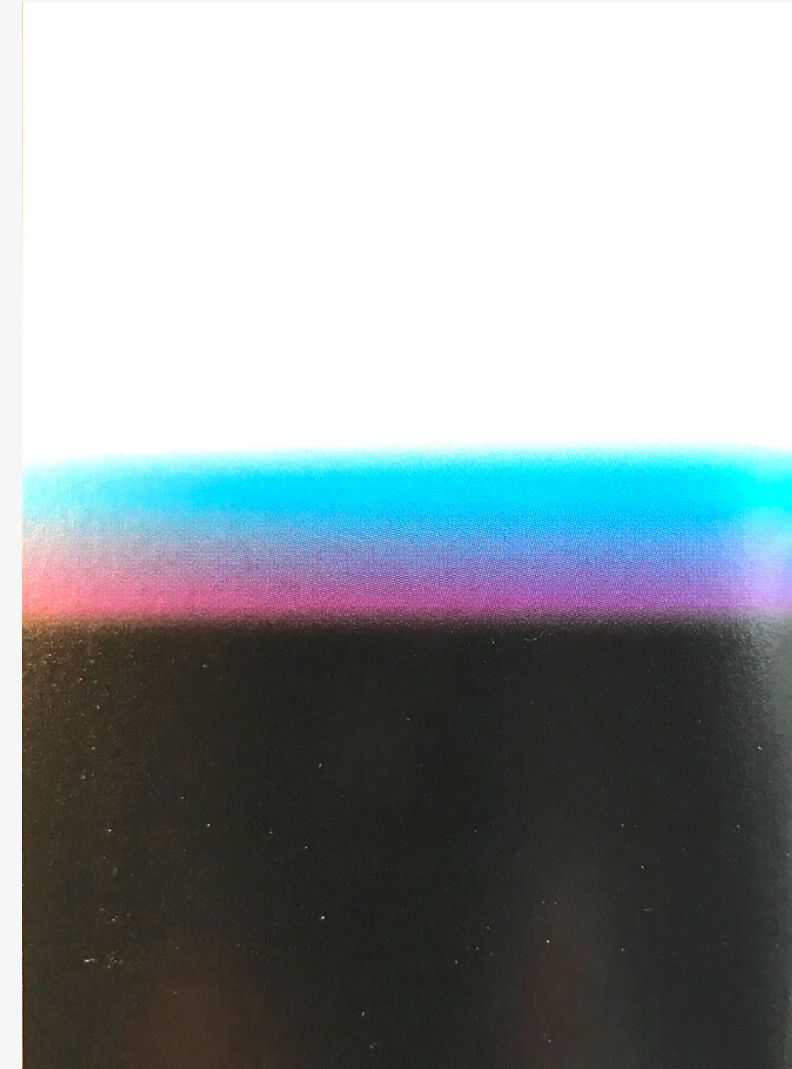
Light :Lemon Yellow, Orange, Vermillion, Black.

# VIOLET - BLUE - WHITE

OBSERVED WITH NAKED EYE



OBSERVED THROUGH A PRISM



When we look through a prism at a black and white image, the lower part black and the upper part white, we see that the image is pushed downwards and the clear contrast between the black and the white is blurred. the upper light turbidity pushes down over the lower dark turbidity. the result is a lightened darkness. A small strip of lightened turbidity pushes down over the darkness, and a beautiful wide band of violet appears. Above this there is a narrow band of deep blue which dissolves upwards into pale blue and white. here once again we have the same archetypal phenomenon as in the case of the blue of the candle, of the sky and the sea. the first lightening arising out of the darkness is perceived as a beautiful violet color.

**In short:**

**Darkness lighted**

**Violet is the color of transformation, transparency and spirituality.**

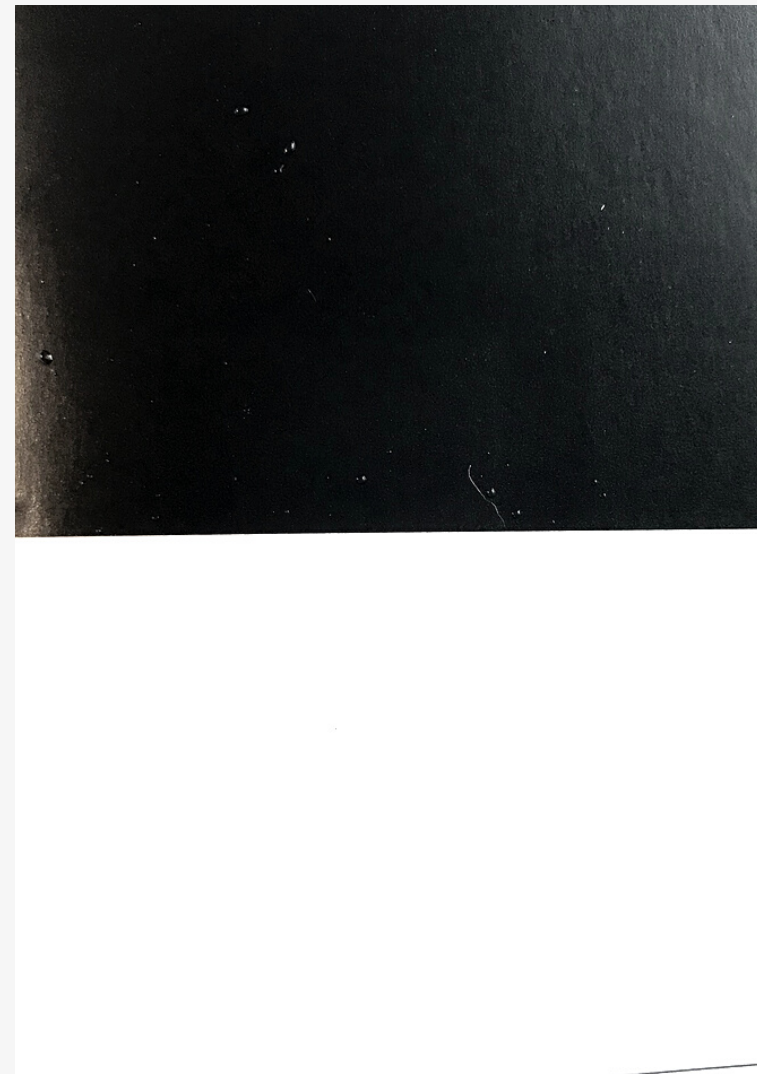
**Indigo and blue embraces us intimately, soulfully**

**Pale blue lifts our mood to cheerfulness.**

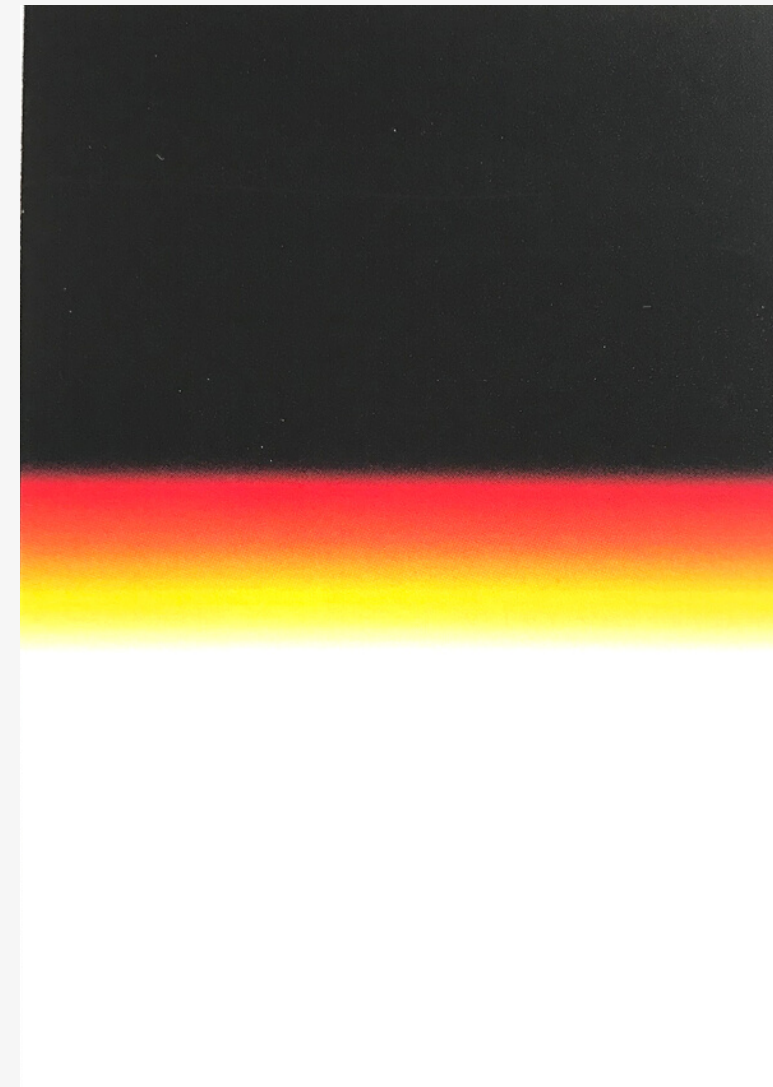
**White the image of spirit, serene.**

# YELLOW - VERMILION AND BLACK

OBSERVED WITH NAKED EYE



OBSERVED THROUGH A PRISM



When we look through a prism at a black and white image, the lower part white and the upper part black, we see that the white image is pushed downwards and the clear contrast between the white and the black is blurred. The upper dark turbidity pushes down over the lower lightness. The result is a darkened light. Where only a small amount of dark turbidity is super-imposed on the lightness, pale yellow appears; where the lightness is darkened more intensively we have orange and vermilion. The vermilion immediately ceases to glow in the darkness. The dark turbidity has transformed the lightness in darkness. The yellow-red edge is an image of sunset of sunrise, although here the evening or morning horizon is upside down.

**In short:**

**Light darkened by turbidity yields yellow, vermilion and black.**

**Yellow - lightness which is slighted darkened - purity and weightlessness of light. Joy ,serenity and cheerfulness.**

**Orange becomes warmer, earthly, sensual.**

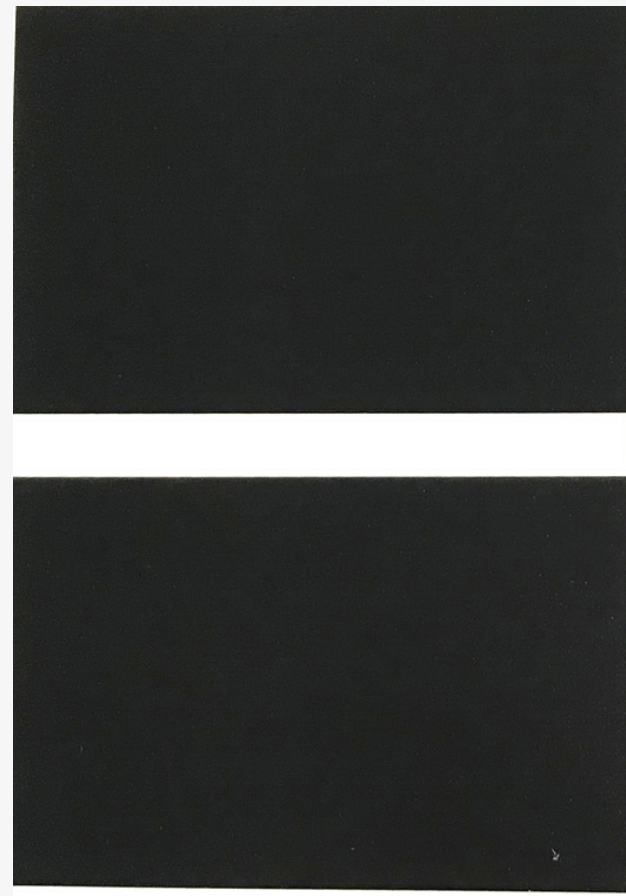
**Vermillion comes to passions of feeling, of the blood, rage, activity.**

**Black is the final point of density.**



# THE SPECTRUM OF THE DAY

The three primary colors, vermilion, green and violet, are in a sense the archetypal colors. Even in his day Aristotle described them as such. They give structure to the rainbow with vermilion and violet forming the outer edges and green the middle. Where light is darkened and where darkness is lightened vermilion and violet border on the surrounding gloom. Where yellow and cyan meet, green forms the stillness in the middle realm. Research today states that the cells of the eye are specialized to see the colors vermilion, violet and green. xxxx



OBSERVED WITH NAKED EYE



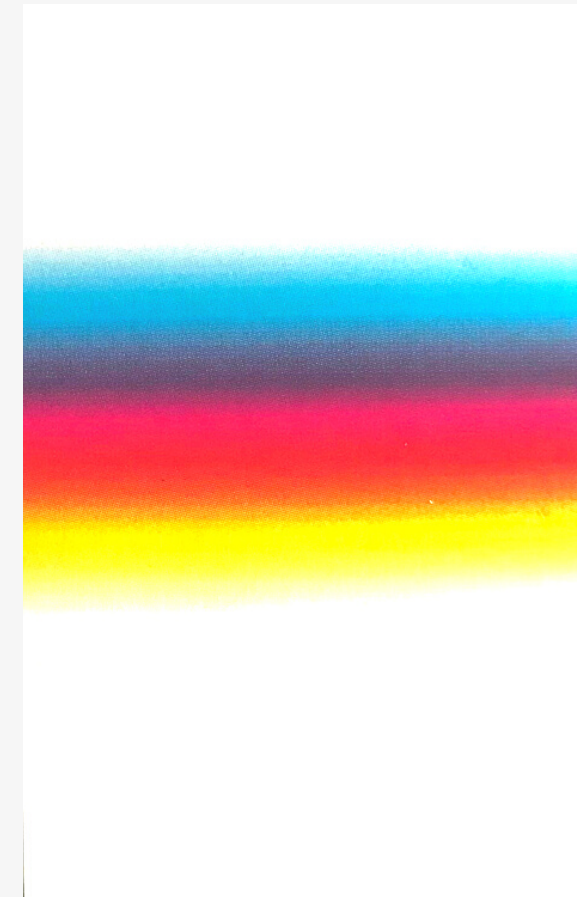
WITH GREATER REFRACTION

# THE SPECTRUM OF NIGHT

OBSERVED WITH NAKED EYE



GREATER REFRACTION



Vermilion and violet together give magenta, vermilion and green give a pale yellow, and violet and green a pale cyan blue. All three together yield a color that is almost white.

The secondary colors, magenta, yellow and cyan blue, can be isolated in a black band by a prism if the refraction is sufficient to cause the violet and the vermilion to disappear, leaving only the secondary colors visible. The darkness of the black disappears and the secondary colors are framed by bright white.

In short:



## Green and Magenta

Light and darkness united by the color green.

We see: The colors of darkened lightness -vermillion to yellow

The color of lightened darkness - violet to blue

Merge becomes green

Green and Magenta are the intermediary between light and darkness - rainbow

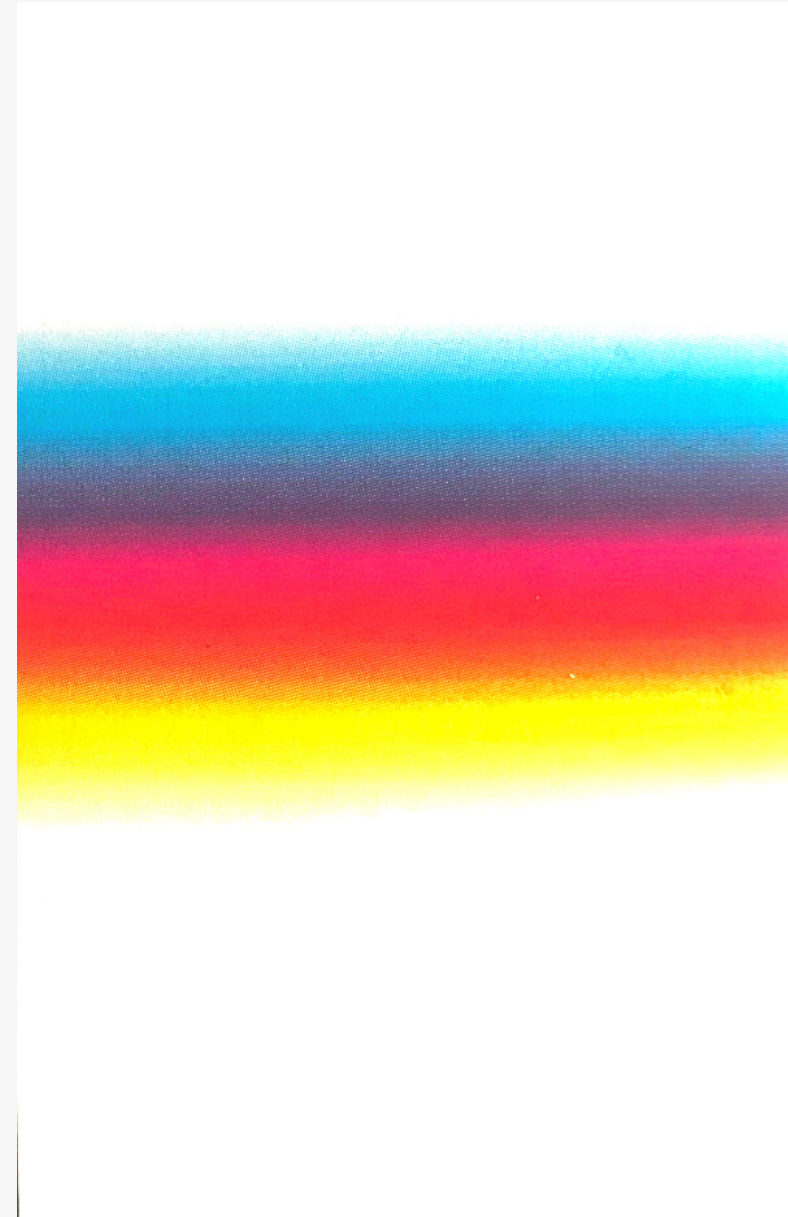
We see: the color of lightened darkness - blue to violet

The colors of darkened lightness - yellow to vermillion

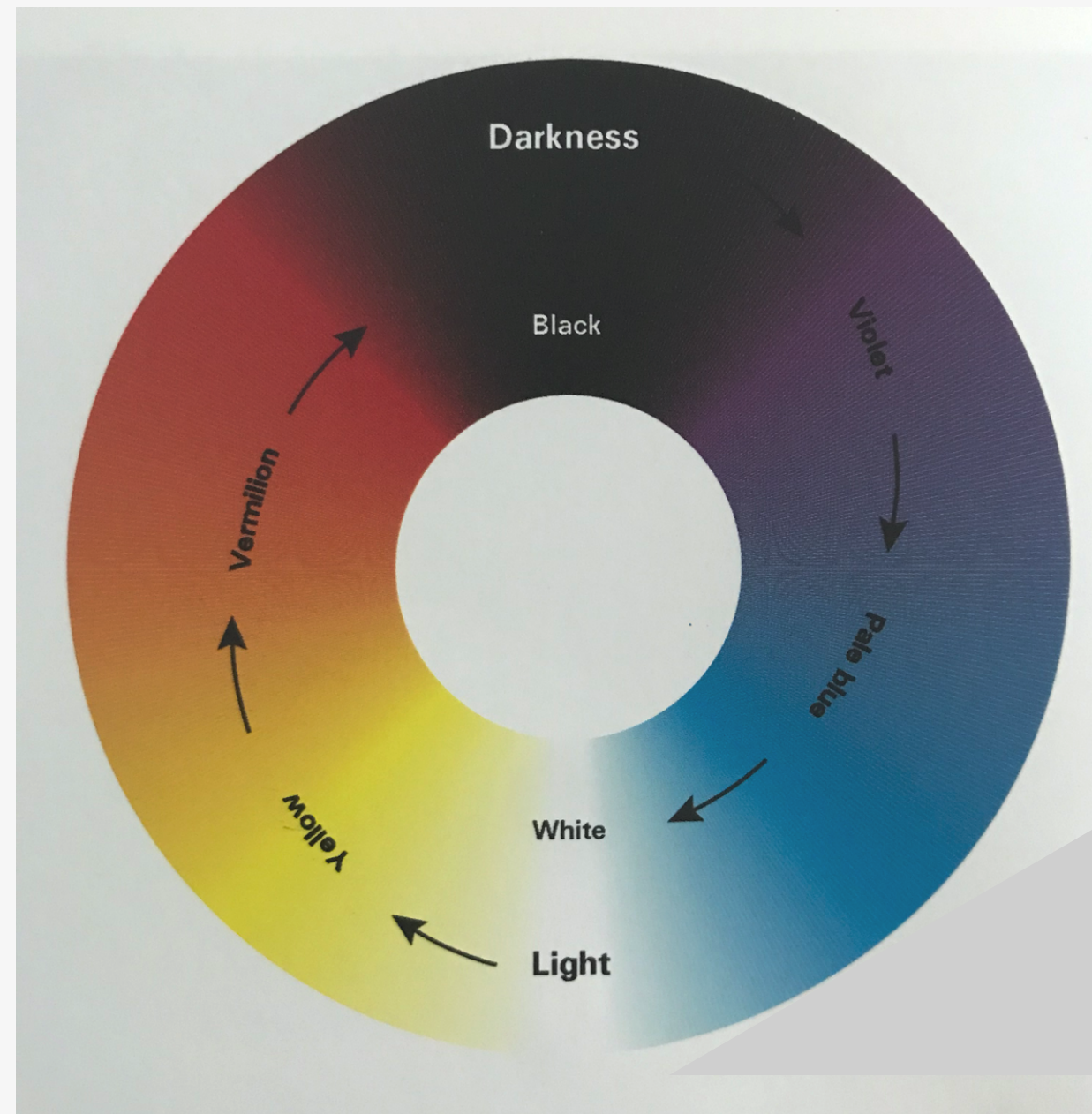
Merge becomes Magenta; It is also called peach blossom, rose pink. It is the opposite of green.

It is on the top of the Goethe's color circle.

## COMPLEMENTARY SPECTRUMS



# LIGHT AND DARKNESS AND THE COLORS



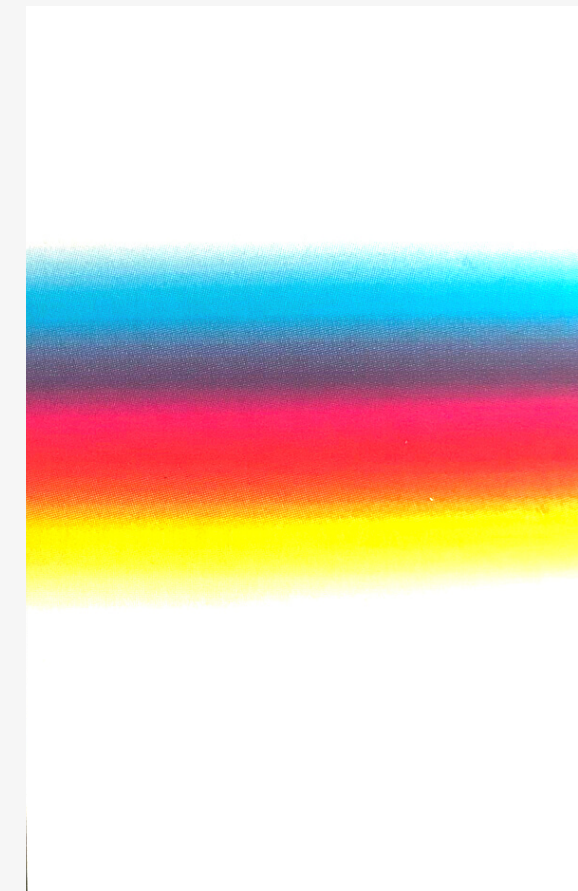
*The color circle divided into two by light and darkness*

# COMPLEMENTARY SPECTRUMS

## PRACTICE 1

Painting the two spectrums: the day and the night spectrum. Start both at the bottom. Painting each one side by side. Start with one yellow at the bottom and transitioning until vermilion red. From the top to the bottom start with blue and transitioning to violet - Lila. The middle is formed by the mixing of these two colors. We can have. Help to carmine red. Result magenta .

Start with violet at the bottom and transitioning to blue. From the top to the bottom with vermilion red to yellow. The middle is formed by mixing the yellow and blue. Result green.



## PRACTICE 2 - PAINTING THE COLOR CIRCLE

Watercolor paper

6 basic colors - lemon and golden yellow/ vermillion and carmine red/ultramarine and Prussian blue.

Square brush number 18 and 12.

Start with a Prussian blue surface on the right bottom side of the paper;

On the bottom left, use a yellow surface;

The yellow goes in the direction of the blue and vice versa.

Green

Above the top of lemon yellow paint gold yellow. Be sure to create a transition between them.

On the other side above the Prussian blue, use ultramarine.

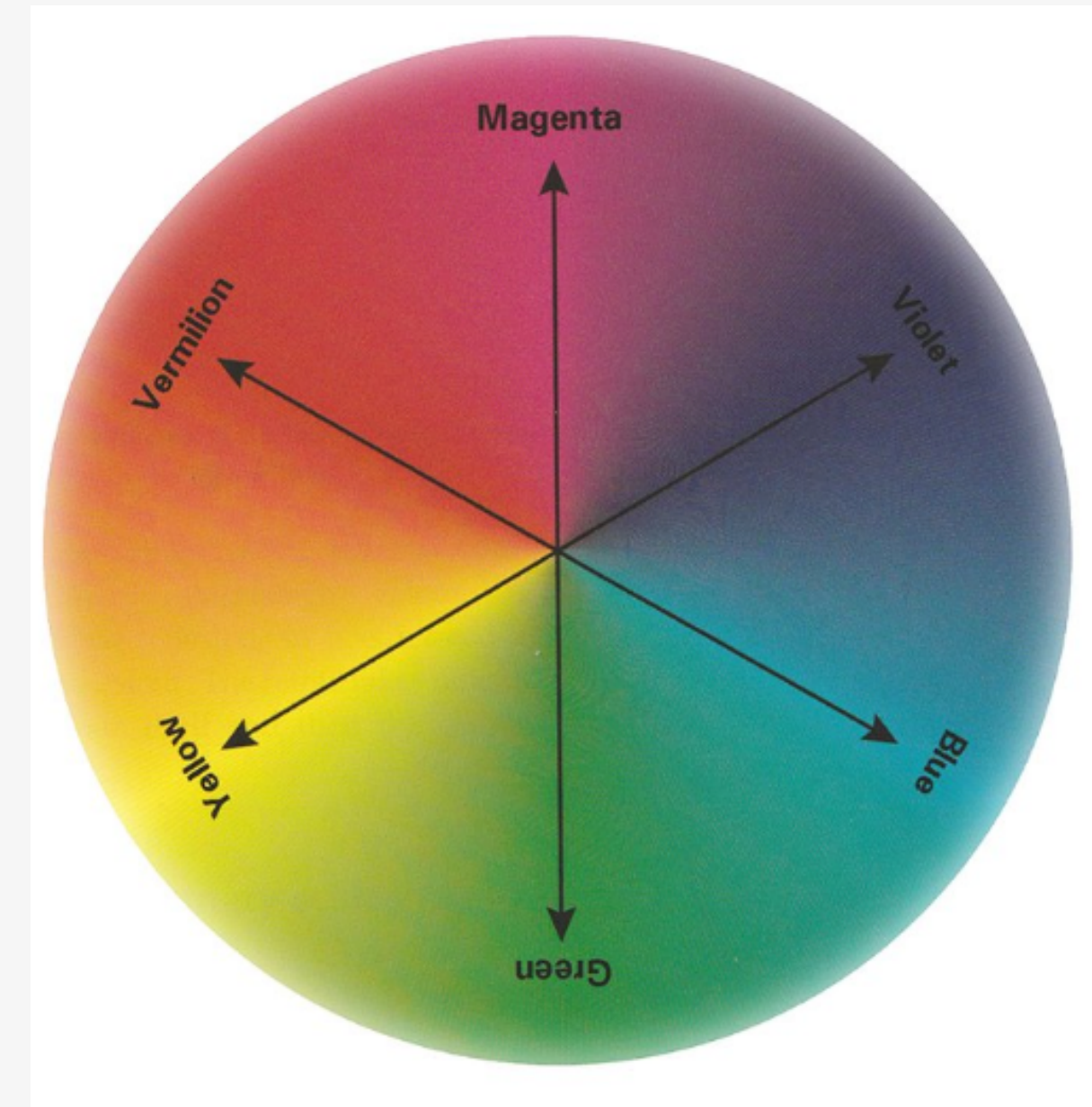
Above the golden yellow use vermillion - mixing and doing the transition - orange

Above the ultramarine carmine - mixing and creating the transition, use violet

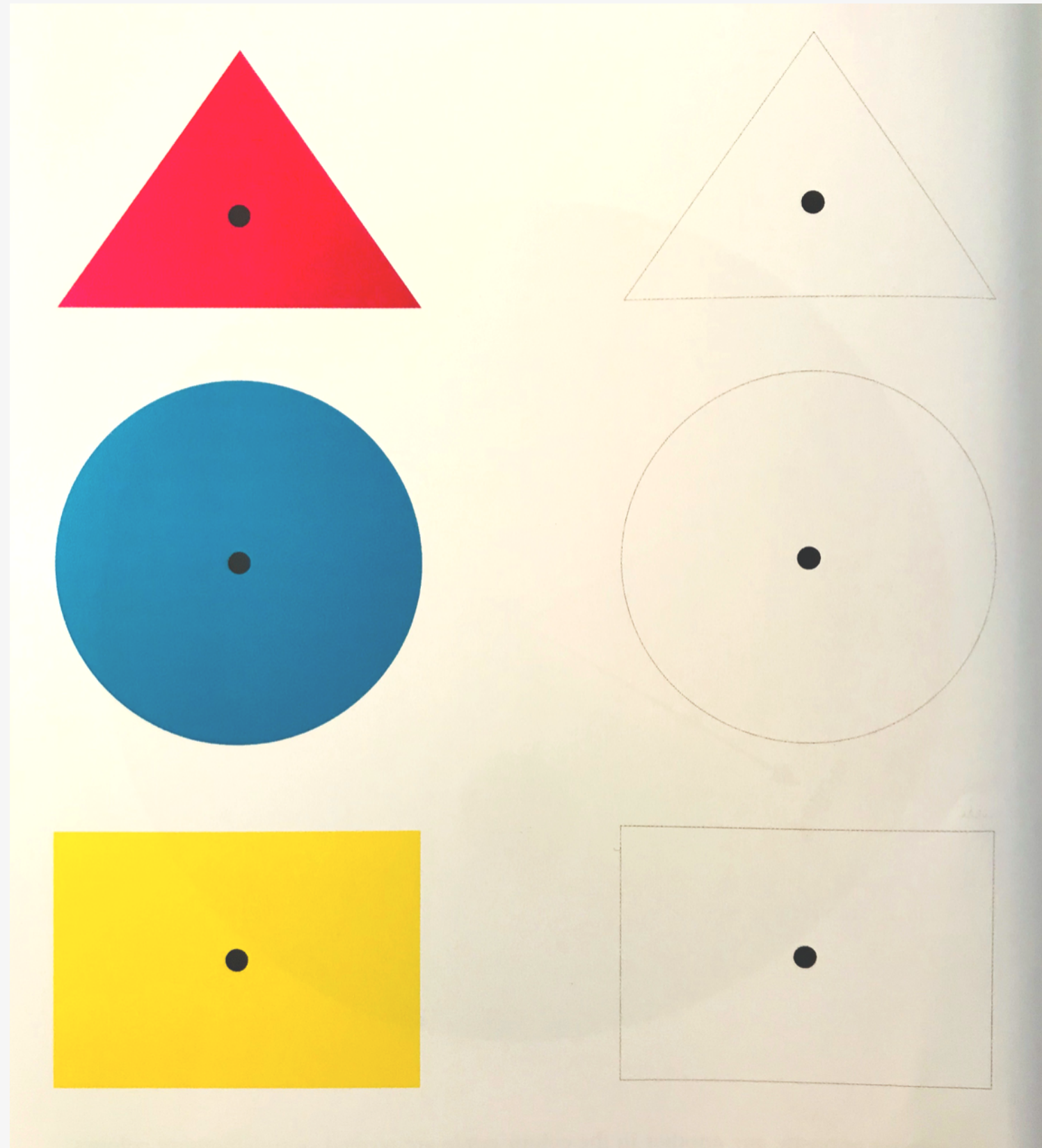
On top we have violet and vermillion mixing forming magenta.

The center can be filled with a little bit of each color - very watery.

The circumference can be painted with a light grey.



*The colors opposite one another in the color circle are termed complementary colors.*



## PRACTICE 3

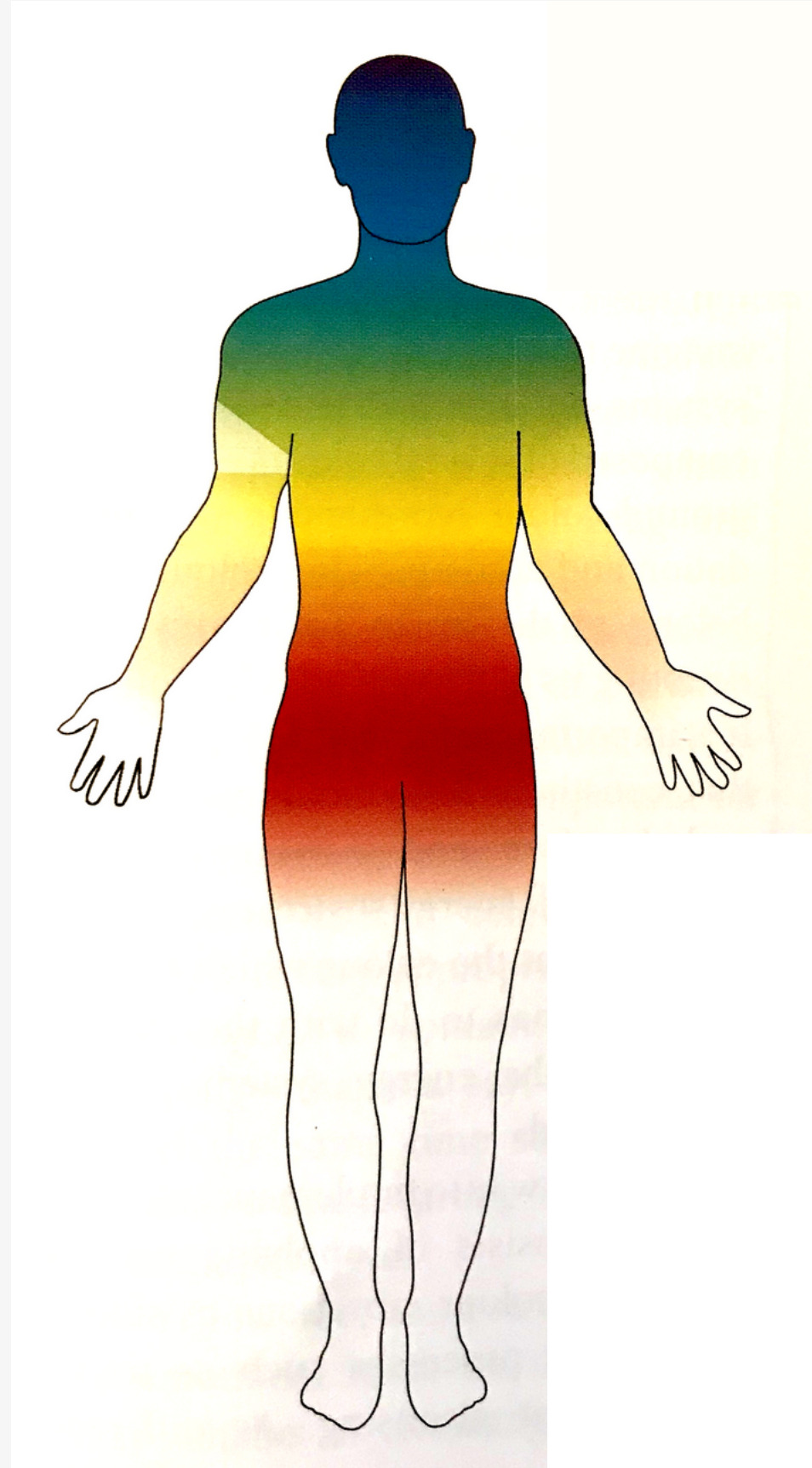
### Complimentary color in shapes

Observation of the charts of the primary colors and its complimentary colors.

Look for a minute at the black dot in one of the colored fields, then at the adjacent dot; paint the physiological color.

Paint the colors  
Green - magenta  
Orange - blue  
Yellow - violet





## **PRACTICE 4 - COLOR CHAKRA MEDITATION**

*I am who I am,  
down to the center of the earth  
and up to the stars.  
And in my heart I am who I am and  
none other.  
There am I green and magenta.  
And I feel linked  
to all locations  
which emit strength.*



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**Daniela Bercovitch**

*With the collaboration of Betta Santini*

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