Diversity—A Unifying Force

Transforming Your World Through Small Acts of Kindness

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To Galina
The symbol above and below the heading of each chapter is the *Endless Knot*—a Buddhist sutra. A sutra is a Buddhist doctrine. The symbol is a closed, graphic ornament of right-angled intertwined lines. The lines have no beginning or end, signifying Buddha’s endless wisdom and compassion. It is believed to be evolved from two opposing snakes—representing the dualistic nature of human existence—good and evil. The Endless Knot represents a closed pattern unifying the dualistic forces into one—representing harmony and peace. The symbol establishes an auspicious connection between the giver and receiver—where their fates are tied one to the other. A good deed done by the giver is reciprocated by the receiver or passed on to others in an endless sequence of replication until total union is achieved.
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This book is about how to change the world; one small “act of kindness” at time. Each small act of kindness can have a ripple effect. When aligned with other small acts they can create a “tsunami of change.” The average number of human encounters we individually have between ages 20 and 60 is staggering; approximately 730,000. Each of these encounters can be an opportunity for the experience of transformation. If most of us were conscious “agents of change,” we would have changed the world by now. So I am inviting us all to become conscious agents of change by using our everyday network of relationships to do kind acts in behalf of ourselves and others. Our network units probably begin with family members and extend to the workplace, to close friends, to religious associations, to those we serve, to clubs or societies to which we belong, and so on. We encounter some of the people in our network several or many times a day. Each of these encounters is an opportunity to transform our relationships to greater human compatibility.
The greatest challenge we face in creating compatible relationships is our ability to respect and accept the differences in people. This is the essence of diversity. Achieving diversity sets the stage for unity. The important realization is that no “great” leader is going to change our lives. A great leader may be inspirational and supportive, but he or she does not have the power to transform a society. We are responsible and accountable for the conditions of our lives—and the society we have created. This book provides a simple way to go about creating the quality of relationships we desire. In doing so, we transform the quality of our own lives as well as the condition of the world. The natural result is unity. In unity, there is no obstacle that cannot be overcome or objective that cannot be achieved. The obstacles we face are simply tests of the human spirit—and the human spirit is unlimited in its power to create the kind of world we all desire.

Bill Guillory
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DIVERSITY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PHENOMENON of the 21st century. Its central objective is to create humanly compatible living and working environments. *Human compatibility* is the crucial element in unifying people to achieve any goal they envision for themselves. For example, the creation of the United States of America was an event that unified 13 different colonies to form one republic. This event resulted in one of the most inclusive documents in human history—The Constitution of the United States of America. In practice, we are still trying to make the Constitution a reality in terms of compatibly embracing all the races, ethnicities, and cultures that comprise America.

The greatest challenge to achieving human compatibility is learning to become more adaptable to change, without the necessity of a crisis. For example, we tend to behave in a humanly compatible way when faced with situations that threaten property or human life. Like the events of 9/11 in
the U.S. in 2001, the tsunami in Southeast Asia in 2004, or the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005. We commonly respond to such events with an outpouring of empathy, compassion, and support for those who have suffered loss or tragedy. Such support transcends whatever differences there are in culture, religion, and even divergently different political systems. Unfortunately, each of these examples is an event that originated from a crisis. Our challenge is to learn how to live and work together constructively without the necessity of a crisis.

We begin this journey with a 21st century definition of diversity. A definition that is *comprehensive, inclusive, and transforming*. First, diversity is a comprehensive part of everything we do with others. Second, it involves an environment that compatibly embraces differences. And third, diversity involves a fundamental change in our acceptance of people who are different from ourselves. This is transformation. Using these criteria, I propose the following definition of diversity.

*Diversity is a humanly compatible environment* wherein differences are integrated:

- to acknowledge the equality of all people,
- to reconcile human conflict,
- to realize our inherent connectedness,
- to create the reality we desire,
- to ensure our survival as human beings,
- and ultimately, to create a unity of one human family.

In this sense *diversity, human compatibility, and unity* are synonymous.

When I was a practicing physical chemist, I participated in the founding of a new organization—The National Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers. Our major motivation for organizing was based upon the exclusion we experienced from the major chemical and chemical engineering organization
in the U.S. In organizing, we had representation from corporations, academia, government, and research foundations. We discussed the right of such a small group to represent the larger group of black scientists and engineers. We concluded if not us, then who? The greatest controversy we experienced was the use of the word “Black” in our name. A few of the older members felt “very uncomfortable” with that word. One member who was highly respected suggested we sounded like radicals. (In retrospect, I think he was right.)

In spite of his objection, we prevailed in keeping the word in our name. He resigned from the group. The organization still exists today and has successfully aided in the recruitment of black students in science and engineering careers. I still have feelings of regret that we were not able to reconcile our differences regarding that word. During that time period it had strong implications regarding our search for identity. I have since learned that life is a never-ending process of reconciling differences to find common ground without compromising the necessary adaptation to change.

**Differences Are an Inherent Part of Life**

If you think about the variety of people you know, their different personalities and interests, there is diversity in your everyday experiences with them. Because of these differences, your relationship with each of them is unique. The key word in discovering how diversity is such a comprehensive part of our lives is “differences.” Differences in the way we are, differences in the ways we think, and differences in the ways we naturally do things. We refer to these categories as *human diversity*, *cultural diversity*, and *systems diversity*, respectively.

I recently went to a hardware store to buy a metal file for expanding the opening for a door lock. As I was directed and redirected among several aisles, I became increasingly frustrated. I finally arrived at the aisle where I believed the files were located. There was a store attendant with his back to me. I asked him politely where I could find files. He didn’t respond. So I asked again, louder. He continued to ignore me. Then I
really became upset and decided to confront him. I walked around to face him and experienced the most heart-warming smile I had seen in years. He took out a small notebook and wrote “Can I help you find something?” It took me an eternity to realize he was deaf, although it was only a few seconds in real time. I stood there feeling stupid and embarrassed. Then I began laughing at myself. He started laughing too. Somehow I suspect he knew why I found the situation so amusing. That experience was a defining moment for me because I had a realization.

“People with disabilities are here to teach us how disabled we are.”

I call these nuggets of wisdom. As I often share with friends, I keep them in my back pocket to help guide me through the differences I encounter in life.

If you have a significant other in your life, you probably have unique differences in how you think and do things. She or he may drive slowly and methodically, you might drive fast and aggressively. She or he may be more conversation and relationship oriented, and you might be more solution and task oriented. She or he may be more “in the world, but not of the world” and you might be more practical and down to earth.

The first conclusion we come to is that:

“Differences are an inherent part of life.”

Everything we do with others involves differences between and among us. The second conclusion is that our experiences of differences are rarely neutral. They either play out constructively or counterproductively. And third, the more we learn to accept the differences in others, the more we experience the quality of relationship we desire. Quality relationships, based upon respect, trust, and equality, provide the foundation for unity.
Diversity—A Unifying Force

Diversity is a unifying force because first, it teaches us how to distinguish between differences which are a threat and those which are not. Second, it teaches us how to combine differences to solve our most difficult problems. And third, it teaches us how to use differences to create the future we desire. Let’s examine each of these statements in greater detail in the following sections.

Have you ever noticed how upset we sometimes become when discussing religious, political, or cultural differences? It’s like another part of our personality takes control of our behaviors. This part of our personality views the other person or the other point-of-view more precisely, as a personal threat—when in fact, no personal threat exists. Sometimes we are even activated to physical aggression.

Learning to experience differing points-of-view as non-threatening requires a transformation in the way we have programmed our thinking. Diversity helps us to identify the major perceptions that are the source of reactive behaviors. It also provides guidelines for discovering effective ways to permanently eliminate such programming; which I will discuss later as small acts of kindness.

Some years ago, I experienced a seminar series that changed my life. There were twenty of us who met over eight consecutive weekends. The purpose of the seminar series was to remove personal barriers to unlimited success. I particularly remember the weekend I was attempting to resolve my beliefs about racial differences—having grown up in the south. My initial comments focused on what white people believed about me as an African-American. The facilitator quickly reframed the conversation about the beliefs I had about myself. He suggested that my emotional reaction to racial comments was “possibly” due to racial programming within me; adopted at an early age. This was a moment of truth. I could either deny his suggestion or explore new territory. The instant I let go of denial there was an overwhelming emotional release, like
Diversity—A Unifying Force

a dam had been broken. The truth of my own programming about being inferior was clearly evident. The opinions I believed others had about me were my own hidden perceptions. I eventually realized how much these perceptions had limited my professional success.

I learned that no one has the power to control my emotions or behaviors. The more I viewed someone’s opinion of me as a reflection of themselves, the more I was free to determine the most appropriate behavioral response where racial issues—real or imagined—were involved. My nugget of wisdom from that experience was,

“That which I dislike in others is a mirror reflection of myself.”

—Unknown

At the end of the eight-week series, the seminar group were friends for life. We still continue to support each others’ careers. Most of all, I experienced what it was like to be so united with a group that our relationship was like one large family.

As suggested above, diversity helps us to discover, constructively confront, and resolve self-limiting perceptions. It also teaches us how to distinguish between differences that are truly threatening and those that require a change in our thinking. The most powerful learning experiences involving change are constructive interactions with someone who is different. Such interactions almost always result in a change in the perceptions we may have about each other. This change in mind-set is defined as personal transformation. The natural result of transformation is unity—learning to compatibly live and work together to achieve our goals in life.

Transforming Differences from a Problem to an Opportunity

When we are open, receptive, and proactive about resolving a problem, a two-step process usually occurs. The first step is a shift in thinking from a problem to a challenge. The second step is a shift from a challenge to an opportunity.
The way we respond to a problem or an opportunity is different. The experience of solving a problem is *tiring* and *energy-depleting* whereas the experience of brainstorming an opportunity is *exciting* and *energizing*. The natural result of brainstorming is a more powerful solution which is equally exciting and energizing when put into practice.

Several years ago, our consulting firm, Innovations International, was faced with declining sales. Some of us felt we should simply work harder and others felt we should reinvent ourselves. Our initial response to this dilemma was to assume we had a problem. Therefore, our strategy was to improve marketing, make more sales calls, and use “hard” sales tactics to reverse this trend. In spite of these efforts, sales continued to decline. Fortunately, we quickly decided to “reframe” our situation as an opportunity.

The first thing we did was to consider ourselves to be a new consulting firm in our field of expertise. That meant we had no attachments to the way things had been done in the past. We were free to create a new reality. It also meant that we were free to explore new programs, presentation formats, and less necessity for our direct involvement. Our customers could be more empowered to *implement* our consulting services. This approach allowed the “opportunity” to serve more customers, create new programs, and use more creative approaches in facilitating organizational transformation—which is our mission.

However, marketing and sales were still a crucial part of our operation. When we combined our new approach with an expanded customer base, both marketing and sales became easier. Marketing was more like *offering* something new that was wanted and needed by our customers. Sales was their realization of the value of our new offering and the subsequent choice to purchase. The result was a wildly successful response from our customers. Conclusion: the most powerful way to resolve a problem involving differences is to reframe the problem as an opportunity. Most of all, I am strongly influenced by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s quote, the 18th century...
German poet, who wrote, “When you commit to something, particularly in moments of crisis, unforeseen resources will come to your aid that you could never have predicted.” This statement of faith is the basis I use for resolving problems, challenges, or even crises.

**Integrating Differences to Create Our Desired Reality**

From birth, (and possibly before), we begin programming ourselves to respond to the world based upon our day-to-day experiences. Our unique programming is based upon our natural survival instinct. The people in our lives (most commonly, parents) play a crucial role in our design of reality. The problem with this decision-making process, at such an early age, is that we lack the wisdom to distinguish between experiences which are truly threatening and those which are not. For example, if our parents’ learned response to significant differences in people was avoidance, then there is a good probability we also adopted the same behaviors. If they embraced differences, then we probably learned to embrace them also. Therefore, maturing is the life-long process of learning how to compatibly adapt to the inevitable differences we encounter. This is the essence of diversity.

*There are wide-eyed little people who believe you’re always right. In their little minds you are setting an example every day in all you do for them to grow up to be just like you.*

—Unknown

Books like *My Mother, Myself* or sayings like “The apple doesn’t fall too far from the tree” are examples of this quote.

The more aware we are of how we are programmed, the easier it is to determine our experiences of others. We obviously cannot control the experiences of others, but we can certainly influence their experience of us. In addition, the more aware we are of our own inner motivations, the more appropriately we can respond out of choice rather than from a
programmed behavior learned as a child. For example, when we find ourselves confronted with significant differences in perceptions, such as the ideas of younger generations, we might first recall the quote of St. Francis of Assisi,

“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”

Having created this “space in time” between experience and response allows us to see the world through their eyes. It allows us to stop and question our strongly held opinions by reflecting on the world we have created. Upon reflection, we may open ourselves to “see” new possibilities that didn’t previously exist. The key is to focus on the message more than the source or style of delivery.

Individuals with this level of openness are said to be “spiritually connected.” They are naturally receptive to the views of others. They recognize that one person does not have all the answers but working together we can resolve any challenge. They also have the ability to freely express the inner dimensions of themselves, such as creativity, imagination, insight, intuition, and a holistic view of the world. These individuals have learned to not only use the power of their minds but the power of something greater than themselves to create their experience of life; thereby, measurably influencing the reality they experience. Such individuals are not “special.” The truth is we all experience this state, but in vastly different proportions of time. Being this way begins with learning how to live compatibly with those we experience most.
THE PROCESS OF EXPERIENCING THE transformation from survival-driven behaviors to compatibility-driven behaviors to spiritually-driven behaviors is described by the three-cycle diagram shown on the following page as Figure 1.

Cycle One represents a survival-driven reality. Cycle Two represents a compatibility-driven reality. Cycle Three represents a spiritually-driven reality. The major value system that characterizes each of these cycles is described below.

**Cycle One: Survival—A Survival-Adaptive Reality**

- Scarcity
- Win/Lose
- Competition
- Separateness
- Polarization
- Information is Power
Figure 1. A Systems Thinking Model of Human Compatibility

Cycle One: Survival
- Programmed Mind-Set (Individual Reality)
- Cultural Conflict and/or Survival Adaptation
- Fear of a Threat to One’s Reality/Survival
- Cultural Encounters
- Personal or Collective Transformation

Cycle Two: Compatibility
- Transformed Mind-Set (A Humanly Compatible Reality)
- Acceptance and Support of More Powerful Ideas/Solutions
- Open, Receptive, and Proactive to Cultural Encounters
- Integration of Differences
- Spiritual Transformation

Cycle Three: Spirituality
- Spiritually Transformed Mind-Set (Spiritual Reality)
- Transformation in Consciousness
- Creative-Adaptive Cultural Encounters
- Collective Transformation from Ideas/Solutions
- Unity
Cycle Two: Compatibility—A Humanly Compatible Reality

- Respect
- Equality
- Interdependence
- Collaboration
- Freedom
- Knowledge is Power

Cycle Three: Spirituality—A Creative-Adaptive Reality

- Abundance
- Connectedness
- Exploration
- Service
- Oneness
- Wisdom is Power

Cycle One

Cycle One appears to be the major mode of operation that dominates human existence. There have been 10,000 wars in 5,000 years, with no apparent end in sight\(^2\). The ultimate way we resolve major differences is through aggression—based on fears that are both real and imagined. We tend to impose our beliefs and values on others as a condition for alliances. We appear to be dominantly driven by greed, based upon a scarcity mentality, where in fact scarcity does not exist. The precipitating events on Wall Street in New York that led to a world-wide recession in 2008 and 2009 are examples of this point.

Even within countries, differences are reflected more as polarized points-of-view, rather than a rich source of synergy. The result is often survival-driven behavior. Within this way of operating, information is viewed as a source of power. This includes information about people, organizations, enemies, adversaries, friends, competitor’s inventions, operations, or any conceivable source that may be viewed as a potential threat, or an opportunity to win at the expense of someone
else’s loss. We define information as interrelated data that may be used for planning, predicting, or decision making. Examples include information about global stock market trends as a basis for investing, or the performance record of an individual as a basis for selection.

Our focus for resolving conflict is on behavioral modification characterized by first-order change. Whereas, the fundamental source of the issues we face is the ways we have programmed and reinforced our realities; thus, the need for personal and collective transformation from Cycle One to Cycle Two. The State of Mind diagram below illustrates these statements.

**Figure 2. The State of Mind Diagram**

A person’s *attitude* and *mind-set* are determined by what he or she believes, which when “irreversibly changed” (transformed) is described as second-order change.

A person’s *mind-set* determines his or her *behavior*; when modified is first-order change.

To understand your *mind-set*, examine the results you continually produce or experience.

For example, when we experience interpersonal conflict, we usually design “different” behaviors and/or procedures for more compatibly working or living together (first-order change). This arrangement usually leads to a temporary solution. However, sooner rather than later a new problem arises in a different form. The new problem is commonly sourced from
the same fundamental differences previously identified. These differences include issues related to control, being right, or a need to have power over others. I sometimes refer to this process as “moving the furniture around the living room thinking that the living room is fundamentally different!” I describe these behaviors and procedures as “comfort zone” because they do not create permanent, positive change. Real world examples of Cycle One are television programs, video programs, and movies that feature violence, destruction, and human conflict based on good and evil that reinforces our dominant beliefs. Perhaps, one of the best quotes which describes this point is by Albert Einstein, who wrote:

“The world that we have made as a result of the level of thinking we have done thus far, creates problems that we cannot solve at the level we created them.”

There are two forms of behavior modification that have the potential to create transformation: significantly challenging, non-comfort zone behaviors and behaviors which are expressions of love. An example of the former is when a family, country, or world is experiencing a crisis, there is a willingness to drop partisan positions and unify as one. The willingness to do so creates a transformation with respect to the issues discussed previously: control, being right, and power. Examples of expressions of love are the small acts of kindness I will discuss in subsequent chapters of this book. The measure of authenticity and commitment of these behaviors is reflected by the results produced according the Figure 2.

Although survival-adaptation appears to be the dominant reality, there is a significant fraction of individuals who primarily live in Cycles Two and Three realities. I do not know the exact number, but from the overall results we experience (Figure 2), it appears that such individuals do not dominate the consciousness of this planet—and we rarely, if ever, elect them to public office. Exceptions include Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the U.S. who served during
the American Civil War and Franklin D. Roosevelt, the 32nd President, who served during the Great Depression. Both of these selections were in response to a crisis. The objective of this book is to increase the number of Cycle Two individuals to critical mass without the necessity of a crisis. I define critical mass as the number necessary for this cycle to become the prevailing way we live on planet Earth. As I’ll discuss later, this will be a grass-roots movement, not one necessarily led by some great leader; although a great leader’s influence is welcomed, valued, and probably ultimately needed.

**Cycle Two**

Cycle Two values (and corresponding behaviors) reflect individuals who “live and let live.” They tend to look for the good things in people rather than how others could or should improve. They rarely, if ever, gossip about others and are uncomfortable with those who do. Think of a person in your own life who you enjoy spending time with, then you will have identified a dominantly Cycle Two person. They are people with whom you have conversations and come away with new realizations that apply to your life; although no formal workshop took place. These are typically knowledgeable individuals who have learned from their life experiences. They change the world by how they live their lives.

An example of a Cycle Two person is described in the book *Tuesdays With Morrie*. The book is about the relationship between a young man, Mitch, and his terminally-ill former professor from Brandeis University, Morrie. They would meet regularly on Tuesdays after breakfast and have conversations about love, work, community, family, forgiveness, and death. The conversations were rich in the knowledge and wisdom Mitch’s former professor had learned over his lifetime. One of the most important lessons Mitch learned was that “none of us can undo what we have done, ...but it’s never ‘too late’ in life.” I assume this statement means that whatever incompletions or unresolved situations we may have, it’s never too late to resolve them.
Several years ago, I realized that I had unresolved feelings about three former close friends. Each of these relationships had resulted in personal monetary loss. Over the years, my anger and righteousness became increasingly justified. Then I read a book which suggested that continued justification of righteousness from a hurtful situation causes bitterness and possibly physical illness. It suggested that forgiveness would resolve those situations and allow one to have peace.

The problem was forgiveness felt like admitting that I was wrong and they were right (Cycle One thinking). I could feel the resistance to such an admission throughout my body. Finally, I accepted the fact that they were as justified in their positions as I was in mine. Neither of us had an unquestionable case for righteousness. Most of all, at this point in my life maybe righteousness was irrelevant! When I had this realization, I experienced an overwhelming feeling of relief and the release of pent-up feelings that I didn’t even know were there. The key element was my inner knowing that I am 100% responsible and 100% accountable for everything that happens in my life. If this statement is valid, how could I possibly be a victim? I am now at peace with them and myself. I’ve learned that the resolution of incompletions in my life has resulted in richer, more fulfilling relationships in the present.

Within this cycle, knowledge is a source of power. Knowledge is defined as the creative integration of information. Since knowledge can only be created by human beings, the knowledge-based paradigm acknowledges the fundamental value of people in any enterprise requiring creativity and innovation. Examples include software development, computer animation, and creative ideas for new products and services. Being knowledgeable also includes an in-depth understanding of areas of study, a personal relationship with the environment, and most importantly, an in-depth understanding of one’s self.
Cycle Three values (and corresponding behaviors) are indicative of individuals who are “at peace with themselves and their surroundings.” They see no need to change the world because they know that the world is only a physical representation of a much greater reality. In spite of this mindset, they are natural agents of change. They embrace life as “a glass half-full instead of a glass half-empty.” They naturally exude empathy, compassion, humility, and love in relationship to others. They are non-judgmental, having learned that an opinion of another person is a mirror-reflection of themselves.

Inner exploration is a way of life in anticipation of change. They are astronauts of inner space. They fully accept 100% responsibility and 100% accountability for creating the reality they experience. Finally, they routinely apply the wisdom of the metaphysical world in their day-to-day physical reality, such as extrasensory perception (ESP), spiritual knowing, automatic writing (channeling), clairvoyance, clairaudience, intuition, dream interpretation, clairsentience, telepathy, imagery, premonition, or psychic awareness. (see Figure 5 on page 33) Typically, a Cycle Three individual masters only two or three of these metaphysical skills. However, highly gifted individuals may master as many as five or more.

In fact, most of us use one or more of these skills on a regular basis, when we say, “I have hunch that... (intuition),” or “I have a feeling that... (clairsentience),” or “I just know that ... (clairvoyance).” We simply don’t validate these perceptions and learn to master them as everyday skills. Primarily because Newtonian-Cartesian physical science hasn’t validated them and given us “permission” to classify such skills as reality! Cycle Three individuals are not waiting for validation by Newtonian-Cartesian science. They have quietly mastered such skills and use them in their everyday lives. I suspect that really clever detectives commonly use these skills to understand the motivations of suspects in an investigation. Such perceptions are then combined with physical evidence from scientific data to solve a case. The focus of physical science is the study of
phenomena that can be probed, measured, and analyzed using sophisticated physical instrumentation. I have suggested in a previous publication that the next scientific paradigm will be the Science of Consciousness⁴; the study of the non-physical, but very real, world.

Each of the elements of the cycles shown in Figure 1. on page 12 and described above is explained in greater detail in the following chapters. I also discuss how they influence our lives on a day-to-day basis. You might make a personal assessment of the average percentage of time you experience in each of these cycles over a week or a month based upon the corresponding value systems shown on pages 11 and 13.
Chapter Three—Cycle One: A Survival-Adaptive Reality

THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION IS AN EXPLANATION of the components of Cycle One. The discussion shows how these components occur in our day-to-day living, based upon Figure 1 on page 12. Cycle One is shown below as Figure 3.

**Figure 3. The Components of Cycle One**

- Programmed Mind-Set (Individual Reality)
- Cultural Conflict and/or Survival Adaptation
- Cultural Encounters
- Fear of a Threat to One’s Reality/Survival
- Transformed Mind-Set (A Humanly Compatible Reality)
Our programmed mind-set is a sum of all the beliefs, ideas, perceptions, and values that comprise our worldview. It is the basis for how we interpret and respond to our experiences of others (or world events). It is the accumulation of everything we know and believe at any given point in our lives. Our programmed mind-set is also constantly changing as a result of our continuing experiences of the world. There are more than six billion unique realities on planet Earth.

As we experience day-to-day living, we commonly encounter events that are consistent with our programmed reality. These are comfort zone experiences that reinforce what we already believe. The most common comfort zone experiences are those within our own family, work, religious, or societal group. When we encounter people, situations, or world events that are different from our presently existing reality, an examination of the level of threat is automatically triggered mentally. I define such incidents as “cultural encounters.”

One of my most dramatic cultural encounters was my first experience of Paris, France. I was a postdoctoral fellow at the Sorbonne—University of Paris. The time frame was the aftermath of the Vietnam War. Based on the U.S. news media, I assumed we were not only justified in our actions but had more or less “won” the war. But we certainly had not lost. I experienced a traumatically different story from my French colleagues. They suggested that I was beyond naïve and certainly brainwashed. As they described the situation from their perspective, my reality was not only threatened but in fast-forward turmoil. I had always considered myself to be a skilled debater. But I learned that skill alone was not sufficient if I didn’t have all the facts involved. When all was said and done, I was seeing the world in a completely different light—from a global perspective. My nugget of wisdom from this experience was,

“All conflicts have two equally justified positions.”

This was my first experience of a “global encounter.”
We Dominantly Live in Cycle One

The common result of a cultural encounter is *fear of a threat to our presently existing reality*. When the experience of fear is dominant, the result is *cultural conflict and/or a survival adaptive solution*. Cultural encounters also include conflicting beliefs and values about nuclear proliferation, global warming, the environment, gay marriage, integrated neighborhoods or schools, different cultural/religious belief systems, diverse workplace relationships, culturally integrated relationships/marriages, abortion, family generational values, illegal immigration, different races/ethnicities, sexual orientation, gender roles, cultural core values, and the list can go on endlessly, confirming my earlier quote on page 4 that differences are an inherent part of life. *In essence, differences influence practically everything we do with others.*

Depending on the issue involved, we may interpret an opposing point-of-view as a personal threat. For example, I am confident each of us can find one or more issues from the cultural encounters listed above for which we probably have a strong emotional opinion. In extreme situations, opposition to our point-of-view may even be viewed as a physical attack. And, we tend to *react* accordingly! Violent actions can be associated with most of the cultural encounters listed in the previous paragraph.

Nuclear proliferation is most strongly opposed by those countries that already possess nuclear armaments. Global warming is ignored by countries that stand to lose economic advantage, even though the phenomenon may ultimately threaten human existence on planet Earth. The budding idea of a “Green Business Economy” is catching on where there is a clear profit (Cycle One) rather than being principally driven from the survival of future generations (Cycle Two). Gay marriage is opposed by most religious groups, but such groups also believe in the right to live their own private lives as they please, without interference from anyone. Most religions claim to be the only true religion; conclusion: the others are false. Gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender individuals
are believed by some to be abnormal, and therefore should be banned, changed, or excluded from personhood. A relationship is an agreement to strike a balance (or compromise) between the wants, needs, and desires of two individuals. I could go on endlessly with such examples. What’s my point? These are all Cycle One examples. I suggest this is where most of us live, most of the time. This is a dysfunctional way to live.

**Transformation from Cycle One to Cycle Two**

In the midst of this world of conflict, we have Cycles Two and Three individuals. These individuals do not seek fame, fortune, or recognition for their tireless efforts in creating a more compatible planet. Their efforts are primarily *small acts of kindness* that have the potential for transformation. Small acts include a respectful smile, a heartfelt hello, the willingness to listen, the offering of flowers, a helping hand with a task, a donation to someone in need, the inclusion of someone who feels excluded, an unexpected compliment or courtesy, an empowering conversation, understanding of someone’s disappointment, and a general attitude of love. Therefore, the extent to which humanly compatible working and living environments are possible is dependent on how “intelligently” (with knowledge and wisdom) we can distinguish between differences that are a true threat to our survival and those that simply require greater openness, understanding, and the ability to “see the world through the eyes of others.”

My most recent global encounter was a visit to Saudi Arabia in 2009. I was invited to facilitate a seminar on Quantum-Thinking to an electronics corporation. This was my first visit to the Middle East. Saudi Arabia is a dominantly Islamic country and strongly guided by the Qur’an. I was first struck by the absence of women in public. It was clear there was no separation between religion and everyday life: no alcohol anywhere, anytime and its use is illegal; prayers occur five times a day no matter where the locale; pork is forbidden
as a consumed food; drug trafficking is punishable by death; and most of all, “intuitive perception” communicates what is appropriate or inappropriate behavior.

Such perceptions are indicative of high context cultures where the most important communications are non-verbal. In spite of these fundamental differences in the way I was raised in the U.S., I found myself wanting to learn more about their culture and customs. Because of my work in global diversity and foreign travel, I didn’t feel judgmental or find myself comparing their value system with ours. Most of all, I wanted to discover if their culture produced the quality of life they desired. This question was impossible to answer in the short time I was there and I’m not sure it could be answered except on an individual basis. The most important realization I had was that if I did feel at all judgmental, my seminar group would have immediately sensed it. The result would have been a very poorly received presentation. I also realized the value of all my learning experiences from global encounters I’ve had over the years; beginning with my postdoctoral experience at the Sorbonne.

After operating in Cycle One for a given length of time (typically years), we commonly experience a life-changing event, such as a mid-life crisis. My life-changing event was an intensive two-weekend training. I had recently been appointed chairman of the chemistry department at a major university. I attended the event with the intention of learning how to become a better manager. I quickly discovered the focus was not on changing others but changing me! My first thought was, ‘How do I get out of here as quickly as possible.’ The problem was there was no bathroom break for three hours. The more the facilitator talked, the more I “had” to go. I later learned there was a connection between what he was saying and my need to go. I’m not sure any frequency-regulating drug, with respect to bathroom breaks, would have been helpful in this situation. By the time the first weekend was complete I felt I had transitioned into another reality. The old Bill was fast
disappearing; similar to the Anasazi crossing the “imaginary boundary” in the Four Corners region of the Southwest. By the end of the second weekend, he was gone! Where? I have no idea. “I” liked the new Bill much better and so did my friends.

Life-changing experiences also include restlessness with one’s life, personal growth, divorce, separation, serious illness, personal tragedy, a natural disaster, loss of income, travel, a child with a drug addiction, a personal drug addiction, living in another country, diversity and inclusion, economic meltdown, “the dark night of the soul,” or whatever might be one’s “personal life’s learning lesson.” The result is personal transformation.

*Personal transformation* is the experience of “letting go” of significant beliefs that no longer serves a constructive purpose in one’s life. Such beliefs are related to situations similar to those listed in the previous paragraph. For example, beliefs relating to *money* are the #1 reason married couples divorce in America. Beliefs relating to *human equality* were confronted during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Beliefs relating to *equity of opportunity* are central to diversity and inclusion today. The result of transformation is a more open, receptive, and positive attitude about resolving differences. Such a transformation allows us to live a more humanly compatible life.

“If we are to survive, we will have learned to take a delight in the essential differences between people and between cultures. We will have learned that differences in ideas and attitudes are a delight, part of life’s exciting variety, not something to fear.”

—Susan Sackett

*Inside Trek: A Star Trek Memoir*
ONCE WE TRANSITION TO COMPATIBILITY WE HAVE A greater understanding of how our own thinking and behaviors determine the quality of life we experience. It doesn’t mean that we are totally free of survival-driven behaviors (Cycle One), but that we experience most of life in Cycle Two. Occasionally, there is some situation that brings us back to Cycle One behaviors. However, such situations can be proactively resolved as a result of the openness to change we have learned from operating in Cycle Two.

I recently decided to build a cabin in the mountains of Utah. I had not realized the amount of planning and designing that were needed. I had to make choices of light fixtures, paint colors, flooring, rugs, and much more. So, I asked a friend to help me with these choices. Her choices and mine were often opposites. I gradually became more resistant to her opinions. When I asked for second opinions from my daughters, they often
agreed with her. My resistance to both their opinions grew into paranoia. When I began to suspect a conspiracy, I knew there was a significant “flaw” in my thinking! Fortunately, I was sensible enough at this point to stop and laugh at myself. I immediately recognized the old trap of being right and in control. I also realized that “compromising choices” would lead to colors we all disliked. So, I decided to have them make all the painting choices. When I look at the choices they made—vibrant greens, yellows, pinks, and golds—I realize how boring my selections would have been. I’m pleased at myself for having the “good sense” to just “chill out” and “let go.” My realization: Life is so much more enjoyable and stress-free when I truly open myself to the ideas of others.

Being open to change frees us to behave in the most sensible way with respect to a relationship, situation, or project. The point is, we are rarely, if ever, completely free of Cycle One, except for extremely enlightened individuals—who I’ve never met. However, we are receptive and open to continuous personal growth. The components of Cycle Two are shown below as Figure 4 beginning with a transformed mind-set of human compatibility.

**Figure 4. The Components of Cycle Two**

- **Cycle Two: Compatibility**
  - Transformed Mind-Set (A Humanly Compatible Reality)
  - Acceptance and Support of More Powerful Ideas/Solutions
  - Open, Receptive, and Proactive to Cultural Encounters
  - Integration of Differences
  - Spiritually Transformed Mind-Set (Spiritual Reality)
An open, receptive, and proactive mind-set is the result of maturing as a person. Being open and receptive to differences is perhaps best captured by the saying “be interested rather than interesting.” It’s approaching life as an ongoing schoolroom for learning through our experiences with others. We are no longer consumed with a defensive/offensive response to encountering differences. In fact, the experience of differences is an effective way of becoming mentally and emotionally mature.

Have you ever noticed how uncomfortable we become when there are periods of silence in a conversation? When I spent time in China, I learned the value of silence; without the need to fill pauses with unnecessary talking. I also learned how to become more aware of non-verbal communication. Particularly, when what people said did not match what I was feeling; sometimes referred to as “listening with one’s heart.” These are skills I learned from my experiences of another culture that I have incorporated into my own life.

Integration of differences is the process of combining ideas to create something more powerful than the sum of each person’s idea. This process works best when everyone agrees, in advance, to set aside an attachment to their own contribution. The process commonly involves discomfort, ambiguity, and confusion. These are the experiences of the mind in its transformation to inclusion of everyone’s contribution. Continually experiencing this cycle eventually results in a greater understanding and acceptance of even divergent points-of-view. The result is the creation of more powerful ideas, solutions, and ways of living. Pablo Picasso is quoted to have said,

“The act of creation is simultaneously the act of destruction.”

Meaning the old way of viewing reality is replaced by the new.

For example, I often do creative brainstorming sessions with a good friend of mine named Chris Harding. Chris is extremely gifted in his ability to create visual scenarios, such
as movies to relate a story. He allows the audience to draw their own conclusions about the story being filmed. Therefore, his stories have wide appeal. I come from a background where the focus is on creating a spontaneous “aha” discovery that has the potential for transformation. I learned that something extraordinarily creative is going to happen when Chris begins to change some new idea I have proposed. I have to hold my opinion in check and let his ideas unfold in order to co-create a masterpiece. The crucial part of our relationship is that we can be “supportively honest” with each other; even when one of us has to backtrack on a prior opinion without embarrassment.

Our most recent masterpiece is a single-user computer-assisted learning program involving an introduction to diversity. Although Chris and I created the script, his two sons designed the computer program and story board. My son served as production manager. The entire project was one of my most significant experiences of integrating differences, since the final product was nothing like my original idea. It was considerably better!

Acceptance and support of a more powerful idea or solution involves the experience of humility. That is, having our ideas totally integrated into others such that its original form no longer exists. It’s the ability to dissociate ourselves from our ideas such that there is little or no emotional attachment. Such an experience can be very humbling to the ego, since it tends to resist change; even when confronted with change that is inevitable.

An Idea Whose Time Has Come

When we authentically embrace an idea that has the intent of radically changing a paradigm, we also experience personal transformation. To quote the French Philosopher, Victor Hugo:

“There is one thing more powerful than all the armies of the world, and that is an idea whose time has come.”
One of the most powerful ideas that has been evolving over the last ten years is a transformation in the way learning occurs. During the 20th century, learning was dominated by the transfer of information and subsequent memorization and regurgitation. In fact, this process was the dominant theme of most popular television quiz programs. Information is now readily available through the Internet or other forms of information technology. In the 21st century, learning involves the creative integration of information to produce new knowledge. It is a facilitated experiential process. This is the primary role of a teacher, no matter whether it’s in a classroom, the Internet, a seminar, a webinar, a conference, or a speech. The objective is that the learner has a transformative experience with respect to the information being presented.

It was previously believed that transformation could only be facilitated by a human being. This assumption is no longer accepted! The present frontier is the creation of information systems that have the power to facilitate personal and collective transformation. It is an idea whose time has come. Those who feel most threatened by this idea are individuals who tenaciously hold on to the old assumption that they are necessary for transformative learning to occur. The natural result of this new way of learning is that there will be fewer “standard right answers” that fit traditional textbook interpretations—particularly, in the Liberal Arts. As this new approach to learning gradually evolves—primarily driven by the Internet—an inherent part of learning will be the transformation from a Cycle One mind-set to Cycle Two. Therefore, personal growth will become a natural part of a learning curriculum.

Human Compatibility to Spiritual Transformation

A Cycle Two individual actively explores new ideas, new cultures, and new experiences and learns from them. As Helen Keller is quoted to have said,

“Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.”
The early stages of experiencing Cycle Two are characterized by caution, curiosity, and exploration. However, after continually completing the cycle, there is a greater desire to learn more about themselves and others.

I remember when I first moved to Utah from Philadelphia. I was guarded about what I might experience because of the strong LDS (Mormon) influence. After living there for six months, I formed a close relationship with a Mormon. In fact, we recently co-authored a book with a tongue-in-cheek title, “How To Become A Total Failure!” I learned, from Phil, that an open, authentic experience of another person—no matter who he or she is—has the power to invalidate any prejudices I might have about a group. Most of all, I learned that the experiences that challenge us most have the potential to create the greatest learning. Such a breakthrough can often result in spiritual transformation.

*Spiritual transformation* is the process of creating a channel to one’s inner self that is transcendent to the mind. (See Figure 5 on page 33) I define spirituality as that which comes from within—beyond the belief systems of the mind. Being spiritual simply means that one’s actions and behaviors are sourced and driven from a level of consciousness beyond the mind. We often experience this state of being during times of quiet meditation, contemplation, or an inspiring or a traumatic event.

I imagine that Buddhist monks spend much of their lives making this connection as a dominant way of living through prayer, meditation, and austere living. The same connection commonly occurs for individuals who adopt children with severe physical challenges. I know a couple who adopted a baby with special needs. Every time I have looked into the young girl’s eyes, I have experienced depths of wisdom. The parents of such children learn as much or more about themselves, as spiritual beings, as they do about caring for someone who is less able in some way. The diagram shown on the next page as Figure 5 describes this process as creating a channel to the Spiritual Domain.
Spirituality is our inner consciousness. The process of creating a channel to the Spiritual Domain involves the resolution of personal belief structures that prevent conscious access.

“Spirituality is the infinite reservoir of wisdom. Each human is a channel through which that divine wisdom is steadily flowing”

—Paramahansa Yogananda

Domains of Consciousness

The lower part of the diagram is the three-dimensional physical world characterized by the laws of physics. We define this realm as the bodymind domain since body and mind are inseparable. Mind is simply the dynamic action of the brain.

Most, if not all, of us program our belief system early in life based upon a dominantly survival mentality, as discussed previously. Therefore, it is inevitable that we all have beliefs.
Diversity—A Unifying Force

that are inconsistent with a reality greater than ourselves. Such beliefs may be cultural, racial, or even religious. For example, it is a common belief in most societies of the world that some people are superior to others. The basis of this belief includes birthright, wealth, education, race/ethnicity, intellect, talent, religious doctrine, or social status. This belief prevails as an apparent reality as long as the other group(s) behaves in an inferior way—one cannot exist without the other. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is quoted to have said,

“You can’t ride a man’s back unless it is bent.”

The experience of realizing the falsity of superiority/inferiority by either of these individuals, or both, quite often creates a permanent channel between the bodymind and spiritual domains; particularly, where such a belief structure is strongly programmed into a society. Such a realization is an experience of humility. I define humility as the experience of equality. It is the realization of not being better than or less than anyone, but simply equal.

The key element here is that spiritual transformation creates a reversible channel. Without this reversible channel the elements of the spiritual domain access us in special moments of inspiration—often as a result of some highly emotional or traumatic event. During automobile accidents, people are often quoted as saying “time slowed down” or “I saw my entire life flash before my eyes.” These are both descriptions of metaphysical experiences of timelessness and holistic seeing, respectively. The process I have described here applies to any strongly-held belief structure that is equally reinforced by a given society or a group. I suspect this is the same process individuals experience who are “reborn” from a religious perspective.

The “dots” at the top of Figure 5 indicate there are even “more expanded” states of consciousness.
Spiritual Transformation Opens Us to the World of Wisdom

Spiritual transformation occurs when a precipitating event leads to the realization that “who we are” goes beyond our mind and body. It is the true realization that we are spiritual beings having a human experience—and not the opposite. A precipitating event is usually an experience (or sequence of experiences) that expands our perception of reality. It is commonly the result of an emotionally traumatic event, such as an “existential crisis,”—which is a crisis of being. It may also be the result of prolonged periods of prayer, meditation, or the natural breakthrough resulting from a dedicated process of personal transformation.

After experiencing a dedicated period of personal transformation, I began using an affirmation, asking for my next mentor or teacher. Little did I know that my mentor/teacher would appear in the form of “channeled” or “inspired writing” that spontaneously began coming “through” me. There was no effort or concentration required. Just a “letting go” of my resistance to giving up control, since I had no idea what my pen might write. It was like being a “conduit” to transmit information from outside of my own reality. This event was another defining moment that significantly changed my life. More importantly, this event opened me to a permanent channel to the spiritual domain. I have since learned how to use this channel to request and receive answers to my most challenging questions relating to spirituality and human existence.
THE COMPONENTS OF CYCLE THREE, SHOWN ON THE following page as figure 6, begin with a spiritually transformed mind-set. A spiritually transformed mind-set means that a permanent channel is created between the bodymind and spiritual domains; (as shown by Figure 5 on page 33). As a result, most experiences involving the compatible and survival reality cycles (pages 11-13) are influenced by the wisdom we have learned from the spiritual domain. That is, when experiencing a new cultural encounter, we have the awareness to create a “space in time” to consider how to best respond to a Cycle One event; either as a learning opportunity or react by a survival-driven pattern. The difference now is that there is a choice created by spiritual awareness. In fact, every time we have a spiritual experience a transformation in our thinking naturally occurs. We become more aware, perceptive, and mature in terms of our responses to experiences of life.
I remember the first time I became consciously aware of learning from a spiritual experience. I was trying to keep a personal relationship from breaking up and the two of us going our separate ways. We were unable to resolve our differences about money, our parents’ involvement, and having more fun together. One evening I was going through a packet of photos we had taken over the past six months. When I looked at her face there was sadness in almost every picture. Underneath her sadness, I sensed there was pain. Surprisingly, the same was true of my pictures. Maybe that’s how I sensed the idea of pain in her! Then from nowhere this thought came to me: “A person who is angry is a person in pain.” That realization transformed our relationship.

I realized that our conflicts resulted from trying to live according to the values and expectations of others in our life. As a result, we decided to change our priorities based upon the activities that were truly important to us. These included time alone together, hiking, movies, and long conversations about growing up as children. Most of all, we simply became more tolerant and understanding of each other. This experience
also transformed my perception of a relationship. I realized that a relationship is simply an unconditional commitment to another person. This was the first time it occurred to me that it was possible to create the type of relationship I wanted, rather than live according to the values and expectations of others.

**Becoming Creative-Adaptive**

As we become more aware of the possibilities associated with the spiritual domain, we begin to think about the kind of life we would like to have. Instead of continually responding to what the world serves us, we decide to align our activities with a future state we desire; sometimes called a personal vision. A vision creates direction and purpose. Activities associated with a personal vision are called creative-adaptive because they anticipate the future we envision for ourselves. Questions that help us clarify a personal vision for our lives may include the following:

- What activities provide the most meaning in my life?
- What activities create the most fulfillment for me?
- What activities appear to give my life meaning?
- What activities bring me the most happiness and joy?
- How can I best serve others in my day-to-day living based on my skills, time, resources, and energy?

When you ask yourself these questions, you may be surprised how quickly answers come to you. These activities may involve travel, new relationships, family, book clubs, gardening, painting, volunteerism, music, reading, introspection, writing, outdoor activities, or just being alone and comfortable with the peace and quiet around us. There is no age requirement for this way of thinking and living. However, there is no assurance that maturity spontaneously occurs with more birthdays; although, maturity does appear to occur with aging for most of us.
Diversity—A Unifying Force

My personal response to each of the questions above, starting with the first bullet and proceeding through each, is the following:

- Activities that involve personal and organizational transformation.
- Activities where I influence greater empowerment (self-sufficiency) of others through personal growth, continuous learning, and self-awareness.
- Activities that involve spirituality, connectedness, and service.
- Informal, outdoor, and time alone activities involving family, close friends, and those on the spiritual path; including writing, retreats, speeches, and conference presentations.
- Being an “unobtrusive agent for transformation” through the experience of “small acts of kindness”—done for me and by me.

In addition to our personal vision of the future, we may also want to make a difference in the world. Such a desire might lead to an adventure or a project with others of like mind to create a better world. For example, my personal mission is developing a way to create humanly compatible relationships, families, communities, cities, countries, and ultimately a humanly compatible planet Earth. This mission will be accomplished by learning how to constructively resolve differences between us when conflict, particularly destructive conflict, appears to be evident. Thus, the title of this book is “Diversity—A Unifying Force.” Our willingness to create this way of living is true human evolution—not the advancement of technological innovation.

Other creative-adaptive projects which require the creativity, ingenuity, and collaboration of people working together include the comprehensive recycling of most, if not all, used materials; use of the sun, wind, water, and other forces of nature as the major sources of energy; provision of health,
education, and the necessities of survival for all inhabitants of planet Earth; global education in human compatibility from grammar school through high school graduation; etc. As a more localized example, a community could envision a creative-adaptive project titled “Designing an Integrated System of Education Across Cultural Differences”—recognizing that language and culture are inseparable. And finally from a personal perspective, each of us can choose to be an unobtrusive agent for transformation by practicing small acts of kindness. At this point I’ll drop the use of the word unobtrusive when describing agents for transformation, although it is implied whenever I use that phrase.

Small Acts of Kindness

My friend, Phil, whom I referred to previously as a co-author, related to me a conversation he had with the president of a printing company. The president was angry because his major customer had demanded a significant reduction in printing costs. The demand was based upon hard economic times. Phil asked the president if the major customer had simply asked for a price reduction, would his response have been different. The president said that he would have “gone out of his way” to help the customer. But giving in to a demand was a precedent he was unwilling to set. Phil suggested that the president assume that is what the customer was actually attempting to ask, but that his thinking was dominated by the fear of losing his company (Cycle One thinking and behaving).

A light came on in the president’s thinking. He asked Phil if he was suggesting looking beyond the customer’s fear and asking the question: “What’s best for my organization and my customer that is fiscally responsible; no matter how the request is made?” Phil agreed that was exactly what the president might ask himself and that he makes it clear to the customer that he was not simply giving in to a demand. When the president took this action, his customer was delighted, appreciative, and relieved. This is an example of being an
agent for transformation by using everyday life experiences. The president experienced a transformation from Cycle One (survival) to Cycle Two (compatibility) behavior. Phil experienced a transformation from the president’s insightful solution, and probably the major customer also experienced a transformation based upon the president’s actions.

This example illustrates several assumptions of social network theory. The first is that authentic small acts of kindness create social capital: expectations, obligations, and trust. The second is that when something kind is done for someone, the favor is either returned and/or passed on to someone else. The third is that an authentic act of kindness by the giver creates personal transformation within that individual, regardless of the response of the receiver.

The point of this example is that every time we do something kind for others, a small positive change occurs which transforms our way of being—sometimes referred to as a transformation in consciousness. When this way of being becomes natural to most of us, we begin to create a spiritually transformed society. Compatibility and spirituality become a natural way of living—with no separation between the two.

If you reflect on your own life, you might recall times that people have stated to you that your conversation, comment, or action changed their lives. And you may or may not remember what you said or did at the time. I suggest we become conscious agents of transformation. This process involves consciously living our lives in Cycles Two and Three as much as possible. The result is we eventually become natural agents of transformation.

Spirituality and Wisdom

When a critical mass of us adopts Cycle Three as a significant way of living, unity is the natural result (see Figure 6 on page 38). Sharing with others becomes dominant in preference to greed and a scarcity-driven mentality. Abundance, which replaces scarcity, focuses on not only what we have,
but also what we can create together. *Connectedness* replaces separateness in terms of cooperation, collaboration, and the extensive use of information technology for global networking. *Understanding* replaces conflict and righteousness. In fact, the life-long process of discovering human potential through understanding one’s self becomes a respected value.

Competing dominantly in behalf of one’s self is replaced by serving others. Service is learned primarily within the family unit and extended to the community, city, nation, or world, limited only by one’s personal commitment to participation. The “illusion of separateness” ultimately gives way to the realization of our connectedness as spiritual beings; even though we have separate physical bodies in the “five senses world.” The result is the experience of oneness. *We are all in this world together, for better or worse.*

This realization simultaneously transforms us such that we begin to observe parts of our own personality in everyone we meet. They become mirror-reflections and even extensions of us. Therefore, aggression against someone is aggression against a part of me. Destruction of someone is simultaneously destruction of a part of me, no matter how justified the action. Reflect on the mental states of returning veterans of the Vietnamese and Iraqi Wars. Many of them experience anguish and mental disturbances based upon their survival and the loss of life of others. I suggest that there is a “human identification” with one’s friends and enemies and the fate they suffer. This is the realization of oneness. This is wisdom.
Chapter Six—Creating Human Transformation

THE MODEL I PROPOSE FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF human consciousness is the origin of most presently existing religious and spiritual organizations—the creation of a critical mass of *agents of transformation*. For example, when Jesus Christ decided to spread the doctrine of compatible human existence, one of his first activities was to enlist twelve disciples to assist him. As he went about spreading his message, these disciples were learning his way of transforming the thinking and behaviors of others. In Catholicism, this original practice has since expanded to the creation of cardinals, bishops, and priests throughout the world to facilitate human compatibility.

A similar process has occurred in other religions and spiritual disciplines globally, such as Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Sufism, Judaism, Hinduism, Mormonism, and many other religions too numerous to list here. The point is the process of creating human transformation is to use the everyday
“moments of truth” we experience in our relationships with others—as my Phil example on page 32. A moment of truth is an opportunity for transformation to occur through a human interaction. The requirement to become an agent for transformation is simply one’s own personal transformation. There is no formal indoctrination process. There is no associated belief system. There are no prescribed ways of how you should live your life. There are no universal laws you must believe. There is simply a natural way of being that comes from within you. This natural way of being results in behaviors we describe as honesty, humility, empathy, compassion, equality, support, and love.

For example, when a friend is experiencing a life-changing crisis, being there to simply listen may be described as supportive. Giving money, food, or clothing to those affected by Hurricane Katrina or the 2008 flooding along the Mississippi river might be described as empathy and compassion. Having a conversation with a “street person” and being humbled by the depth of his or her wisdom about life might be described as the experience of humility. Or uniting in a cause to ensure the human rights of others might be described as equality. However, the behavior of each of these individuals is a natural response that is triggered by their spiritual connection. There is no thought “before the fact” that the proper response should be support, compassion, empathy, humility, or equality. This is the natural (not normal) behavior of which all human beings are capable that is the result of spiritual transformation. Normal behavior is indicative of Cycle One.

Therefore, each individual must assume personal responsibility for engaging those activities that uniquely provide the opportunity for personal and spiritual growth. The extent and rate of this engagement is a personal choice. The greater the engagement, the greater the influence we have in creating the transformation of others. The powerful aspect of transformation is that both individuals experience irreversible change to greater understanding, compassion, and awareness—which, in turn, is reflected in greater human
compatibility, until it becomes a way of life. This model invites everyone to be part of this revolution in human transformation. An example of a person who influenced the transformation of others is Cesar Chavez. He was a Mexican-American labor leader, who along with Delores Huerta, founded the National Farm Workers Association; which later became the United Farm Workers. His quote below captures the spirit of an agent of transformation.

“I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of manliness is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally non-violent struggle for justice.”

To Learn a Little Everyday is Wisdom

As I suggested previously, one of the most common modes of participation involves small acts of kindness. A small act of kindness is a human interaction that has the potential for transformation. An example is the willingness to listen more and talk less. My mother always said, “If you talk all the time, you rarely learn anything new.” In a like manner, sharing one’s self can be an extraordinarily powerful act of kindness (and transformation). I recently received a telephone call from a close personal friend who had been diagnosed with prostate cancer. The disease had spread into his bones. During our conversation he informed me that he was receiving chemotherapy. Then he paused and said to me this was a time for the six most important words in his life: optimism, cheerfulness, fullness, gratitude, faith, and love for those around him.

He shared with me what he said he learned in “cancer school”: “As our mortality heightens, our sensitivity, compassion, and love for others deepens to a depth of understanding that could not be reached in any other way.” Needless to say, his sharing (not simply his words) created a deeply moving experience within me that changed my capacity for empathy and compassion for others. Trapper Woods received treatment
for his cancer in Mexico. He is presently healthy and back on
the consulting and speaking circuit again. He can be reached
at trapper@trapperwoods.com

How has this event affected my life? I have a heightened
awareness of the preciousness of time I spend with my
family, friends, and those I serve in a professional capacity.
I also have a heightened awareness of those I meet who are
afflicted in some way. I am more observant of their process of
transformation through the experience of an imperfect body.
During the Christmas holidays of 2008, I went to buy a sewing
machine as a gift for a personal friend. The salesperson/expert
had severely bowed legs, causing him to walk with a jerky
motion. The instant I began talking to him, his broad smile
and expert explanations soon had me ignoring his legs. I asked
him to hold the machine for me overnight since there was only
one left. He said he would do so without a deposit. The next
day I returned and bought the machine, not out of pity, but
based upon his infectious personality, expert knowledge, and
facilitation of my transformation in a period of fifteen minutes.
He even offered to gift wrap the box, carry it out to my car, and
assist my friend if she had any difficulties after Christmas.

These are small acts of kindness that each of us
experiences everyday in giving and receiving which are
expressions of empathy, compassion, humility, and love. My
suggestion is to recognize them, appreciate them, and learn
from them. Listed below is a list of small acts of kindness for
yourself and others that you might incorporate into your life.
As you read each of these acts, think of someone who it might
apply to; including yourself.

Small Acts of Kindness

- Forgive yourself
- Forgive others
- Accept yourself: just as you are
- Accept others; just as they are
- Send him a plant
• Send her flowers
• Smile more often
• Help someone in need
• Be sensitive to others, they may be in pain
• Hug your children, tell them you love them
• Take a day off to examine your life
• Write a note, call, or email a long, lost friend
• Don’t put off what you really want to do
• Be aware that time runs out
• Thank someone for his or her support
• Don’t take life for granted, it stops when you least expect it—no matter your age
• If you know something from your heart, there’s no need to prove it
• Remember, you change your life the instant you change your mind
• Adopt a positive attitude about life, in spite of your situation
• Get a hobby and be passionate about it
• Notice when you feel superior to someone; it’s all an illusion
• Be thankful you woke up this morning—some people didn’t
• Remember, each act of kindness changes the world!
• Write a note, email, or call your parents or grandparents
• Do your best in school and college—your record will follow you for the rest of your life
• Listen more and talk less
• Be more and do less
• Change the world by changing yourself
• Be spontaneous and follow that impulse
• Turn off the lights, use natural sunlight
Diversity—A Unifying Force

- Say hello from the heart
- Make someone happy, everyday you can
- Create a *space* between experience and anger
- Take or invite a friend to dinner, for no reason at all
- Be thankful for what you have, someone has less
- Give thanks for your health, without it very little matters
- Create a connection with something beyond you
- Let your significant other know you love him or her
- Spend time alone
- Teach a kid
- Give yourself a break, there are no experts
- Remember, love is your greatest gift
- Take responsibility for that which is unreasonable
- Do something kind for someone who is infirm
- Live your most important value everyday
- Read the labels on the food you buy for its contents
- Do something kind for someone who is experiencing physical, mental, or emotional pain
- Make a cyber friend from another county
- Tell your parents you love them
- Commit to learning something new everyday
- Don’t try to do everything yourself, let others help
- Give credit to others involved and experience humility
- Remember the stupid mistakes we made as kids—give your kids a break
- Kindness means correcting bad behavior, diplomatically
- Remember a disabled person is there to have us experience how disabled we are
- Give up trying to control events or people, it’s too stressful
Chapter Six—Creating Human Transformation

- Count the number of friends you made by being right
- Make amends today, when your heart stops, time has run out!
- Encourage your kids’ unique talents; don’t compare them
- Support others in need
- You’re worth all the luck in the world; expect it
- Help someone take more responsibility
- Write a note to the teacher who influenced you most
- Send a small gift to a grandchild
- Call a friend to say “good morning”
- Support a friend in whatever they do
- Use your email “In Box” to say hello to friends
- Trust others without proof
- Reevaluate your values as your life changes
- Compliment the good things in others
- Practice a good habit for one month; it will become permanent
- Talk to your kids on a regular basis; mostly ask questions and listen
- Share yourself with your kids
- Share the difficulties of hard times with your kids; make them part of the solution
- Attend your children’s events; they remember
- Go to a movie with your kids
- Contribute food/clothing/services to others in need
- Love yourself!

“Kindness isn’t a big thing.
It’s a million little things.

—Unknown
My experience of practicing *small acts of kindness* is a positive transformation in my body chemistry, my mental attitude, and a deeper faith in the human spirit. I am convinced that there is no adversity that cannot be overcome with unity. When I experience differences, even diametrically different ones, I try to understand how they can become a positive part of my reality of understanding. Keep in mind revolutions have always been started by a small number of individuals, even revolutions of love. *You are not alone!*
EVERY ACT OF KINDNESS IS AN EXPRESSION OF LOVE. So the question we face is “how do we have such expressions become viral?” That is, “how do we spread love in the most efficient and effective way(s) in the shortest period of time?” Efficiency refers to maximizing the use of available resources, such as people and information systems. Effectiveness refers to using the best process(es) based upon the resources identified. Our answer to love becoming viral appears to be the widespread participation of people practicing acts of kindness using naturally existing social networks and information technology (IT).

If we examine our lives we will discover that human interaction—both direct and indirect (IT)—is a constellation of connecting and overlapping social networks. A social network is simply a group of individuals with common or overlapping interests. Examples include families, communities, project teams, executive teams, international organizations, clubs,
societies, business units, Facebook, Twitter, etc. We are naturally connected through such networks. A typical social network for a majority of individuals is shown on page 56 as Figure 7.

This network begins with one’s self and extends to family, one’s work, and service activities involving volunteerism. The units involving family and work probably have the greatest frequency of interaction with the same people. Keep in mind these individuals will also exhibit kind acts toward you. In addition, they have their own connecting and overlapping networks. The key to love becoming viral is to use every interpersonal interaction as a moment of truth—or an opportunity for spreading the love within a social network. Such an example is a school.

In January of 2009, I was asked to give a 20 minute speech to one of my toughest audiences—a grammar school of 300 children. It was their Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration. The children ranged from 4 to 13 years old. I was more anxious about impressing this audience than any I could remember. I was asked to share what it was like growing up in the southern U.S. during my boyhood. I was also asked to share what I thought they could do to make the world a better place to live.

When introduced, I projected myself back into my eight-year old body. I began by recounting an incident with my mother when we were catching a bus. I ran to the first open seat I saw. Unfortunately, it was in front of a wooden screen that separated “Colored Patrons” from “White Patrons” in terms of seating. My mother was embarrassed. I was confused. The “White Patrons” were upset. My audience was hanging on my every word!

I shared with them stories of how we lived completely separate lives from each other. This separation began with communities and extended to schools, restaurants, playgrounds, theaters, entertainment activities, and practically every conceivable way human beings socialize. I also shared with them the support, sharing, and love that existed within our black community that significantly influenced me as a person.
Then I came to the difficult part: “How could they make the world a better place to live?” When I asked myself this question, a thought popped into my head, *be kind to others.*

So that’s what I told them. “Hold the door open for each other.” “Say good morning to classmates and teachers.” “Share your knowledge with those who find a subject hard.” “Don’t say bad things about others.” “Make a friend with someone who feels left out.” “Volunteer to help your teacher.” “Be an example of a good student.” “Always do your best.” “Hold hands when you cross the street.” “Don’t hit each other.” “Don’t be influenced by violent video games or movies—in fact don’t even watch them!” “Help your parents clean the house.” Then I asked, “Are there any I’ve left out?” At least thirty hands flew up. We spent the next thirty minutes brainstorming an endless number of random acts of kindness.

The reason schools (and even colleges and universities) are such powerful sources of social networks is because of the frequency of student interaction with each other. In addition, institutions of learning are natural environments where acts of kindness can be reinforced (or even taught) by teachers. They are self-contained environments where numerous highly influential and participating *agents of change* can be nurtured.

Each of the small acts above would apply equally to our workplace—except perhaps, holding hands. The truth is we know how to be kind to each other. We are just rarely asked to do so. “How do we transform our world of social networks?” Answer: “One kind act at a time.” At first we may feel uneasy and even embarrassed. That’s because it’s not the way we typically behave in Cycle One. There are bound to be skeptics; and probably cynics. As Mother Teresa said, “Be kind anyway.” With a little practice, kind behaviors will become a habit. And then, they will spread like wildfire! So do your part in spreading the love.

“If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.”

—Mother Teresa
The black dots represent you. The gray dots represent your direct, frequent relationships. The patterned dots represent indirect, infrequent relationships. This is your major network for influencing cultural transformation through everyday human interactions. Every interaction is a “moment of truth”—an opportunity to make a difference in someone’s life.
THE TRANSFORMATION TO CYCLES TWO AND THREE is a dominantly grass-roots movement. It will be led by anyone who chooses to be an agent for change. (I use the phrases agent for change and agent for transformation interchangeably) As previously mentioned, there is no organization. There is no formal rite of passage, except the process you engage for yourself in preparation to assist others. (See the questions on page 59) There is no doctrine to believe in or master. I do propose networking and sharing success stories.

A book I recently read, Tribes⁵, describes how informal networks are established using the Internet. Seth Godwin, the author, points out that there are only two requirements for a tribe: a shared interest and a way to communicate. Any
Diversity—A Unifying Force

individual self-selects to be a part of a tribe (or movement) and a participant on a given website. My website for *Diversity—A Unifying Force of the 21st Century* is www.where-to-now.com. I have been blogging and providing tools for this movement for the past three years. It is now my Internet site which focuses on the contents of this book.

The guiding principles for this cultural transformation process are the following:

1. Anyone anywhere self-selects to be an *agent for change*.

2. Every interpersonal (cultural) encounter is a “moment of truth” for an *act of kindness*—an opportunity for mutual transformation to occur.

3. An *act of kindness* is based upon the well-being of someone else in addition to one’s self; the two are mutually compatible.

4. Transformation is an irreversible change in a person’s (or group’s) mind-set *and* behaviors resulting in a more humanly compatible way of living (review Figure 1 on page 12 and the corresponding values on pages 11-13).

5. The objective of cultural transformation is to achieve a critical mass of individuals living and operating in a humanly compatible way.

6. Critical mass is achieved when human compatibility *begins* to dominate a group’s behaviors.

**The Process of Engagement**

The natural question at this point is, “Where and how do I begin this process if I choose to become part of this transformational movement?” The answer is to begin by defining your Personal Social Network as shown by Figure 8 on page 60. This blank diagram is provided for your use. For each area of your life, identify specific individuals by name.
Chapter Eight—Cultural Transformation: A Grass-Roots Movement

You might use the example on page 56 as a guideline. Select the actions that are most appropriate for each individual from the list on pages 48 to 51; or create actions of your own. Remember no formal announcement is necessary, unless asked by someone, “Why are you being so nice to me?” Then, you might reply, “I just thought it was something that you might appreciate.” You will probably be under suspicion for a period of time until this relationship becomes the norm.

If you choose, you can become part of the diversity tribe I mentioned above, www.where-to-now.com, by visiting and contributing to the website. I also recommend that you begin with a personal examination of yourself as reflected by your day-to-day behaviors and the results you experience. As preparation to become an effective agent for change, you might reflect on the following questions:

- Do you experience more compatibility than conflict in your life?
- Are you more accepting of the shortcomings of others than judgmental?
- Do you “respond” out of choice to most of your life experiences?
- Are you comfortable with yourself as a person?
- Are you accepting of significant differences in others?
- Are you willing to practice conscious acts of kindness even if it involves the experience of humility?

After you’ve had an opportunity to reflect on these questions and others you feel are appropriate, then I invite you to become part of this movement. The more “yes” responses to the questions above, the more effective you will be in facilitating the transformation of others. Keep in mind, your encounters provide you an equal opportunity for your own personal transformation. As you extend kindness to others, begin to notice how the quality of your life changes.
The black dots represent you. The gray dots represent your direct, frequent relationships. The patterned dots represent indirect, infrequent relationships. This is your major network for influencing cultural transformation through everyday human interactions. Every interaction is a “moment of truth”—an opportunity to make a difference in someone’s life.
IN THE SUMMER OF 2008, I WAS STRUGGLING WITH a question: “What is the most effective way to transform human consciousness from a dominantly survival-driven reality to one that is humanly compatible?” As I reflected on the way most of us change, I kept returning to the idea of a devastating planetary event, such as a tsunami (in the Pacific or Atlantic Ocean), hurricane, earthquake, planetary economic breakdown, or possibly a meteor hitting the planet earth. But the essence of my thinking was dominated by a global catastrophe sufficiently traumatic to cause an emotionally-driven transformation in human consciousness.

When I consulted my inner guidance regarding the wisdom of this line of thinking, the response I kept getting was a question: “What is the most powerful force in the universe?” The conclusion I eventually came to, regarding my question, was that it was not some catastrophic force of nature—planetary or universal. So the question and answer process continued for
several weeks with increasing frustration on my part. Then one night I was awakened from a restless dream and the word “love” filled my mind. I knew that word was the answer to my question. I also realized that I didn’t really know the meaning of “love” as it related to my question. After several weeks of “conversations” with my inner guidance through written transmissions, I finally began to get a glimpse of what Love might be as the most powerful force in the universe.

Love is sourced from within each of us, beyond the belief systems of the mind. The question is “How inner is within?” Inner is boundless and without limitation—and difficult to describe in words. Inner is the infinite realm of consciousness. In fact, the inner realm of consciousness is brought into being by Love. Thus, Love is ultimately the source. If this source is the same as the statement in the Bible—“The kingdom of God is within you”—then Love and God are synonymous. Both terms refer to the source that gives rise to consciousness—which in turn gives rise to our observable universe and ultimately human existence. In this sense, all that exist are expressions of Love or God.

Expressions of Love

Organized expressions of love that I have been associated with are two non-profits: The Greenleaf Center and Volunteers of America. The former is based upon the writings of Robert Greenleaf. The latter is based upon the “call to action” of Maud and Ballington Booth to assist those in need. The writings of Robert Greenleaf espouse Servant Leadership. This leadership philosophy focuses on service to others by influencing their growth, freedom, and self-sufficiency. Historical servant leaders include Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Chief Seattle. In the past fifteen years, Servant Leadership has become popular throughout the world.

Volunteers of America is a national organization with thirty-nine affiliates throughout the U.S. Their calling includes
serving the needs of the elderly, the homeless, those formerly incarcerated, and troubled youth. More than 80 percent of their funding is expended on the groups they serve. The compassion and care of these individuals and their volunteers in serving these populations are driven by love. Whether it’s “Meals on Wheels,” messaging the elderly, providing a sleeping facility for the homeless, or assisting youth in breaking the cycle of drug usage, the ultimate objective is to empower those in need to experience greater health, happiness, and self-sufficiency.

In addition to these kinds of organized efforts around the world, the most natural expressions of love are small acts of kindness. The everyday little things we do in behalf of ourselves and others listed on pages 48 to 51. These small humanitarian acts have the power to transform the world.

**Inner Guidance in Support of Others**

When we are guided by Love, it bypasses the mind in driving our behaviors. These behaviors include treating others with dignity and respect, sharing with others beyond our personal needs, and supporting the success of those who experience difficult obstacles. Love does not dictate behavior or what we should do in behalf of others. That is for each of us to discover based upon our talents and resources. However, there is a role for everyone. Love is the force that drives us when we open ourselves to our inner guidance. Love does not judge or evaluate humans or human behavior. It is my experience that enlightened individuals are non-judgmental of others. Enlightenment is simply having spiritual awareness. From a spiritual perspective, there are no comparisons of expressions of love. All expressions of love are equal no matter how large or small the impact. The life of Mother Teresa is no more or less better than the teacher who dedicates her life to teaching thousands of young people over a career. Being guided by Love means we are supportive of others in moments of happiness and difficulty.

For example, when a friend is experiencing the “dark night of the soul” the appropriate (spiritually-sourced) behavior...
may simply be to listen; and where appropriate, ask questions that provide clarity for the difficulty that person might be dealing with. That is, assisting the individual in taking the first “baby steps” out of his or her perceived helplessness. I emphasize here the person does not need to be “helped” as though he or she is in fact helpless—but assisted in discovering empowering actions that ultimately lead to personal resolution. Such assistance is an expression of Love, when there is no agenda or attachment for what is best for another person.

This is an example of a small act of kindness that has the potential for transformation. The objective of this book is that such transformative encounters be multiplied million-folds through our day-to-day life experiences; without the necessity of a crisis. This million-fold process has the potential to create a “tsunami of human compatibility” through the power of Love.

“Love in action is a force
That will set us free.”

—Susan Taylor
Chapter Ten—Unity

UNITY IMPLIES COMING TOGETHER FOR A COMMON purpose. It is an acknowledgment of the value of each individual’s effort in contributing to the whole. For example, sports teams are comprised of individuals with specific specialties. Each specialty is a necessary part of the functioning of the team. In basketball, there are three specialty positions: center, forwards, and guards. When these individuals function in the most selfless manner, drawing upon their unique strengths, they experience success. Unique strengths include “ball handlers,” “shooters,” “rebounders,” “defensive specialists,” “free-throw shooters,” and “team leaders.” When these unique strengths are driven by a desire to win, they maximize their team performance. The same analogy can be made with the global sport of soccer (or football in most countries of the world).
Unity is also the recognition of our connectedness to everything and everyone in our everyday experiences. It is the farmer who experiences successful crops from year to year by caring for the soil and its health. It is the city that cleans its waste water before returning it to the river that feeds the city downstream. It is the recognition that air pollution generated in the northeast United States knows no national boundaries as it flows into Canada. It is the awareness that any upheaval or joy experienced by a family member reverberates throughout the entire family. It is the experience that national or global economic crises affect us all as individuals. As such, we are all responsible for resolving such a crisis. And finally, it is the recognition that we are all diminished spiritually whenever there is the resort to armed destruction of property and life in an effort to resolve our differences.

Transformation as a Requirement for Unity

Unity is the recognition that first-order change—change in comfort-zone behaviors, processes and procedures, national boundaries, political philosophy, elected officials, governments, financial status, religions, etc.—does not necessarily create human compatibility. It is the recognition that second-order change—the transformation of human consciousness—is the essential requirement for compatible existence. Transformation of human consciousness is captured by the remake of a movie I recently saw, The Day the Earth Stood Still. In the movie, we are visited by a planetary power greater than Earth’s military forces. We are told our way of life threatens the planetary balance of the solar system. The solution is to rid the Planet Earth of human beings. The scene that affected me most was an impassioned plea by the leading actress, “Give us a chance. We can change!” I know we can. But are we willing to do so, not by what we declare in times of crisis, by what we do in times of peace?

Unity is the wisdom to resolve our differences through understanding, change, and the recognition that we share a common fate. The global financial/economic crisis of 2009 is an
example of our connectedness. It is also the acknowledgment that the world that exists today is a reflection of what we have collectively created—as J. Krishnamurti has written in his book, *You Are The World*. These experiences are a reflection of our inseparability from each other. When extended to all humanity, it is the realization that unity and oneness are synonymous.

**Our Role in Creating Unity**

What is the role of each of us in achieving this state of unity and oneness? The first step is a personal desire to change our daily existence from fear to compatibility. By fear, I mean living in a dominant state of scarcity, win/lose, pitted competition, polarization, and inner and outer conflict. By compatibility, I mean an existence where we live within our means; we all secure our basic needs for existence; we respect the Earth that sustains our existence; we are provided health, education, and a livelihood; and we have the opportunity to create an existence limited only by our imagination.

The second step is preparing ourselves to become *agents of change*. This process is listed on page 59. It is the process of gaining sufficient self-awareness to skillfully influence the transformation of others—through *small acts of kindness*. Preparation begins with the realization that we are 100% responsible for creating the existence we experience. This is a very powerful realization. It influences every action we take and how we influence others—either as victims of our existence or creators of our reality. Ultimately, we are only as effective in influencing others as we are self-aware of and claim responsibility for our own circumstances. This level of self-awareness and influence is a personal choice of each individual. We are a planetary team with uniquely different abilities to contribute. There are no stars or celebrities—only participants who are continually learning to become better *agents of change*. 
Diversity—A Unifying Force

“Since all creation is a whole, separation is an illusion. Like it or not, we are all team players.”

—The Tao of Leadership
John Heider

The third step is the active process of influencing change (or transformation) in others. The key word here is to be unobtrusive. The driving force for such participation is not the righteous mind-set of “making the world better,” “convincing others to believe as we do,” “ridding the world of evil and replacing it with our perception of good,” or other self-righteous motivations. The process of participation is simply driven out of a desire to create a context of compatibility. That is, the dominant values by which we live include respect, equality, interdependence, collaboration, freedom, and wisdom. How these values take form in terms of human activity is the personal and collective choices of a group—family, community, city, nation, and planet.

If We Transform the Context, We Transform Our Existence

When we achieve a context of compatibility, I suspect many of our activities will be identical to what we do now. We will still play family games except the context will focus more on fun, relationship, and learning than pitted competition to win. We will still experience personal and national conflicts, but the focus will be on compatible resolution and continual personal learning. If we transform the context, we transform our existence. Existence within this context inevitably leads to a desire to “create our own reality.” This is the breakthrough to spirituality and the expansion of our compatible context to include the spiritual values of Cycle Three on page 13.

The second and third stages of transformation are true human evolution or more precisely, consciousness revolution. The two are synonymous. These are the transformations necessary for continued human existence on planet Earth.
This is the challenge (not problem) we collectively face. From a spiritual perspective, this is humankind’s greatest opportunity! The requirements for success are the systematic achievement of diversity, compatibility, and unity.

“All of you reading these words have loved someone, have done someone a kindness, have healed a wound, have taken on a challenge, have created something beautiful, and have enjoyed breathing the air of existence. Every moment you make a difference.”

—Random Acts of Kindness
References


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