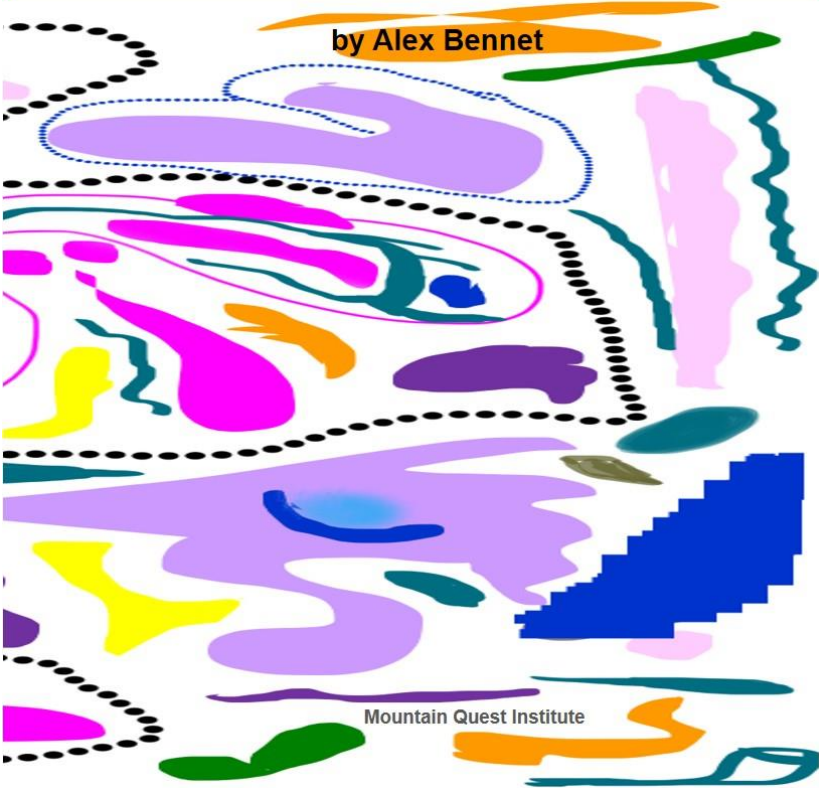


Possibilities that are **YOU!**

Volume 18: Staying on the Path

by Alex Bennet

Mountain Quest Institute

The lower half of the cover features a vibrant, abstract composition. It includes various organic, flowing shapes in shades of purple, pink, yellow, orange, green, and blue. These shapes are interspersed with several black dotted lines that meander across the page, some enclosing specific areas. A prominent blue shape with a pixelated or stepped edge is located in the lower right quadrant. The overall effect is one of dynamic, interconnected forms.

This is the 18th in a series of 22 short books, what we call Conscious Look Books, that are conversational in nature, taking full advantage of the reader's lived experience to share what can sometimes be difficult concepts. We live in a world that is tearing itself apart, where people are out of control and wanting to control others, rebelling from years of real and perceived abuse and suppression of thought. Yet, this chaos offers us as a humanity the opportunity to make a giant leap forward. By opening ourselves to ourselves, we are able to fully explore who we are and who we can become. With that exploration comes a glimmer of hope as we begin to reclaim the power of each and every mind developed by the lived human experience!

These 22 concepts are part of the learning journey of which we are all a part, the Intelligent Social Change Journey (ISCJ). This is a developmental journey of the body, mind and heart, moving from the heaviness of cause-and-effect linear extrapolations, to the fluidity of co-evolving with our environment, to the lightness of breathing our thought and feelings into reality. Grounded in development of our mental faculties, these are phase changes, each building on and expanding previous learning in our movement toward intelligent activity.

These little books share 22 large concepts from the Profundity and Bifurcation of Change (which is written from an academic viewpoint). Each book is independent and includes seven ideas offered for the student of life to help us become the co-creators that we are. These books, available in soft cover from Amazon, support idea exploration, class discussion, other discussion groups or can be used as special occasion gifts.

Possibilities

that are **YOU!**

Volume 18: Staying on the Path

by
Alex Bennet



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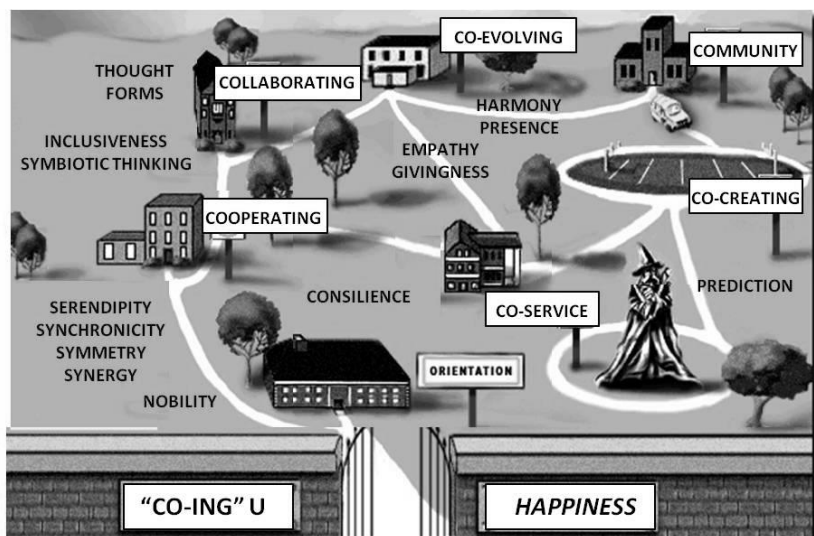
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MQIPress



Frost, West Virginia
303 Mountain Quest Lane, Marlinton, WV 24954
United States of America
Telephone: 304-799-7267
eMail: alex@mountainquestinstitute.com
www.mountainquestinstitute.com
www.mountainquestinn.com
www.MQIPress.com
www.Myst-Art.com

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The University of Life

*Growing through life education
With soul orientation
In service learning to cooperate
Uniting all to collaborate*

*Together we are co-solving
Learning and co-evolving
Coming together in world unity
Becoming an Earth community*

*One by one, each one awaking
Through resolve, co-creating
Spreading altruistic purposefulness
Rising to a higher consciousness.*

-Cindy Lee Scott

Preface

This book is for YOU. Regardless of economic success or educational prowess, beyond cultural influences and habitual routines, YOU have been and continue to be a student of life. And since our time in this learning sphere is precious, the challenges and opportunities are both rapid and continuous, always offering new insights. YOU are a verb, not a noun. Forget what you were taught in grammar school!

Now, we live in a world of demanding challenges, where people and systems are rebounding from control, rebelling from eras of real and perceived suppression of thought. With the acceleration of mental development over the past century has come increased awareness of human capacity, with economic success in small bites for many and large bites for the few, and for some coming with an arrogance that says, “Look at me. I’m right, you’re wrong, and I’m not listening.”

Because of our Economy’s focus on the material, economic success begets economic success and the separation of wealth grows larger, flaming the difficulties of surviving in a CUCA world, that is, a world of accelerating change, rising uncertainty, increasing complexity, and the anxiety that comes with these phenomena.

Yet all of this **offers us, as a humanity the opportunity to make a giant leap forward.** By opening ourselves to ourselves, we are able to fully explore who we are. With that exploration comes glimmers of hope as we contemplate the power of each and every mind developed by the lived human experience!

As YOU move through your life of thoughts, feelings and actions—even when you have to repeat things over and over again as part of the experience—YOU are advancing toward the next level of consciousness.

Here's the bottom line. Everything that has been learned and continues to be learned is out there ... and as a student of life, YOU have access to it all. So often it is expressed in ways that don't make sense because of the language and media being used. It just isn't presented conversationally, and you don't have a chance to ask questions from your unique point of view.

So, these little books—which we refer to as Conscious Look Books—are specifically focused on sharing key concepts from *The Profundity and Bifurcation of Change* series and **looking at what those concepts mean to YOU.**

These books are conversational in nature, and further conversations are welcome. We invite your thoughts and questions, not guaranteeing answers because there is still so much to learn, but happy to

join in the conversation. Visit Mountain Quest Inn and Retreat Center www.mountainquestinn.com located in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia or email alex@mountainquestinstitute.com

As my partner David reminds us: *Run with the future!*

Our gratitude to all those who take this journey with us, and a special thanks to the colleagues, partners, friends, family and visitors who touch our hearts and Mountain Quest in so many ways.

With Love and Light, Alex and David

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Introduction

Following the phases of change, humanity began its long learning journey toward today with simple cause-and-effect related actions. As we recognized patterns, we discovered the higher mental thinking of concepts and began to co-evolve with our environment, operating in the NOW while using patterns from the past to forecast the future. Today, as a humanity we are shifting gears to expand beyond co-evolving into the Quantum nature of Phase 3 of the Intelligent Social Change Journey. At this time in our progress, it makes good sense to explore ideas that have emerged during the course of this change journey, ideas that begin the conceptual and developmental expansion necessary for spontaneous change.

This chapter contains but a sprinkling of the conceptual shifts that could be included. While choosing some of my favorites that are making a difference in my personal and professional lives, we will also touch on concepts of growing significance today in preparation for ushering in a new level of conscious thought. These ideas are woven into the University of Life (on the back cover). Each concept can be related to the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual planes, the correlating senses of each of those planes, and the balancing of our senses across those planes.

While certainly affected by our experiences which reside in the past, they all represent approaches, states or conditions that happen in the NOW and have large implications for understanding the future. The learning points included in this little book are consilience; divination, prediction and forecasting; empathy, givingness, happiness, harmony, inclusiveness, presence, serendipity, symmetry and symbiotic thinking, synchronicity, synergy and thought forms.

This is not to say these are new concepts. However, while these concepts interweave through *all* the Phases of the Intelligent Social Change Journey, they are *very supportive of the social aspect of our journey*, including "co-ing" words such as cooperating, collaborating, co-evolving and co-creating. As you read through these concepts, try to remember when each idea was new to you, recalling how you felt about it when it was new, and how you feel about it now. There is so much growth occurring in each of us, and we rarely take the time to realize that it is occurring, and to *honor the self that is developing through this growth*. So, as we continue this journey, take a moment to appreciate your self.

When we ask ourselves about the path we choose to take, it is easy to picture a pathway through a forest, or a short-cut to work, or perhaps the yellow brick road to Oz. But the larger path we are plowing is weaving itself through our minds in

the form of thoughts bolstered by passions and desires. Our thoughts are so powerful. **We are just learning that the material world is an effect, not a cause.** Change occurs from the inside out. As the Dalai Lama says so beautifully, "In order to change conditions outside ourselves, whether they concern the environment or relations with others, we must first change within ourselves."¹

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INSIGHT: The material world is an effect, not a cause.

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Change begins with thought, then energy follows thought and becomes thought forms. Thus, thoughts and images have a profound creative and motivating power within human consciousness, with the mind controlling energy and building form. These are not physical forms, rather "energy complexes on the subtle levels of reality that are analogous to physical things. They are forms made of emotional-mental matter."²

As produced on our mental and emotional planes, thought forms are sent out into the environment where they attract sympathetic vibrations, that is, *those who resonate with the thought being produced*. This can be difficult to accept for those who suffer from the Cartesian dichotomy between matter and mind and want to

bring everything to the physical level. Even bringing it to the physical, we now understand from neuroscience findings the power of the mind/brain and that our thoughts actually change the structure of the physical brain as well as impacting all of our human systems! Further, we now recognize that we are in continuous two-way communication with all those around us. Our thoughts are permeable and porous.³

Each thought that is definite has a double effect, producing both a floating form and a radiating vibration, with each thought form differing in both density and quality. In analyzing the qualities that have significance for the meaning of the thought form, we can identify color, shape and distinctness of outline.⁴ Color has to do with the *emotional quality* of the thought; form has to do with the *intent* of the thought; and distinctness of outline has to do with the *degree of concentration* of the thought. The radiating vibration is a complex one, with every rush of feeling associated with thought producing a permanent effect.

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INSIGHT: Each thought that is definite has a double effect, producing both a floating form and a radiating vibration differing in both density and quality.

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Interesting examples are thought forms built by music. While sound is often associated with color, it also produces form. “Some such forms are very striking and impressive, and naturally their variety is infinite. Each class of music has its own type of form, and the style of the composer shows as clearly in the form which his music builds as a man's character shows in his handwriting. Other possibilities of variation are introduced by the kind of instrument upon which the music is performed, and also by the merits of the player. The same piece of music if accurately played will always build the same form.”⁵

Lower mental thought forms diminish the capacity for higher thought forms to function, and increasingly have an effect on an individual's ability to create higher thought forms. This is because *thought forms linked through logic limit the ability to perceive the larger truth of conceptual thinking.*

In their book on *Thoughtware*, businessmen Philip Kirby and David Hughes assert that if you change an organization's thinking, the organization will change itself. This is based on the belief that behavior is rooted in thought and that people's thinking and collective interactions drive organizational performance. *Thought, and the thought forms produced through thought, are directly related to behaviors and actions.* As Philip

and David describe, thinking and action are "synonymous and integral at the point of change."⁶

Thus, we send our thoughts out into the world, ever engaging the new thoughts that wonder through our learning, reflecting and acting on those thoughts. And, as we do so, we are choosing to follow the pre-ordained path of consciousness expansion that is our birthright.

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 1: Our journey of expansion begins when we recognize our connections to others.

Living the "co" in our everyday activities is a critical pivot point in our personal development and expansion. It denotes the recognition that we are not alone on this journey toward intelligent activity. Recall that intelligent activity represents a *state of interaction where intent, purpose, direction, values and expected outcomes are clearly understood and communicated among all parties, reflecting wisdom and achieving a higher truth*. Whether from a physical, mental or emotional focus, human experiential learning is about living in and with our environment.



Figure 1. *The journey toward intelligent activity is a journey of "co-ing".*

We now recognize that an individual cannot evolve or expand without interaction with others.⁷ We are social beings, and co-ing is the "co" of co-creating, cooperation, collaboration, community, co-evolving, and co-service, that is, expanding the entangled knowledge base of humanity and serving others so that they may serve others.

Co-Evolving

At the highest level of evolution, co-evolving describes an interdependency of two or more species, with each affecting development of the other. The term originated from Paul Ehrlich and Peter Raven in their now-famous article, "Butterflies and Plants: A Study in Coevolution," which showed the relationship between families of butterflies and phylogenetic groups of plants.⁸ While the relationship of insects and the flowers they pollinate is often used as an example of co-evolving, co-evolving can insinuate a predator/prey or parasite/host relationship or competitiveness, as well as a mutually beneficial relationship.

As a species—and as individuals—we survive by successfully **co-evolving with our environment**. In changing times this is a continuous and difficult process because of the intensity and uncertainty of the environmental changes that occur. Co-evolving is a focus of Phase 2 of the Intelligent Social Change Journey. In this context, co-evolving means

interacting with, influencing and, as necessary, adapting to the demands of the environment.

Let's look at the word more closely. Evolve is to develop gradually over time; in this sense, we differentiate "evolve" from "exist", thus emphasizing development (change) rather than existence, although clearly you cannot evolve unless you exist. Recognizing the various nuances that could be attached to the concept of evolving, we choose to consider the term in a positive context, that is, evolving *to* or *towards* something "better", with "better" in context to a perceived current state and the movement toward an improved, even transformative, state. Thus, the term *co-evolve* as used in this text represents *an interdependent developmental learning journey among two or more people*. This can be extrapolated to other levels such as two or more teams, organizations, or even nations.

From the viewpoint of the individual, we now know that the self co-evolves with its environment through the process of associative patterning, the complexing of incoming information (extrinsic signals) with internally-stored patterns (intrinsic signals). The results are not necessarily based on the *number* of the extrinsic signals, but rather on neural interactions “selected and stabilized by memory through previous encounters with the environment.”⁹ In other words, the more we know about a specific area that is in memory, the stronger the modulation

with extrinsic signals that relate to that area. The more we know in an area, the easier it is to learn in that area. There is an amazing plasticity in the mind/brain, "endowing it with the flexibility to adapt to the environment it encounters, the experiences it has, the damage it suffers, the demands its owner makes of it."¹⁰ The bottom line is that the brain is continuously remodeled by the lives we lead.

Journey into Cooperation and Collaboration

Whether today or in days of old, cooperation and collaboration start at the family level in caring for and protecting our young. As Darwin realized in *The Descent of Man*—too late to recall the meme "survival of the fittest" that had taken on a life of its own—"Those communities which included the greatest number of the most sympathetic members would flourish best and rear the greatest number of offspring."¹¹ Thus began the recognition that "cooperation and unity, rather than survival of the fittest, are the keys to the success of a species."¹² In fact, cooperation was identified as *the key factor* in evolution and survival.¹³

Both cooperation and collaboration could be defined as the process where two or more people and/or organizations work together towards achieving mutually beneficial goals and objectives. Collaboration denotes closer alignment of the parties involved. This is the co-creation of value through open sharing, the leveraging of existing resources

and creating new insights through the bisociation of ideas.

As our human mental faculties developed and expanded, recognition of the power of cooperation and collaboration did not immediately translate into our organizational models, which were largely based on control, whether this was via blood lines, religion or classes. Max Weber's bureaucratic model called for *imperative control*, which was management power over workers based on a hierarchy of relationships. See Table 1.

Focus on controlling physical activities		
Control via Blood Lines	Control via Religion	Control via Class Separation
629-649 A.D. Reign of Taizong (Golden Age of Chinese Imperial History)	1200 A.D. Pontificate of Innocent III (Height of power of Roman Catholic church)	Circa 1900 A.D. Implementation of Max Weber's Bureaucratic Model
Value of learning and knowledge recognized and used to expand the imperial family's influence throughout bureaucracy. Instituted System of state schools and colleges reserved for children of the imperial family and those of highest imperial officials. Highest positions in government went to those who passed literacy exams.	Religious beliefs and rituals serving as the framework and justification for authority. Supervised religious, social and political life in the west. Centralized administration and tapped church's financial resources, taxing and putting under papal protection bishops, monasteries, convents and churches. Codified Canon Law.	Imperative control (management power over workers through legal, ownership and charismatic legitimacy). Hierarchical structure, clear division of labor, rule and process orientation, impersonal administration, rewards based on merit, decisions and rules in writing. Knowledge linked to power; secrecy increased superiority and power.

Table 1. *The role of control.*

The rise of Knowledge Management, riding on the tail of the quality movement, brought management attention to the importance of knowledge as a strategic asset. Since knowledge is created by people, this led to a refocusing on people and new ways, such as communities of practice and social media, to ensure the flow of knowledge *among* people, improving decision-making at all levels of the organization and expanding the opportunity for creativity.

Like love, learning and knowledge creation cannot be ordered to occur; they must be nurtured, providing the internal environment (meditation, safety, rewards and recognition) and external environment (stimulation, trusted others, exposure) such that they will emerge. The combination of creativity and collaboration create a collaborative entanglement that erases cause and effect relationships. The act of bisociating ideas is itself a representation of the creative leap, which can occur nearly every day of our lives. There is a Conscious Look Book on *The Creative Leap*.

Collaborative entanglement, a phenomenon occurring during the course of positive and creative interactions, is the dynamic process of mixing, analyzing, discussing, perceiving and interpreting knowledge from different perspectives. It produces emergent patterns. In a social setting, new thoughts and behaviors proposed through personal reflection

emerge and build on other's thoughts and behaviors, becoming mixed with yet another set of thoughts and behaviors from the community, and so on. We call this mixing, entwining and creation of unpredictable associations the *process of entanglement*; the knowledge creation process in a group or community that works very much as does the human mind/brain.

Biological systems are remarkably smarter in their support of the body than we are in sustaining our work places and communities. Fortunately, we can learn and *are* learning from ourselves in this sense, and whether we reflect on this learning in the form of a reality or as an analogy is insignificant as long as we keep learning and creating knowledge.¹⁴ Collaborative entanglement as a social phenomenon can be analogous to the natural activities of the brain, with the brain representing the researcher and the stakeholder community representing the knowledge beneficiary.

All the living and learning of the host human is recorded in the brain, stored among some hundred billion neurons that are continuously moving between firing and idling, creating and re-creating patterns. Information is coming into the individual through the senses, which, assuming for the sake of our analogy, resonates with internal patterns that have strong synaptic connections. When resonance occurs, the incoming information is consistent with the individual's frame of reference and belief

systems. As this incoming information is complexed (the associative patterning process) it may connect with, and to some degree may bring into conscious awareness, deep knowledge. The unconscious continues this process 24/7, with new knowledge stored in the unconscious and perhaps emerging at the conscious level.

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INSIGHT: Biological systems are remarkably smarter in their support of the body than we are in sustaining our work places and communities. Fortunately, we can learn and *are* learning from ourselves.

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The collaborative entanglement of humanity is reflective of the butterfly effect of complexity theory, and the real-time learning lesson of World War II, when we learned that an action taken on one side of the world impacts the other side of the world. As we now know, we are all energetically connected, part of a larger web of interactive energy. The idea of collaborative entanglement honors that knowing. Whether a family, an organization, a country, or the world, we are on this journey together, and the actions of the one affect others.

In Knowledge Mobilization theory, collaborative entanglement means to *purposefully and consistently* develop and support approaches and

processes that combine the sources of knowledge and the beneficiaries of that knowledge in order to move toward a common direction such as meeting an identified community need.¹⁵ Thus, *collaborative entanglement engages social responsibility*.

While harmony is not a “co” word, it flows through every concept of co-ing. To harmonize is to bring into harmony, bring into agreement, adjusting differences and inconsistencies. In music it is the mixing of melodies and chords to create pleasing sounds. An example of harmony is beauty, a consistency and pleasing arrangement of parts.¹⁶ There is a Conscious Look Book on *Transcendent Beauty*.

Harmony deals with multiples, that is, in terms of its usage in music, it began historically describing the sounds of combined voices produced by more than one person singing at the same time. Accordingly, musician, theorist and educator Stefan Kostka and his colleagues define harmony as "the sound that results when two or more pitches are performed simultaneously. It is the vertical aspect of music, produced by the combination of the components of the horizontal aspect."¹⁷ There are two important learnings for us from this definition.

First, that individual tones alone do not create harmony, rather **it is the combination of tones**. Stefan and his colleagues specifically describe the combination of these tones, saying that the soprano

and tenor line are the most melodic, with the actual melody in the soprano, the tenor following for a while, then bringing in a figure of his own. While the bass is less melodic, it is also strong and independent, and the alto, the least distinctive, adds the tones that fill out the harmonic line.¹⁸ Thus, harmony in the sense of people and organizations (or countries) is *an inter-weaving, the working together such that there is an overall sense of well-being and beauty*. Harmony would appear to emerge with intelligent activity, *a state of interaction where intent, purpose, direction, values and expected outcomes are clearly understood and communicated among all parties, reflecting wisdom and achieving a higher truth*.

Second, harmony is not created in an instant of time, rather it is produced through the combined *movement* of the musical tones. As our resource Stefan and his colleagues state, "Although this book deals with harmony and with chords, which are little samples taken out of the harmony, you should remember that musical lines (vocal or instrumental) produce the harmony, not the reverse."¹⁹ This reminder is a good one. Harmony is produced by social interaction over time. While it may be punctuated by chords (events), it is the movement of the social interaction that produces the harmony. This makes sense. So often we are reminded that it is the journey of life that is important. And when we achieve an important personal or professional

milestone, we find it is just part of a larger flow towards something else, and so forth.

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INSIGHT: People create harmony through the combined movement of working together such that there is an overall sense of well-being and beauty.

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It is quite easy for an individual "melody" to go off on its own, an independent horizontal line with little attention to the resulting (vertical) chords, which would most likely result in the build-up of forces, or dissonance, as one melody battled with another for dominance. This is actually the case in some 20th century music! The opposite case is where the melody is totally subsumed by a focus on the chords, or events, resulting in an absence of flow and loss of the melodic line (and harmony). In other cases, some voices just double the melody, offering no additional value or individuation. As can be seen, we can learn much about human behavior from exploring the harmony of music!

In the Native Hawaiian *Lokahi* tradition, balance and harmony represent the seamless unity and interconnectedness of all things. This is a reference to the concept of *supernal harmony*, with supernal meaning heavenly, celestial or spiritual.²⁰

The *Lokahi* Triangle is introduced in the Conscious Look Book on *Balance*.

With the harmony of cooperation and collaboration, synergy emerges. No doubt this synergy is something that you have seen happen in your own experiences. Synergy is that something more that emerges from the coming together of two or more elements in a complex adaptive system, with the result of producing more than the sum of the parts of the system. Synergy is an experience of creation, an emergent state that drives the bursting forth of ideas. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we are a part of this experience as we move through life.

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INSIGHTS: Synergy is an experience of creation, an emergent state that drives the bursting forth of ideas.

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An example of synergy in the organizational setting is created through unity and shared purpose, which serve to integrate organizational activities, enabling the mobilization of resources to gain the synergy of complementary talents and to coalesce personnel resources to meet surge requirements. By synergy in this context, we mean the working together of two or more people when the results are

greater (and usually different) than the sum of their individual talents. See Figure 2.

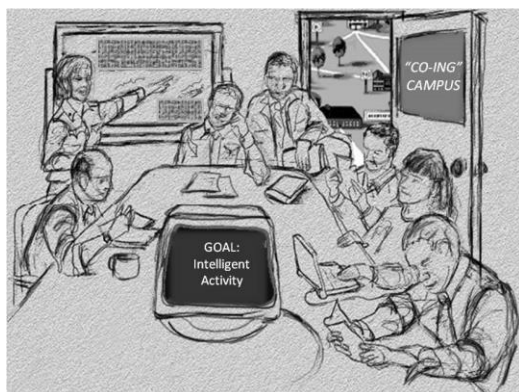


Figure 2. *Cooperation and collaboration in all walks of life create synergy, and move us closer to intelligent activity.*

If all parts of an organization are kept informed and up to date on the overall direction of the organization, the autonomous units can then respond rapidly, collectively and collaboratively, without the often-seen confusion over what is wanted or needed, or why. When an organization is behaving intelligently, it is similar to the conscious mind working intentionally, using its unconscious experience, its incoming information, and its full capability to focus on the task at hand to create a synergy of thought and action.²¹

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 2: Co-evolving requires development of empathy.

Psychoanalyst Louis Cozolino calls empathy a hypothesis that we make based on a combination of visceral, emotional and cognitive information, a "muddle of resonance, attunement, and sympathy."²² Psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut says empathy is objectively trying to experience the inner life of another.²³ And organizational psychologist Ron Riggio describes three different types of empathy: (1) a cognitive-based form called *perspective-taking*, that is, seeing the world through someone else's eyes; (2) literally feeling another's emotions, a *personal distress* caused by "emotional contagion"; and (3) recognition of another's emotional state and feeling in tune with it, what is called *empathic concern*.²⁴

Empathy—part of a continuum based on an increasing depth of connection—is required in order to co-evolve in a dynamic environment, which is Phase 2 of the Intelligent Social Change Journey we are all on. The movement through this journey is from sympathy to empathy to compassion, and, for most humans sometime in the future, to unconditional love. There is a Conscious Look Book on *Conscious Compassion*.

Interestingly enough, from a neuroscience viewpoint, the physiological basis for empathy is so

inherent in brain function that it has been extensively documented in scientific experiments with other tested primates. For example, researcher Masserman and his colleagues reported that in a study of rhesus monkeys when one monkey pulled a chain for food, a shock was given to that monkey's companion.²⁵ The monkey who pulled the chain refused to pull it again for 12 days, that is, the primates would literally choose to starve themselves rather than inflict pain on their companions. Frans de Waal, a Dutch-born biologist, feels that *empathy is nature's lesson for a kinder society*.²⁶

A key proponent of empathy is feeling, and Ron Riggio thinks that in reality we all have some level of each type of empathy.²⁷ However, it is when the boundaries between self and the other blur, and the inner states of the other are assumed to be identical with the self, that empathy is replaced by what Louis Cozolino calls identification or fusion, lacking perspective and an awareness of boundaries. This is an important point.²⁸ Empathy cannot take over individuation. There is a balance needed. See the discussion of "givingness" later in this book.

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**INSIGHT: Empathy cannot take over
individuation.**

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Although the neurobiology of empathy is still in its early development,²⁹ the insula—described as the limbic integration cortex lying beneath the temporal and frontal lobes—appears to "play an important role in both the experience of self and our ability to distinguish between ourselves and others."³⁰ Beyond basic sensations, the left insula is involved in the evaluation of eye gaze direction, the response to fearful faces, and the observation of facial expressions of the other.³¹ Further research has found that the insula mediates the extreme limits of emotions, ranging from severe pain to passionate love.³²

Louis says that the insula cortex and anterior cingulate *link hearts and minds* and that this is best demonstrated when watching others experience pain. That's what we learned from the monkeys! These two regions become activated *either when we experience pain, or when a loved one experiences pain*. The degree of activation of these two structures has been shown to correlate with measures of empathy.³³ Thus, whereas the insula cortex has played a small role in the history of neurology and neuroscience up until this point, "it appears to have a bright future as a central component of the developing social brain."³⁴

These findings suggest that through feelings there is an active link between our own bodies and minds and the bodies and minds of those around us.

Thus, the feelings that we each perceive in the course of our daily living may be affected by, *or even belong to*, those around us. Think about this. What does that mean? It could be that our “bad mood” is actually the “bad mood” of someone else, or that our anger is being transferred to another! What a responsibility we have for our emotions!

With this understanding, we are now in a position to think conceptually, that is, understand the patterns that emerge through emotive thinking, recognizing the differences and similarities in emotional reactions between ourselves and others and among all living things. This understanding leads to exploring the "why" of actions based on the feelings of the actors. As can be seen, empathy, as with all feelings and emotions, supports development of the mental faculties. Acting effectively on empathy requires development of the higher mental mind (concepts, the recognition of patterns). It is not just *what* you do, but *how others will respond to what you do* that supports taking right actions.

Givingness

Laura Arrillaga-Andreessen, philanthropist and educator, says: *Giving is a universal opportunity. Regardless of your age, profession, religion, income bracket, and background, you have the capacity to create change.* -

Givingness is a way of caring, a way of loving. By virtue of definition, at different levels, sympathy,

empathy, compassion and unconditional love are connected to the desire to help, the desire to give, the desire to serve. While this desire is commendable, it is critical that any service provided be accompanied by a high vibration in terms of thought and emotion. For example, when you are feeling discomfort from observing another person in a needy situation and you decide to help them from this place of discomfort, there is no lasting value for two reasons. First, you are not in "alignment" with your self, so you have little to give. Second, paying attention to their need *amplifies* their need. Helping from a position of strength means that you are in alignment with their *success* when you offer assistance, not in alignment with the problem.³⁵

Thus, it is important that we understand our motives, and that is not an easy thing to do. There are layers of causes, or motives, for any single action. When humans engage in introspection, they have the ability to detect reasons, or motives, for specific actions. However, this can be largely misguided. People are complex adaptive systems with a large number of interrelated elements with nonlinear relations, feedback loops and dynamic uncertainties, *all of which says we are very difficult to understand and predict!* Even to ourselves! This suggests that our conscious motives in terms of cause and effects may be artificial, and that there is always another layer below that which we identify. While we can single out motives, and justify them,

there is always another layer hidden below. As Nietzsche describes, “Everything which enters consciousness is the last link in a chain, a closure. It is just an illusion that one thought is the immediate cause of another thought. The events which are actually connected are played out below our consciousness: the series and sequences of feelings, thoughts, etc., that appear are symptoms of what actually happens!”³⁶

As we move through life, "giving" opportunities are ripe. There are people on the street corner asking for help; family members and friends in trouble; not-for-profit groups looking for donations; groups of children running after tourists begging. It is so easy to ignore them, write a quick check, or throw some change in a bucket, and then dismiss them. Yet, *giving is an art* that must be cultivated to achieve *wise giving*, which is helping others to help themselves and others. This is about paying it forward, that is, loving someone enough that you can help them learn to be more loving of themselves and others.

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INSIGHT: Giving is an art that must be cultivated to achieve wise giving, which is helping others to help themselves and others.

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Consider for a moment the thoughts and feelings that go through you as you toss your change into a bucket in the following scenarios: (1) A young musician playing in the park with his violin case open. You pause and listen. He's quite good, and, you toss your change (or dollars) in to encourage him. (2) Without you asking, a middle-aged man aggressively cleans your windshield as you stop at a light, then holds out his hand for money. (3) An older woman pushes her way to the front of the check-out line in a store, then turns to the person behind her to ask for money when she discovers she doesn't have enough to pay for her cigarettes. (4) A middle-aged woman in the hospital parking area approaches you to ask if you can help with gas money. She points to an older man and young child in a nearby car and explains she had to rush him to the hospital early that morning, but doesn't have enough gas to get back home.

Most of us would be inclined to help in situations (1) and (4), but not in situations (2) and (3). In situation (1), the young musician is sharing his talent and you are listening, thus there is an informal value exchange. Further, your contribution has a clear potential for paying it forward. In situation (4), the context of the situation supports the request for assistance, and while there is certainly the potential that this story is a fabrication, there is a strong likelihood that it is real. Thus, you will go with your gut feel. You are in a small way assisting a

person who is assisting another person in need, a pass-it-on situation.

Conversely, in situation (2) the individual is counting on your feeling of guilt, that he has performed an act for which he is owed a payment, despite the fact that you did not ask him to do so. He is attempting to manipulate you. By responding to this manipulation, you not only enable him to continue this behavior, but you also create a negative force within yourself by knowing that you are being manipulated. In situation (3), this is a woman who clearly feels entitled, while showing little concern for others. If you give in this situation you are enabling the woman while, as in situation (2), creating negative forces within yourself.

Thus, we have a model for wise giving. This is giving where the recipient is participatory, either immediately (as an exchange or partnering) or in the future (pass-it-on). From your point of view the act of wise giving may be paying-it-forward.

Wise giving is also an important element of a relationship that can help reduce forces, with the object to *reduce forces over the long term by cooperating and sharing with others the amount of energy they need in the short term*. This might involve lending a hand with a difficult task that requires more than one person; or providing a short-term loan to get through a rough spot, which is then repaid in some way as promised; or the sharing of

knowledge, effort or material objects in an equitable relationship.

On the other hand, unwise giving can help produce selfishness in others, thereby *producing* forces. Unwise giving can be characterized as taking care of other's issues and problems without their participation. For example, paying someone's debt without them learning from the experience, thereby repeating it again and again or building a dependency on you such that they cease their own creativity and growth, giving away their freedom and personal power. Think about this carefully. While you *think* you are helping this individual, over the long-term you may be hurting them. If the lessons of life are not learned, they are repeated; participation in resolution of issues that emerge in life is essential for learning to take place.

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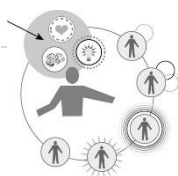
INSIGHT: If what you are giving is not of yourself, then it is not giving.

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Giving is always of ourselves. To give is to present, provide or deliver something to someone. The Collins dictionary and dictionary.com both include a reference to *voluntarily* doing so, although this is not mentioned in Merriam-Webster, Macmillan or Cambridge, leading dictionary references. We contend that if what you are giving is

not of yourself, then it is not giving. We cannot give to others that which is not ours.³⁷

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 3: In a state of presence, we can extrapolate patterns of the past into the future.

Without presence we would become our environment. We are chameleons, and brilliant at imprinting what we see and bringing it into our own energy. When we are conscious, we are present. While presence and consciousness are interrelated, the idea of presence in this discussion goes beyond an awareness of the NOW to include deep listening and moving beyond the way we've done things in the past, that is, it brings with it the freedom of choice.

Peter Senge, who is best known for his development of organizational learning, working with colleagues, sees presencing as a core capability of the future, a way to access the living fields that connect us and *that which is seeking to emerge*.³⁸ These living fields are, in the larger sense, what we have referred to as the Noosphere, the Zero Point field, the Consciousness field, the Quantum field or the God field. The concept of connecting to that which is seeking to emerge is certainly consistent with the Quantum field as a probability field containing all possibilities.

Peter and his colleagues introduce seven capacities that are foundational to see, sense and realize these new possibilities: suspending,

redirecting, letting go, letting come, crystalizing, prototyping and institutionalizing.³⁹ Each of these capacities enable various activities, which serve as a gateway to the next capacity. This theory has become more popularly known as the *Theory of U*.

This idea of "letting come" is the process of *allowing*, whose importance cannot be overemphasized. As the adage goes, we are often our own worst enemies. As we realize the power of the mind/brain in terms of thought and feelings in the process of co-creating, we do not want to interject barriers to our desired progress forward. *Presencing opens us to receiving and learning*. As was forwarded in a daily quote from Abraham-Hicks Publications, "Over time, your appreciation for the question will become equivalent to your appreciation for the answer, and your appreciation for the problem will become equivalent to your appreciation for the solution. And in your newfound ease with what-is, you will find yourself in the state of allowing what you truly desire."

Presencing is not an individual concept, but rather considers the individual as a living system that is of the whole. In other words, there is a sense of social identity present. In the context of the mind, this means *consciously* showing up, being aware of our inner connections to the larger field.

Divination, Prediction and Forecasting

Let's briefly differentiate these terms. Divination is a seeking of knowledge in an attempt to foretell the future, the direction of things, identifying forces and creatively acting with or on those forces. Prediction is concerned with exactness, that is, in time, nature and the magnitude of future events. "I am going to predict what item is behind that closed door." Conversely, forecasting deals very much with uncertainty and conjecture, offering a spectrum of possibilities. This is closer to the Quantum concept, where all possibilities exist behind a closed door until the door is opened and what is behind it is observed.

In both the East and the West, divination has been a tool to explore the future since antiquity. Divination can be thought of as the imagination tapping into the unconscious side of a situation, perceiving forces and then creating ways to deal with those forces. It "involves a combination of analysis and intuition that normal thinking usually keeps apart. This process values imagination and creativity. It shifts the way you make decisions."⁴⁰

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INSIGHT: Divination is the imagination tapping into the unconscious side of a situation, perceiving forces and creating ways to deal with those forces.

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There are many systems of divination or insight that can serve as a way of developing intuition. For example, there are various systems of astrology (Western, Vedic, Chinese, Real-Sky, Mayan), numerology, human design, gene keys, Tarot decks, etc. While they all work at some level, certain ones will resonate more than others for certain individuals. This resonance is based on the symbolism and framework used that makes most intuitive sense to the user such that the user tunes their awareness into it more consciously, training their mind to those symbols. These tools then become a vehicle for gaining insight into things to which we might otherwise be blind.

The *Kabbalah*, or the *Tree of Life*, and its various symbolic correspondences of numbers, letters, sounds and archetypes is at the foundation of many divination tools in Western Mystical Traditions. It is both a mathematical and geometric system of organizing information and archetypal patterns in a way that adapts itself well to a Western way of thinking. In Kabbalah, using something like Tarot is not for divination, but rather for using the archetypal imagery of the cards to create a window or bridge into the unconscious and/or a mirror to the self. The unconscious works in symbolism and imagery well, so this is a way to train our conscious mind to the language of the unconscious. We meditate upon the images/symbols, build them up in our mind, recreate the inner landscape, and then

"walk through the door" into that imagery using our creative imagination. This is called *Pathworking* and is best documented in the books by Paul Foster Case.⁴¹

The *I Ching* (the Book of Change) is the oldest divinatory system to have survived from the past. Through the use of symbols, seekers are able to connect with forces that govern the world. As R. Ritsema and S. Karcher describe, "The *I Ching* ... puts its users in a position to create and experience their own spirit as a point of connection with the forces that govern the world. It is this imaginative power that was elaborated, re-interpreted and defined throughout later Chinese history to the basis of philosophy, morals and ethics. It is a way to connect with the creative imagination that underlies all systems and creeds. Thus, the *I Ching* serves as a manual and sourcebook for Jung's archetypal forces. It asks the general question: How can I creatively act with the forces shaping this instant of time?"⁴²

Bayesian Inference is an early mathematical approach to predicting the future based on probability theory. Bayes was a Presbyterian minister and amateur mathematician who lived in the early and middle part of the 18th century. He was interested in how humans judge the reliability of information. He developed a method of calculating probabilities that was modified whenever new information was acquired. This led to the

development of Bayesian statistics, which has become more powerful with computers crunching big data. Bayes' method begins with *prior odds*, that is, estimating the relative probabilities of A versus B. Then, as new information (X) becomes available, you calculate the likelihood of X being true if A is true and if B is true. Now, the relative probabilities of A and B are re-estimated taking into account a Likelihood Ratio, that is, the likelihood of X if A is true divided by the likelihood of X if B is true. This whole process is repeated whenever new information is acquired.⁴³

It is important to recognize that in predicting the future prior beliefs matter. As scientist Sean Carroll says, "Bayes Theorem allows us to be quantitative about our degrees of belief, but it also helps us keep in mind how belief works at all."⁴⁴ Each of us has developed an inner mapping of reality, the way the world works, and a personal theory and beliefs of how to operate in this world. Yet, as we now recognize, all knowledge is incomplete. We are continuous learners in a continuously changing environment that is becoming more and more complex. Nonetheless, our experiences and the associations of our mind bring us to our current starting point for living life.

In the 1980's, business consultant Stan Davis developed a framework he described as *Future Perfect*.⁴⁵ The framework was based on a simple

syllogism, that time, space and mass are the basic dimensions of the known Universe, and that everyone and everyone's business is *part of that Universe*. These resources can be exploited and manipulated for better, or for worse. Linking these universal abstract truths to specific business applications—and asking a lot of questions along the way—changes our thinking.

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INSIGHT: Time, space and mass are the basic dimensions of the known Universe, and everyone and everyone's business is part of that Universe.

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By 1996, when Stan reviewed and updated his model, he ended, “When management treats time, space, and no-matter as resources rather than as roadblocks, our methods of organization will no longer be lagging behind, at the end.”⁴⁶ In making this shift to “no-matter,” Stan was acknowledging the shift to a Knowledge Economy, that is, with information (an infinite intangible) the major fuel for the new economy and knowledge the principal product of this fuel. “Although there are limits to growth in finite resources, **there are no limits to learning, the ultimate renewable resource** [emphasis added] ... The more information you add to a finite resource, therefore, the more valuable it becomes.”⁴⁷

Since 1996 we understand the difficulties as well as the advantages of information overload. With this in mind, we would shift Stan's words from "the more valuable it becomes" to "the more potential value is created." Nonetheless, Stan's framework, and others working in this field who were heading the same direction, looked into the future and *moved us toward an understanding of the organic nature of organizations and the co-evolving model of change.*

With knowledge-based companies in full swing, the predictions of sociologist Michael Zey jump from innovations in biotechnology, computing, robotics, medicine, energy development and space technology to the exploration of gene therapy and decoding of the human genome, next generation robots and smart machines, space tourism and fusion-based energy. He identifies four powerful new forces that are changing the way we live: biogenesis, cybergenesis, species coalescence and dominionization.⁴⁸ Placing humanity at the threshold of what he refers to as the Expansionary Age, he visions a *Humaniverse*, which is *the emergence of human consciousness and human intelligence that is happening today*.

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***INSIGHT:* The “Humaniverse”—which is the emergence of human consciousness and human intelligence--is happening today.**

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Michael calls this an historical event: "... the human race's capacity to vitalize, bring life, order, creativity, and novelty to everything it touches, sets the world on a complete new evolutionary trajectory. Moreover, the world now possesses an entity, the human species, that could develop the tools to save the Universe."⁴⁹

We agree that, ultimately, it is *human will* that will determine the shape and direction of the Universe, a Universe that we are actively creating. As Michael concludes, we have entered "the most magnificent period imaginable—the future is an act of love. It will also be the most challenging in human history—the future is an act of will."⁵⁰

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INSIGHT: Ultimately, it is human will that determines the shape and direction of the Universe, a Universe that we are actively co-creating.

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This brief glance at divination, prediction and forecasting suggests that the human mind is quite capable of—in the NOW and based on the past—focusing thought toward exploring the future. A significant aspect of the mind/brain is its capability to continually make sense of its environment and anticipate what's coming next. Part of knowledge is anticipation of the future. As neuroscientist György

Buzsaki states, “Brains are foretelling devices and their predictive powers emerge from the various rhythms they perpetually generate ... The specific physiological functions of brain rhythms vary from the obvious to the utterly impenetrable.”⁵¹

In other words, *our behavior is closely related to our capacity to form accurate predictions*. This perspective is reinforced by the neuroscientist Rudolfo Llinas, who considered predicting the outcome of future events as the most important and common of all global brain functions.⁵² The sense of movement of the body provides a simple demonstration of the need—and power—of anticipating the future. Imagine walking down a staircase and accidentally missing a step, recognizing the surprise one has when beginning to fall. Since for thousands of years survival has depended upon humans being capable of anticipating their environment and taking the right actions to survive, perhaps it should be no surprise that that capability has come through the evolution of the brain.

As Antonio Damasio explains, “Survival in a complex environment, that is, efficient management of life regulation, depends on taking the right action, and that, in turn, can be greatly improved by purposeful preview and manipulation of images in mind and optimal planning. Consciousness allowed the connection of the two disparate aspects of the process—inner life regulation and image making.”⁵³

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EXERCISE: *Predicting through Pattern Discovery*

Understanding patterns is one way to predict change. In *Thinking in the Future Tense*, business lecturer Jennifer James said that patterns evolve through six processes.⁵⁴ Exploring the landscape through each of these lenses can aid creativity and promote innovation. These are briefly described below.

APPROACH (1): EXTENSION. Observe a known phenomenon, imagine how it could be expanded, and the implications of that expansion. For example, when a new-sized iPhone comes out, what accessories are needed? With electromagnetic sensitivity growing, what protection products would help these individuals?

APPROACH (2): ELABORATION. This is the process of changing an existing product or service. Jennifer points out: “Elaboration is the best way to capitalize on an already established pattern or trend.”⁵⁵ For example, Disney expanded his entertainment and product focus to include building resorts, broadening his focus and expanding the impact of his products.

APPROACH (3): RECYCLING. This is the process of taking an old product and recycling it for a new generation, or as a point of nostalgia for an older generation.

APPROACH (4): PATTERN REVERSALS.

These are hesitations or momentary interruptions in forward movement. “When we push too far in one direction, there is a tendency for whatever we are pushing to snap back. Veggie burgers somehow create a demand for steak houses.”⁵⁶ This is a human anomaly. When you push too hard in one direction, the other direction is perceived as less available and therefore more desirable.

APPROACH (5): STRANGE

ATTRACTIONS. These are unpredictable and odd combinations of patterns or trends, much like the strange attractors in chaos theory. An example is techies putting crystal on their computers to ground them. These unusual combinations can excite the mind.

APPROACH (6): CHAOS. Chaos theory cautions us to stay open to the unlikely, improbable and unpredictable. As Jennifer notes, “Chaos theory is the science of process, the knowledge of what is becoming, not what is or will remain. Our minds and our business are not always systems in balance: they are always in process.”⁵⁷

There is a Conscious Look Book on
Connections as Patterns.

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Idea 4: New ways of thinking enable us to see the world differently.

Since it is humans that separate knowledge into different domains, not nature, it is easy to resonate with biologist and naturalist Edward Wilson's work on consilience, the bringing together of two or more disciplines, or when two or more inductions drawn from different disciplines come into agreement.⁵⁸ This little book takes a consilience approach, tapping into a deep array of research in knowledge and learning, with specific references to recent neuroscience understanding, and looking to psychology, physics, cell biology, systems and complexity, cognitive theory, social theory and spirituality for their contributions. That's a lot of consilience!

Thinking back over life, I wonder if this isn't a natural approach for most people? Think about it this way: we learn patterns from childhood games, we learn about relationships from different people throughout the years, we have specific hobbies and crafts and things like gardening and woodworking, and we learn different jobs to make a living. Certainly, all of those things require different ways of thinking and acting, and the patterns sort of get mixed up with life! And the way we look at the world and act certainly has a lot to do with those

patterns. For example, when someone displays poor sportsmanship at a children's softball game, my judgment of and reaction to that poor sportsmanship isn't just based on the previous softball games I've attended! It's based on a larger understanding of life with the foundation of a moral base built up over those years of life. Now, you've got to agree that's the idea behind taking a consilience approach to life.

Back to Edward's theory of consilience, from a system's perspective, limitations and challenging problems often derive from our inability to rise above the tendency to categorize and specialize in separate disciplines. While disciplines are convenient artificial constructs that may be effective within their boundaries, they can also be limiting by their frame of reference and accepted procedures and practices. For example, a certain approach a professor has to writing an exam, or a particular combination and ordering of seasonings used by a Chef. Of course, limitations can happen within a discipline as well as across disciplines. An example of such a limitation within a discipline was the dominance of behaviorism on learning research in the 20th century. As David Kolb, well-known for his 1994 model for experiential learning, posited, "In the overeager embrace of the rational, scientific, and technological, our concept of the learning process itself was distorted first by rationalism and later by behaviorism."⁵⁹

By looking across fields, it may be possible to see interactions and possibilities that are not obvious within individual disciplines. An example would include past beliefs regarding adult learning that have been shown to be false through neuroscience findings, which was part of a research study with David, my partner. Our interests were in looking across fields to enhance understanding and find new ways of achieving objectives.

Howard Gardner, a professor of cognition and education, calls this *synthesis*, what he considers the human ability to knit together information from disparate sources into a coherent whole. *This is a powerful and important human capability.* Howard notes that the Nobel prize-winning physicist Murray Gell-Mann believes that the mind most at a premium in the 21st century will be the mind that can synthesize well. As Gardner contends, this ability is vital today. “Sources of information are vast and disparate, and individuals crave coherence and integration.”⁶⁰

In today's global world where we have recognized the power of social interaction, synthesis is taking on an expanded meaning to include bringing people together to share and integrate their thoughts, honoring individuation as value to collective collaboration.

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***INSIGHT:* Synthesis, the ability to knit together information from disparate sources into a coherent whole, is a powerful and important human capability.**

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As a working definition, consilience means a “jumping together” of knowledge through the linking of facts and fact-based theory across disciplines to create a common groundwork of explanation. Our consilience friend Edward Wilson quotes Whewell as saying in an 1840 synthesis of *The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences* that, “The Consilience of Induction takes place when an Induction, obtained from one class of facts, coincides with an Induction, obtained from another different class.”⁶¹

When taking a consilience approach, each field or discipline provides a different perspective, each has a contribution to make, and each has its own way of solving problems and validating findings. In addition, each discipline may hold a specific primary frame of reference. Although individuals in various fields may be studying the same general phenomena, their frame of reference will influence what is considered valid data or acceptable conclusions.

As systems become more complex, their behavior and characteristics change, requiring

different (or multiple) approaches to understanding.⁶² Thus, there is also the phenomena of emergence of hybrid disciplines. Examples are evolutionary psychology, cognitive psychology, neurobiology and functional medicine.⁶³

Consilience can be challenging, particularly as in the example of a focus on experiential learning, when one discipline leans toward the “hard” sciences (such as neuroscience) and others lean toward the “soft” sciences (such as psychology and education). In addition, each field of study may have a different ontology (philosophy) as well as epistemology (knowledge) while simultaneously having an impact on the other. For example, Sarah-Jayne Blakemore and Uta Frith, both cognitive neuroscientists, and James Byrnes, a professor of human development, agree that knowledge of the brain and how it learns will undoubtedly have an impact on education. Sarah-Jayne and Uta offer that there is almost no literature on the connection between the brain sciences and education.⁶⁴ This perception may, however, be due to a lack of awareness in the educational field of some of the available research. My partner David, a nuclear physicist and mathematician, who also has a PhD in neuroscience and learning, spent ten years of his life connecting neuroscience findings and experiential learning. His book, *Expanding the Self*, includes a new theory of experiential learning.

In 1959, C.P. Snow (1959/1993) wrote about the two cultures of science and humanism, identifying many aspects of their differences as well as the importance of their interdependence. While there has historically been a divide between the natural sciences on the one hand and the social sciences and humanities on the other hand, Snow also believes that, “Nothing fundamental separates the course of human history from the course of physical history, whether in the stars or in organic diversity.”⁶⁵ The issues we face as a humanity require that we bring our knowledge of the humanities and natural sciences together, erasing their boundaries to produce a clearer view of reality.⁶⁶ The National Research Council suggests that the growth of interdisciplinary inquiries and new kinds of scientific collaboration have begun to make the path from basic research to education practices somewhat more visible, if not yet easy to travel.⁶⁷

Symmetry and Symbiotic Thinking

Symmetry is proportional or balanced harmony, and is tightly linked with the concept of beauty. It is the exact correspondence of form on opposite sides of a centerline or point.⁶⁸ As mathematician Hermann Weyl says, "Symmetry, as wide or as narrow as you may define its meaning, is one idea by which many through the ages have tried to comprehend and create order, beauty, and perfection."⁶⁹ As order, beauty and perfection,

symmetry moves far beyond the idea of art, and is woven into the disciplines of mathematics and physics, architecture and building, and many other fields where categorization and classification are involved. The principles of symmetry penetrate every level of life.⁷⁰

Wade says that symmetry is simultaneously a mundane and mysterious area of study. He offers that, "In itself symmetry is unlimited ... symmetry principles are characterized by a quietude, a stillness that is somehow beyond the bustling world; yet, in one way or another, they are almost always involved with transformation, or disturbance, or movement."⁷¹

Two common characteristics of symmetry are *congruence* and *periodicity*. Congruence refers to similar patterns and periodicity refers to regularly repeating patterns. Two different aspects of congruence are rotation and reflection. For example, a simple rotation occurs when a pattern is laid out in a circle around a central point. Symmetries abound in our everyday lives. For example, a butterfly's wings or the patterns in a quilt.

Amazingly, four fundamental features can be used to describe any symmetrical pattern! As John Conway and Heidi Burgiel note, "It is a remarkable fact that wonders, gyrations, kaleidoscopes and mirrors suffice to describe all the symmetries of any pattern whatsoever."⁷² Gyrations have repeating points around a circle; kaleidoscopes are symmetries

defined by reflections; miracles occur when a pattern from one side is reflected by a pattern on the other side but does *not* go through a mirror line; and wonders are patterns that don't present the other three aspects, sort of a "catch all the rest" kind of category.

Symmetry plays an important role in patterns in the physical world. Nature is fond of doing things in the most economical and efficient way. As short forms of larger patterns, symbols help facilitate thinking about symmetry, and can help us recognize simpler solutions to issues and situations.

The idea of infinite symmetry is appealing.

This would insinuate that we know much more about the Universe than we know that we know. A popular saying in spiritual circles is, "As above, so below" which also says, "As below, so above." This means that if we can understand the models of life within our context, we have the keys to understanding higher-order patterns beyond our cognizance. While sounding like a paradox, as we discover more and more about the human mind/brain, and as we touch the thought of Quantum, the idea of infinite symmetry opens the doors to expanding our understanding of the Universe.

In our attempt to understand the wholeness of a topic, we are usually led to the idea of systems thinking. This extension of cause-and-effect thinking shows us that effects provide a feedback loop into

the next cause, helping us to understand that what we call an “effect” is actually *part* of the next “cause.” From the lens of symmetry, we move from *systems* thinking to *symbiotic* thinking when we realize that the very concept of “cause” cannot *exist* without the concept of “effect.” This deeper relationship is not from causality, but from existence.

Would the concept of “day” exist if not also for the concept of “night?” Would we have a need for the term “summer” if not also for the term “winter?” In the physical Universe, we find that since there is such a thing as “matter” that there is also “antimatter.” The very existence of a thing or idea *requires* the existence of something else. We see this same pattern play out in a discussion of time and space, noting that space cannot exist without objects, and objects must be enclosed by space. Does lightning just travel downward? With symbiotic thinking, we would understand that if there is a reaching down then there is also a reaching up, and indeed modern photography has captured the phenomenon of upward streamers.

As we develop our symbiotic thinking, we see that “supply and demand” is not just a single business concept, but two concepts where each exists because the other exists. We now view the old and new testaments of the Bible not as a contradiction but as a completion, since grace (new) cannot exist without law (old). And we begin to understand the

nature of Quantum physics where two states must exist at the same time; for example, consider the famous thought experiment of Schrodinger's cat, which is both alive and dead. Things that don't make sense using systems thinking begin to make sense using symbiotic thinking.

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INSIGHT: Things that don't make sense using systems thinking begin to make sense using symbiotic thinking.

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In our efforts towards co-creating the future, with symbiotic thinking, there is reason to expect that *our individual ideas cannot exist without also a larger consciousness which seeks to incorporate our ideas*. The need to create cannot exist without the need to receive that which is created; and we begin to see that *there really is no creating without also co-creating*. Yet we also understand that we should expect a degree of resistance that may push against that which we are creating.

Serendipity

Serendipity is the art of finding what we are not seeking, *yet perhaps what we need or want*. It is the interweaving of chance into our lives ... or is it?

In a recent article on serendipity, Pagan Kennedy asks: How do we cultivate the art of

finding what we're not seeking?⁷³ She provides the example of Steve Hollinger who, in 2008, developed a throwable videocamera, which took the shape of a baseball that was equipped with gyroscopes and sensors. This baseball (called Squito) could be tossed into a crawlspace to provide nonhuman visual perspectives of the world.

The term serendipity is traced back to English author Horace Walpole who, in the mid-1700's while researching a coat of arms, stumbled upon an exciting tidbit of information. He coined the word serendipity to represent the discovery of something for which he was not searching. The more formal definition is luck that takes the form of finding valuable or pleasant things for which we are not looking.⁷⁴

In the mid-1900's, Dr. Sandra Erdelez, a University of Missouri information scientist, studied 100 people to discover how they created—or failed to create—their own serendipity. She discovered that these individuals fell into three groupings: (1) non-encounterers, who did exactly what they set out to do and didn't look beyond that tasking; (2) occasional encounterers, who "stumbled" into occasions of serendipity; and (3) super-encounterers, who purposefully explored random texts, hoping to find treasures in odd places. Sandra felt that *believing* you were a super-encounterer helped you be one, possessing "special powers of perception, like an

invisible set of antennas, that will lead you to clues."⁷⁵ This is consistent with neuroscience findings.

In the 1960's, reporter Gay Talese published a book titled *New York: A Serendipiter's Journey*, which "traced the perambulations of feral cats, cataloged shoeshine purveyors, tracked down statistics related to the bathrooms at Yankee Stadium and discovered a colony of ants at the top of the Empire State Building."⁷⁶ This work breathed new life into the concept of serendipity.

Thus, the super-encounterers, or serendipiters, dive into the unknown in search of the unknown, a *highly creative act*, and discover something new and different and yet related to them, an expression of self. Clues emerge when least expected from unexpected places. Through these clues, serendipiters are imagining their way around impossible issues to discover groundbreaking solutions. As Pagan sums up: "The journey will be maddening, but the potential insights could be profound: One day we might be able to stumble upon new and better ways of getting lost."⁷⁷

Synchronicity

Synchronicity can be thought of as a coincidence of events that seem related, yet with no obvious connection one to the other. The term synchronicity was first used in the sense of a *meaningful occurrence happening in time* in the

work of the psychologist Carl Jung. In the first chapter of Carl's work titled "Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle,"⁷⁸ he notes that "modern physics has shown natural laws to be statistical truths and the principle of causality to be only relatively valid, so that at the microphysical (i.e., subatomic) level there can occur events which are acausal."⁷⁹ He also questioned whether acausal events could be demonstrated at the macrophysical level.

Evidence in support of this was provided by Rhine in experiments that revealed statistically significant correlations between events **even though there were no causal relationships between those events**. Jung saw the synchronicity principle—that a meaningful coincidence is connected by simultaneity and meaning—as "the absolute rule in all cases where an inner event occurs simultaneously with an outside one."⁸⁰ The conclusion by Carl Jung was that *time and space become relative under certain conditions, and even appear to be transcended*.

An early researcher looking into the nature of life's coincidences was Paul Kammerer, an Australian biologist who investigated coincidences and unexplained clusterings of events. Over a number of years at the turn of the century, Paul collected data and looked for clusters in time through careful statistical analysis. From this work, Paul hypothesized that random events fall together into

clusters just as asteroids drift together in space under the influence of gravity.⁸¹

In his book, which speaks to synchronicity as the bridge between matter and mind, physicist David Peat suggests that synchronicity “arises out of the underlying patterns of the Universe rather than through a causality of pushes and pulls that we normally associate with events in nature.”⁸² This is the acausal principle of Jung, which suggests that there are inherited characteristics in the brain prefigured by evolution. This links the individual with the history of the species. Never before a part of the consciousness of the individual, the collective unconscious “is that portion of the psyche which can be differentiated from the personal unconscious by the fact that its existence is not dependent upon personal experience.”⁸³

This is also the causal connection proposed in the Pauli principle. Wolfgang Pauli, a physicist and early contributor to the field of Quantum Mechanics, is best known for his exclusion principle, which complements Heisenberg’s Quantum mechanics. Pauli argued that at the Quantum level nature engages in an abstract dance—with electrons, protons, neutrons and neutrinos engaging in an antisymmetric dance and mesons and photons of light engaging in a symmetric dance, keeping particles of the same energy apart from each other. This is not the result of force or any specific act of

causality, “rather it arises out of the ... abstract movement of the particles as a whole.”⁸⁴

Certainly, a causal explanation can be argued for all events and behaviors, and biological connections can be made as well. So, while causality certainly has a role to play, *it is only part of the change picture*. For example, in the 18th century, David Hume concluded that causality could not be placed on a strictly logical footing, that is, because A follows B in one instance or in all similar instances of which we are aware, this does not mean that A will always follow B. He called this belief in causality *a habit of the mind based on repeated historical precedent*. As David says, “We have no other notion of cause and effect, but that of certain objects, which have been always conjoined together ... We cannot penetrate into the reason of the conjunction.”⁸⁵

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INSIGHT: While causality certainly has a role to play, it is only part of the change picture. This is where synchronicities can bridge the gap between mind and matter.

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While agreeing that when forces are well defined and time flows freely the concept of causality does not present problems, this is not the case as complexity increases. “As science probes

deeper into the Universe of internal flows and dynamic unfoldings, of subtle influences and intersecting time scales, then causal chains can no longer be analyzed and reduced to linear connections of individual events so that the very concept of causality begins to lose its power.”⁸⁶

Since mental events are not dependent on causality, this is where synchronicities can bridge the gap between matter and mind.⁸⁷ Indeed, as has been shared throughout this book, the human mind is an associative patternner, continuously creating knowledge for the moment at hand, triggered by internal and external stimuli yet not necessarily part of a linear chain of causality. We are engaged in a continuous process of unfolding patterns.

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INSIGHT: We are engaged in a continuous process of unfolding patterns.

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From complexity theory we understand that emergence is a global property of a complex system that results from the interactions and relationships among its agents, and between the agents and their environment. Systems can also generate responses that are not proportional to the action taken. We say a system possesses nonlinearity when a small action may generate a very large outcome—or a large action may have very little effect on the system.

Further, meaningful patterns can emerge from an unstable and chaotic system.

The concept of self-synchronization (the self arrangement of actions in time, space and purpose to produce maximum relative effect at a decisive place and time), whether applied to an individual or a larger group of individuals, and, when coupled with interoperability (the ability to work together) and orchestration of means (the ability to act in concert in a timely manner), is consistent with the definition of intelligent activity. For example, as one of the tenets for Network Centric Warfare to achieve self-synchronized forces and actions, it is defined as: a clear and consistent understanding of command intent; high quality information and shared situational awareness; competence at all levels of the force; and trust in the information, subordinates, superiors, peers, and equipment.⁸⁸ In other words, *it is dependent on measures that guide but do not dictate details.*

From another frame of reference, Peter Senge, who we introduced earlier in this little book, and his colleagues say that perhaps "synchronicity is simply what it feels like, from our personal vantage point, to be part of a field knowing itself and to be taking action informed by the whole."⁸⁹ And, finally, biologist and researcher Rupert Sheldrake, who developed the concept of morphic resonance, asserts that this is not extraordinary, but rather that

synchronicity is a natural feature of a living system.⁹⁰ From the viewpoint of experience over our collective years of life, we agree. Do you?

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 5: As we focus our energy outward toward others, happiness emerges.

Happiness is a choice. As Sir John Templeton says, “The way we choose to see the world creates the world we see!”⁹¹ From our neuroscience learnings, we know that this is true. So, then, *happiness is not the product of events, but rather how we respond to events*, and that is a choice.

The "happiness formula" forwarded in positive psychology, is $H = S + C + V$, that is, happiness is equal to "your biological set point (S) plus the conditions of your life (C) plus the voluntary activities (V) you do."⁹² Of course, as voluntary, V includes intentional activities. Note that the biological set point is also impacted by physical choices such as what and how much you eat and physical and mental exercise as well as natural hormonal levels, etc. Further, *the "conditions of your life" have a great deal to do with how you choose to perceive the conditions of your life.*

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INSIGHT: The conditions of your life have a great deal to do with how you choose to perceive the conditions of your life.

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Further, happiness is not a state of being, for it cannot be static when generated by a verb (a person), nor could it sit still in a changing, uncertain and complex environment. It is a by-product. In *What All the World's A-Seeking*, written in 1897 by Ralph Waldo Trine, he says:

“A corollary of the great principle already enunciated might be formulated thus: **there is no such thing as finding true happiness by searching for it directly** [emphasis added]. It must come, if it comes at all, indirectly, or by the service, the love, and the happiness we give to others. So, there is no such thing as finding true greatness by searching for it directly. It always, without a single exception, has come indirectly in the same way, and it is not at all probable that the great eternal law is going to be changed to suit any particular case or cases. Then recognize it, put your life into harmony with it, and reap the rewards of its observance, or fail to recognize it and pay the penalty accordingly, for the law itself will remain unchanged. **Life is not, we may say, for mere passing pleasure, but for the highest unfoldment that one can attain to, the noblest character that one can grow, and for the greatest service that one can render to all mankind** [emphasis added]. In this, however, we will find the highest pleasure, for in this the only real pleasure lies.”⁹³

James Baird, an engineer, and Laurie Nadel, an expert on mental health, describe the “full involvement of flow” as a state of natural happiness.⁹⁴ Thus happiness, a state of mind or feeling characterized by inner peace, love and joy, is part of the flow of life, **not an inward flow, but an outward flow**. As Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke, “Those who are not looking for happiness are the most likely to find it, because those who are searching forget that the surest way to be happy is to seek happiness for others.” Robert J. McCracken agreed as he wrote, “The most infectious joyous men and women are those who forget themselves in thinking about others and serving others. Happiness comes not by deliberately courting and wooing it, but by giving oneself in self-effacing surrender to great values.” John Marks Templeton shortened this to say, “Happiness pursued eludes; happiness given returns.”⁹⁵

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INSIGHT: True happiness cannot be found by searching for it directly; if it comes, it is by the service, love and happiness that we give to others.

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A Harvard Grant Study followed 268 male Harvard undergraduates from 1938-1940 for 75 years, collecting data at regular intervals on aspects of their lives. The study was focused on exploring the secrets of a happy and purposeful life. George

Vaillant, the psychiatrist who directed the study from 1972 to 2004, says that while it may be obvious that love is key to a happy and fulfilling life, there are two pillars of happiness. "One is love," he writes. "The other is finding a way of coping with life that does not push love away."⁹⁶

The Harvard study provided a number of insights. First, it's about more than money and power. There is a larger picture, and the older we grow the more we appreciate that picture. Second, we can all become happier regardless of how we begin life. One participant started with pretty bleak prospects for life, yet wound up being one of the happiest. He said he spent his life searching for love. Third, connection is essential. "Joy is connection" says Vaillant. **"The more areas in your life you can make connection, the better"** [emphasis added]. Strong relationships were found to be a high predictor of life satisfaction, and feeling connected at work was more important than the amount of money being made. Fourth, the perspective you get from challenges can make you happier.⁹⁷ Examples cited were Mother Teresa, who had a terrible childhood and painful inner spiritual life but a "highly successful life by caring about other



people," and Beethoven, who's connection to music helped him cope with misery. In 1984 I had the opportunity to experience Mother Teresa first-hand. The story of that amazing experience is in the Conscious Little Book on *Conscious Compassion*.

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EXERCISE: *Choosing Happiness*

Happiness is a choice. The foundational concepts that support this tool are: (A) There is a spot of happiness to be found in almost every situation; and (B) We have the ability to create happiness through our thoughts and actions.

STEP (1): Look and find the spot of happiness in the situation. This may be peripheral to the situation at hand; for example, perhaps no one was hurt in an accident; or your health may be intact despite the situation; or recognize the situation as a learning experience (all situations do have the potential for learning, even if only learning that you don't really want to repeat them); or you can be happy that the experience is over.

STEP (2): Treat yourself to something you enjoy. This might be as simple as a hot fudge Sunday, a new outfit, a book or movie.

STEP (3): Do something for someone else. Surprise a loved one with a gift; give a financially

struggling employee a raise; participate in a "house building" experience for someone in need; write an inspirational poem or short story and share it with your friends and neighbors. The possibilities are endless. Think of those you know—and those you don't know—and do an act in service to others.

STEP (4): Repeat as needed.

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Laughter, supporting health and productivity, has the capacity to glide an individual and group into happiness. Along the path of life, I had a colleague who had one of those loud, joyful bursts of laughter, accompanied with a big smile, which periodically emerged in her conversations. There was no way you couldn't respond in like manner, and you always felt good after the conversation. Even writing about it, remembering, brings a smile. Laughter is contagious.

Embracing laughter as a universal language, in cooperation with United Kingdom application developers Platoon and Made in Space, Israeli artist Eyal Gever originated a competition called "#Laugh" to create an application that can generate a digital 3D sculpture *based on the sound of laughter*. Gever said to CNN representatives, "Lately, the world seems to be dominated by racism and the rise of right-wing politics. Laughter is something we can all do, and that unifies us." And, according to the artist, "laughter reminds people that there is beauty in humanity." There is a Conscious Look Book on

Transcendent Beauty. The winning design from this competition, selected through social media online voting, was sent into space and 3D printed on the International Space Station (ISS). In 2017, the sound of human laughter was the first 3D art printed in space!⁹⁸

Bliss is a form of extreme happiness. For some of us who are older, the phrase *follow your bliss* is one that emerged in inspirational speeches as well as in everyday conversations, fiction books and movies. It's a phrase that bears surfacing again today. **Follow your bliss.**

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 6: There is a new generation of co-creators, and they are ready to embrace a new reality.

In 1975, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, the author of *Flow*, published a book entitled *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety*. This book focused on, in a culture ruled by the pursuit of money, prestige and pleasure, how to make our lives more meaningful. As Mahalyi described, “We find ourselves on a never-ending search for ways to counteract the boredom, anxiety, and alienation that our work-oriented society has become.”⁹⁹ He, of course, is introducing the flow experience, that *exhilarating feeling of creative accomplishment and heightened functioning*.

Fast-forward four generations, with new minds and new hearts engaging the world quite differently. The good news is they *do* engage. “They organize themselves, publish themselves, inform themselves and share with their friends—without waiting for an authority to instruct them,”¹⁰⁰ albeit an underlying pattern of this need for immediacy is an impatience with business models and processes of the preceding generation.¹⁰¹ Giora Hadar describes this generation as optimistic and determined, and notes that they like public activism¹⁰² and Elmore points out that they are both high-performance and *high maintenance*,¹⁰³

more likely to "rock the boat" than any prior generation.¹⁰⁴

Let's understand that this is a generation that is connected; from their viewpoint they always have been and always will be. Information is available at the tap of a finger. Their world has always been complex, and so to them it is simple; they hop from one thought to another, never needing to focus too heavily, because all they need is instantly available. They are superior integrators of information, use their feelings to select what is next on their action agenda, and thrive on interaction.

The implications of continuous social interactions (conversations, dialogues and multilogues) across an expanded global network (capacity) are staggering. When needed, these young decision-makers have the ability to develop context and generate ideas around a specific issue at hand (capability). Further, swimming around and diving up and down in the global shallows—which are filled with a diversity of views, perspectives, concepts and cultures—spurs uninhibited creativity and more significant innovation than surface swimming. Decision-makers in the connected, global world can be *mentally stimulated by interactions involving diverse views, perspectives, concepts and cultures* and are not bounded by local ideas.

Creativity and innovation thrive on different ideas and ways of looking at things, and flourish

from connecting different streams of thought. From cross-domain stimulation of an open mind, new and often unsought patterns will emerge. A key phrase here is “open mind,” that is, a mind not “limited” (whether purposefully or otherwise) to a specific direction, a bounded domain of knowledge, or immutable mental models. Open mind describes a decision-maker co-evolving with a CUCA environment (change, uncertainty, complexity and anxiety) and searching out relationships between the mission/vision/purpose/values of their organizational alliance and the potential offered within their environmental opportunity space.¹⁰⁵ These are decision-makers seeking a window of opportunity in terms of space and time in a turbulent environment.

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INSIGHT: Creativity and innovation thrive on different ideas and ways of looking at things, and flourish from connecting different streams of thought.

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Because this new social way of being, thinking and acting taps into a huge diversity of experience, there is also an increased *appreciation of difference*, and with it comes a tolerance of diversity. "They are a true global generation; smarter and more tolerant to diversity than their predecessors."¹⁰⁶

A strong characteristic of this new generation is **Inclusiveness**. We have right in front of our eyes the Universal model for inclusiveness, *the Earth with whom we live*. The Earth is an amazingly rich planet, with a high diversity of living organisms and inorganic forms, an example of what *Urantia* describes as “*exquisite repleteness* of the all-inclusive nature of the Universe.”¹⁰⁷

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INSIGHT: We have right in front of our eyes the Universal model for inclusiveness, *the Earth with whom we live*.

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Yet, somehow, it’s easy to forget that Universal lesson when focusing on our organizations and day-to-day life. Recognizing the value of diversity, forward-thinking leaders around the world have worked to bring diversity into their organizations. However, this is not enough. Inclusiveness is far more than diversity of gender, race or culture.¹⁰⁸ Today, “while many organizations are better about creating diversity, many have not yet figured out how to make the environment inclusive—that is, create an atmosphere in which **all people feel valued and respected and have access to the same opportunities** [emphasis added].”¹⁰⁹

Management coach Susan David says it’s about shifting our mindset. “What matters most is a

fundamental mindset that embraces every person as an individual and helps them bring who they are—both their backgrounds and their opinions—into the workplace.”¹⁰ She suggests the following practices: becoming aware of biases, creating a shared identity, and being attentive to emotions.

In Phase 2 (co-evolving) of the Intelligent Social Change Journey, we begin to recognize the amazing power of diversity in terms of thought and action, and the contribution of diversity to the bisociation of ideas that leads to innovation. To move fully into the flow co-evolving in a global world, it is necessary to release any remaining barriers or forces attached to the illusion of separation. This does not negate the power of individuation; rather, it elevates its significance. Only through individuation, with each of us fully developing and contributing our special talents, can Oneness expand and grow.

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INSIGHT: Releasing the illusion of separation does not negate the power of individuation; rather, it elevates its significance.

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Immersion coupled with conversation and dialogue is quite the opposite of the Cold War isolation approach. *If they choose to do so*, the Net

Generation may truly have the potential to create a global humanity.

Simultaneously, they can become quickly irritated when something they desire is not immediately forthcoming, and incredibly bored when unplugged, that is, when immediate access to the larger world is not available through their iPhones and tablets. They are a generation of immediate gratification, because this is the *fast world* we live in. We had an example of this in the Summer of 2016, when Ray-Ban, a global leader in the premium eyewear market, decided that Act Six of their *#It Takes Courage* campaign was “the courage to ditch the screen and truly connect in the real world.”¹¹¹ Ray-Ban asked seven people from around the world who are online influencers and digital content creators, with millions of followers on various social media, to spend 48 unplugged hours in the vicinity of Greenbank, West Virginia, a cell phone tower-free location.

The influencers who participated in this event were: Gabbie Fadel, a YouTuber-Twitterer who is the “Dear Abby” of Brazilian teenagers; Giaro Giarratana, an Instagramer from Holland; Zhang Wei (Will), a Fashionista/Blogger from China; Jack Adams (Mumdance), an Electronic Musician from the UK; Matteo, a Digital Artist from Italy; Faith Silva, an Instagramer from the US; and Paul Ward, a Photographer from South Africa. They were all

interesting and unique. For example, while I can't remember which one, one of these men designed and modeled his own line of male underwear.

They stayed at the Mountain Quest Inn and Retreat Center in Frost, West Virginia. During their "unplugged" experience, they visited the small newspaper office, talked to locals, brushed and played with the horses, interviewed an electromagnetic sensitive individual in her home, gathered around a campfire, ate together and shared stories.

I had the opportunity to do questionnaires before and after the influencers' experience, as well as observe them *during* the experience. Initial responses were as expected: some anxiety, some hesitation, discomfort at not being able to check email, but generally open to the new experience and very much living in the NOW. Several of the influencers admitted that they found joy with being globally connected, in chatting with people 24/7, of getting a message out to your audience instantaneously, with the immediate response from people. They truly enjoy influencing, and being an inspiration to, others.

Regarding their expectation for the event, it was one of change. One influencer exclaimed: "What am I gonna do? How will I spend my day without my Netflix account and my phone?" Another said, "I am expecting or hoping to gain some perspective, in

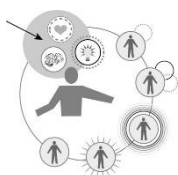
what way I'm not entirely sure. But being this far out of your comfort zone can only be a positive thing."

Post event responses showed shifts. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being minimal and 10 being wonderful, they rated the experience at 9, 10, 11 and 10,000. They were all tired, but, as one shared, feeling stable and happy. *They all agreed that perhaps it was a good idea to get offline on a more regular basis, to interact face-to-face with people.* Individual responses about the experience showed inner reflection. For example, an insightful observation by one influencer was, **"There's no 'social' in social media."** And as far as what was learned, "I learned that with the right attitude, new and strange experiences can yield interesting reflections on self and society." What is fascinating about this comment is that *the "new and strange" experience refers to living a life that was considered "normal" some 20 years ago!*

As can be seen, once the cycle was broken—a breather from virtual global connectivity which indeed took courage—these influencers recognized the importance of having direct human "contactivity". Note that this was a situation involving changing their day-to-day activity, engaging what they described as a "new and strange" experience, a new environment in which to co-evolve. This is consistent with neuroscience findings in terms of the need for social engagement. Further,

four of the influencers specifically spoke of "trusting" Ray-Ban in this experience. Thus, Ray-Ban was in the role of the trusted significant other necessary to move comfortably through change.

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 7: Communities are key to living in these times of extremes.

By now, we are beginning to understand that co-evolving is all about living and working with others, whether that is a family, an organization, a local community or a world-wide community.

Communities denote commonalities of some nature, whether those commonalities are physical (examples: sports enthusiasts, or living in the same locality), mental (common domain of knowledge such as science, or sharing common goals and objectives), or emotional (common attitudes, or common interests). Visionary Gregg Braden says that localized living—community—is the key to living in these times of extremes. He refers to localized in terms of food, services and energy, noting that (1) one size does not fit all, and (2) each geographical area has special needs and things that are both available and abundant.¹¹²

This concept does *not* denote a movement away from globalization. Quite the contrary! From systems theory we have learned that a combination of small systems working together has more flexibility (and stability) than one large system, that is, as a hierarchy. The origin of hierarchies lies in the ability to withstand or survive shock. For example, if a given part of an organization is shocked, if it is

hierarchical, the shock only damages the local level of the hierarchy and allows the organization to rebuild itself because of that hierarchy.

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INSIGHT: Community provides a degree of stability while simultaneously enabling greater adaptability, flexibility and resilience.

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There appears to be a paradox, of course, that community provides a degree of stability while simultaneously enabling greater adaptability, flexibility and resilience. The answer underlying this paradox is that we reference a community based on cooperation and collaboration rather than control, which was the underlying foundation of bureaucracy. Similar to the earlier example of the intelligent complex adaptive system, this is a community that is co-evolving with its environment, utilizing its hierarchical relationship as a learning and operational platform, with the global world as a grounding structure, simultaneously independent and interdependent. This is the same growth relationship attributed to individuation and Oneness. From the perspective of energy Art, this same relationship is demonstrated by the diversity of orbs (represented as electromagnetic energy points of consciousness) that come together in the instant to form a tapestry of *Myst* representing a larger concept, then falling back to their individuated state.



Figure 3. *An example of energy Art.*

There is a Conscious Look Book on *Connections as Patterns*.

In our interconnected world, community need not denote living in a single location or specific locality. A community support system can be sustained through virtual interactions as well. Take, for example, the Women of Wisdom group who held their annual retreat at the Mountain Quest Inn for several years. This eclectic group spent four days together sharing their individual learning and skill sets such as felt making and Reiki energy healing amidst planned moments punctuated with conversation, positive affirmations, storytelling, meditations, dancing, and drumming. A culminating talent show highlighted songs, poems and skits

connecting with the participants and the perturbations of the day. How can a single event sustain community throughout the year? It can't. This event lays the groundwork for smaller sessions with rotating hosts and homes; for a continuous dialogue through a private web service, with counseling and other services openly offered according to the gifts and learning throughout the group; and for **an overwhelming outpouring of love and active support** as individuals move through life-changing events in their lives. *This is the definition of community.*

What does this mean to me?

This Conscious Look Book has been a bit different in format than the others, each of which has a specific focus or topic. The intent was to bring in some of the ideas that we are collectively touching along the journey of life which are expanding our consciousness. And, whether we recognize it or not, we are ALL on this path together!

Still, let's bullet a few key points. I'll start, and you can add to this list:

-  Each thought that is definite has a double effect, producing both a floating form and a radiating vibration differing in both density and quality.
-  People create harmony through the combined movement of working together such that there is an overall sense of well-being and beauty.
-  Giving is an *art* that must be cultivated to achieve *wise* giving, which is helping others to help themselves and others.
-  Ultimately, it is human will that determines the shape and direction of the Universe, a Universe that we are actively co-creating.

-  Things that don't make sense using systems thinking begin to make sense using symbiotic thinking.
-  True happiness cannot be found by searching for it directly; if it comes, it is by the service, love and happiness that we give to others.
-  We have right in front of our eyes the Universal model for inclusiveness, *the Earth with whom we live.*

And ...

Releasing the illusion of separation does not negate the power of individuation; rather, it elevates its significance.

**Isn't life fascinating ... and there is so much
more for us to learn ...**

**We are, well, amazing ... there isn't another
word for it ... with powerful minds,
and so much potential!**

What shall we do next?

This volume of **Conscious Look Books** builds conversationally on the ideas presented in *The Profundity and Bifurcation of Change Part IV: Learning from the Past*, largely presented in Chapter 22: “Learning Points Along the Path” and Part III: Learning in the Present, Chapter 14, “Co-ing and Evolving.” Co-authors of the original text include David Bennet, Arthur Shelley, Theresa Bullard and John Lewis. Full references are available in the original text, which is published by MQIPress, Frost, WV (2017), and available as an eBook on www.amazon.com

Endnotes

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The Volumes in
Possibilities that are YOU!

All Things in Balance

The Art of Thought Adjusting

Associative Patterning and Attracting

Beyond Action

The Bifurcation

Connections as Patterns

Conscious Compassion

The Creative Leap

The Emerging Self

The Emoting Guidance System

Engaging Forces

The ERC's of Intuition

Grounding

The Humanness of Humility

Intention and Attention

Knowing

Living Virtues for Today

ME as Co-Creator

Seeking Wisdom

Staying on the Path

Transcendent Beauty

Truth in Context

Following the phases of change, humanity began its long learning journey toward today. It just makes good sense to explore ideas that have emerged during this journey, ideas that begin the conceptual and developmental expansion necessary for spontaneous change. The ideas presented in this little book are woven into the University of Life. While certainly affected by our experiences which reside in the past, they all represent approaches, states or conditions that happen in the NOW and have large implications for understanding the future.

