

Shifting Our Perspective to the Big Picture

by Emanuel Kuntzelman

At our Leadership Transformed Retreat in Pacific Grove, CA in May, we discussed the disorienting dilemma we face as individuals and society as a whole. The dilemma stems from the fact that we are in the midst of a singular moment, when our social systems and institutions have to adapt to a new value structure that is replacing exclusion with inclusion, competition with cooperation and the perspective of 'my' and 'mine' with 'we' and 'ours.' Our response to this disorienting dilemma will determine our successful ascent of the evolutionary wave pattern. But unless we adopt a model of compassion, environmental sustainability and a new moral understanding for the need of social outreach, we are facing a dire future.



The normal response to overwhelming challenges is to look inside ourselves to try and find an answer, and to pull ourselves up by our own boot straps. I would venture to say that rather than looking within, let's make the bold assumption we're ready to look outwardly for solutions in this critical point in history. How do you balance personal life, work obligations and unfortunate circumstances with social action? My answer is to see the biggest picture possible. By that I mean focusing on the important aspects of what's going on in this grand process, this evolutionary wave on a 14 billion year trajectory at a potential miraculous turning point. If you are in a place that is healthy and holistic, no matter how difficult the day or how bad or frustrating the situations at an individual level, it is really small potatoes compared to the cosmic process we are experiencing. As soon as we get out of a narrowly focused perspective and reorient ourselves to the grand process, suddenly ego-driven preoccupations seem insignificant.

To place ourselves in the grand process, it is critical that we are able to identify our soul-based vision and how this vision contributes to the cosmic cause. When we are aware and present to what drives us at an individual level, we can begin to understand our bigger place in the global perspective. We really are co-creating our evolution, and it's extraordinary to be on that edge. Up to this point, most of us have had a cultural conditioning that has stressed the importance of rugged individualism, forcing us to look back within ourselves. When we find ways to connect and move outward in community we create a completely different dynamic.

The cosmic process provides us with the flow of energy to help keep us on the path as we maneuver through the disorienting dilemma, but this requires a commitment. Each of us needs to be committed to a personal practice that nurtures our individual evolution, because if we aren't aiding our own growth, we will find it difficult to be aware of our place in the big picture. It is important to fuel our own transformative fire, helping us be energized to aid in humanity's conscious evolution.

Michael Murphy, author and leader in the human potential movement, said at our Leadership Transformed Retreat that it's difficult to market the "Big Vision." The bigger the vision, the harder to sell to the masses. But Michael and I also agreed that this is only true as long as we work from the old paradigm of rugged individualism. When we stop wondering "What's in it for me?" and take a broader, more inclusive scope, this big vision of a transformed world of compassion and cooperation will become reality. Whether that initial vision inspires us to take action by sharing food with a sick neighbor or creating a non-profit for positive change, it only requires that first small step take to start the journey of social transformation.