

What Does the World Need Now?

By
Terry Mollner

Lets think big for a moment. What does the world need now?

I think the world mainly needs the following four things:

1. A trust fund for every child to end poverty,
2. A re-villaging of our lives with a recognition of stages of maturity of being a human being and a system of eldering people up those stages,
3. A consensus democracy movement, and
4. A trusteeship corporate movement.

A Trust Fund for Every Child to End Poverty

Think about it, we have created legislation to assure that all elderly people will have adequate income (social security). We have provided tax incentives to encourage people to save for their own retirement (IRAs, Roth IRAs, 401(k) plans, etc.). We have provided tax incentives for people to save for their children's college education (mostly state programs). So, why don't we provide a tax incentive to create a trust fund to be sure no one ends up in poverty? Or if we cannot get the legislature to do it, why don't we just do it in the private sector?

We can. Trusteeship Institute has developed a program called Trust for All Children. A private sector activity - which could, of course, be greatly enhanced by tax incentives, it assists any group of people - a group of friends, a church, a business, a town, etc. - to create a trust fund for each child born into the group at its birth. This is the time when people are most prone to want to be helpful to a child.

A committee is created in the group. When a baby is born, it asks friends and family and others in the group to loan (they can chose the interest rate between 0 and 3%) or to donate (it is a tax deductible contribution) money to create an \$11,000 trust fund for the child in Trust for All Children (TFAC). TRAC is a public charity dedicated to ending poverty through the creation for trust funds for poor children around the world. \$10,000 is for the trust fund for the child in the USA and \$1,000 is for another baby in a third world country. So the trust fund will be creating a trust for two babies - the \$1,000 being the purchasing power of approximately \$10,000 in many Third World countries. The capital is invested in socially responsible stocks and bonds.

Assuming an average return of 13%, and the whole \$11,000 being borrowed at 3%, it would be possible to repay the loans plus interest in one payment at the end of 7 years and have \$11,000 left in the trust fund. From this point forward, 25% of the net profit each year would be loaned at 3% interest into a pool to create other trust funds for other children. Beginning in the twentieth year, 25% of the net profit each year would be distributed to the children from each trust (the \$10,000 and \$1,000 trusts). Beginning in the 30th year, 50% of the net profit would be distributed to the children. Upon death, the balance in the trust would go into the pool to be loaned at 3% interest to create trusts for other children. Assuming the average return of 13% a year on the trust investments, and that there will be 11 billion people on the planet, at the end of 80 some years every person would have a trust fund.

Now the income would not be sufficient to keep anyone fully out of poverty, but it would begin to create a floor beneath which poverty could not go. Once everyone had a trust fund, the additional funds into the program as people die would be added to the pool to increase the size of all the trusts.

What is important about beginning such a program is not the goal of creating all those trusts. Its is to provide the world with the vision that it is possible. Once this occurs, pressure will be put on legislatures to provide the tax incentives which would greatly speed up the growth of the program. And there is nothing that would be better for the environment, for ending crime, for stimulating economic activity, and peace in our hearts then ending poverty on our planet. And, of course, with nearly half the planet in or close to poverty, it is the best thing we could do for our fellow human members of this planet.

A Re-villaging of Our Lives With a Recognition of Stages of Maturity of Being a Human Being and a System of Eldering People Up Those Stages

That is, for sure, a mouth full. Not just of words but of ideas. However, there is probably nothing that is more important to make all the other things we want to see happen able to emerge.

There are stages of maturity of all things in nature. There are stages of maturity of learning to walk, of running a business, of understanding live. There are also stages of maturity of beliefs.

Remember when you thought the opposite sex was something to throw rocks at? Remember when you thought money was something to get to buy candy? We all grow and change as we grow. There are stages in our growth. That is, there are distinct times when we jump to another level.

For instance, when we were all babies we did not understand time. We only understood differences - milk or no milk. Later we learned about time and space, about waiting and sharing. Here is another example: there was a time when we all thought doing things the way we wanted to do them was the only thing important. Then we learned that there was something called “relationships with other people” and we became concerned with choosing ways of doing things that worked for others as well as just for ourselves. These are graduations in stages of maturity.

In most mature cultures throughout history, the conversation about the stages of maturity was the most important on-going conversation in the society. There is little to no conversation about stages of maturity in our modern 2001 USA. Why was it so important to mature cultures?

I believe it was because it moved the mind from the two-dimensional thinking pattern into the more mature level of three-dimensional thinking. Let me explain.

As we grow we go through stages of mental patterns which limit the range of possible beliefs. As a young child we only can identify differences - milk or no milk. We are not aware of time and, therefore, cannot wait until others around the table get milk before we do. Eventually we discover that there is one difference that is more important than all the others, one difference that is a context for all the others. It is time. We end up loving stories because

there is a beginning, middle, and end - being in time is on the cutting edge of our maturation process so it is the place of the greatest feeling of fulfillment.

“Differences” and “time” make up a two dimensional mental framework - a two dimensional coat rack upon which we hang all of our thoughts.

Anything that will not fit into a two dimensional construct will be rejected as naïve either because it is immature or idealistic. Our two dimensional way of looking at things, we believe, is the only right way to look at things. This is natural. Whatever stage of maturity we are on is assumed to be the highest stage of maturity because it is the highest one we know. If we knew of a higher one and truly believed it was a higher one, we would be there already.

Most of our society today is using this two dimensional (2D) coat rack upon which we hang our thoughts and beliefs. It limits us to what will fit into a two dimensional world. However, there is three dimensional thinking and there is even four dimensional thinking. Each is a stage or two more mature than 2D thinking and allows for more complex and subtle and, therefore, more fulfilling beliefs. Each is a stage of maturity of mind.

The reason mature societies throughout history have had the discussion of stages of maturity be the most important on-going conversation is because it necessitated 3D thinking. In 2D thinking we are always trying to balance opposites because they are seen as separate in time and space - for instance, the interests of the individual and the interests of society. In 3D thinking, they are seen as parts of one another, one is seen as inside the other. This is because the three dimensions are 1) differences, which are in the context of time, 2) time which is in the context of all time (oneness), and 3) oneness.

In time we can eliminate things because we are choosing to focus on this and ignore that. In oneness we realize that everything is here whether or not we are focused upon it. Nothing can be eliminated from the equations of reality. The assumption for how things work inside our body (all things are cooperating for the good of the one whole) is discovered to be the correct fundamental assumption about all of reality - it is one whole. Competition becomes seen as a lower “form” of cooperation. Compromise is seen as a higher form, and agreement as an even more mature form of cooperation.

This means that rather than finding balance between two opposites we must find the right relationship between them. This usually means that one is a subset of the other - one is a bigger whole and the other is a part. Once this

relationship of priorities is identified, then something remarkable becomes discovered: it is not only possible to do both 100% at the same time it is also possible to achieve a higher state of fulfillment in each when relating to them in this way. Right relationship results in the sum being greater than the parts: synthesis.

For instance, capitalism is based on giving priority to the interests of the individual in the two dimensional thinking of balancing the interests of the individual and the group. Communism and socialism give priority to the interests of the group as the best way to create a balance between the two. The next stage of economic maturity after capitalism and communism-socialism will reflect the recognition of the third dimension of mind called “oneness” and will find the right relationship of priorities between the two. Seeing the universe as one thing, the good of all will be given priority...but it will do so in a way that will enhance, not limit, individual freedom!

If the universe is one thing, then all things in nature give priority to the good of all at all times and about that they have no choice. That is nature. Humans can, if operating at the level of 2D thinking, choose to give priority to their own self-interests over the good of all but they will not be able to sustain being as happy doing this as they would be if they gave priority to the good of all. Giving priority to the good of all is a more mature alignment of one’s thinking with nature. Morality, therefore, is natural and effortless as one matures.

When the main on-going conversation in a society is identifying the stages of maturity, and eldering people up them to the degree they are willing to be eldered, the society is operating in a three dimensional pattern of mind. They have eliminated the conflict between the interests of the individual and society.

There is nothing that can be more fulfilling for the individual than to learn to operate at higher stages of maturity. There is also nothing that could be better for society then to have every person operating at high levels of maturity. By giving priority to this focus, they are doing more than meeting the interests of both the individual and the society 100%. They are enhancing both in the experience of the individual because he or she is now operating at a higher level of maturity of mind. Therefore, a person is able to experience reality at a more subtle and complex level and is more in alignment with nature in choice of actions with less conflict. The result is the

person experiences greater feelings of personal fulfillment. This is why old people almost never want to go back to being a younger age. There is nothing more enjoyable than wisdom.

If this is so, how do we re-create this focus in our lives? How do we move up to a 3D way of thinking?

We certainly can each think it through and figure it out on our own. Most of us will have no choice but to do that - by attending the lonely school of hard knocks. But once we discover these truths we immediately want to make life easier for our children, younger friends, and those who come after us. And parents have too many roles to also play the elder initiating children through these stages of maturity. That is one of the reasons people have created close relationships with others, called clans or tribes or villages or communities. It allows for many joys and efficiencies, but it also allows for a system of elders and initiations into higher stages of maturity.

Re-creating this in our splintered, mass media lives will be very difficult, but as parents come to see the importance of this to their children, they will seek to do so.

This is often one of the things parents are looking for when they join a church, especially after having children. Few churches today give primary focus to identifying the stages of maturity and eldering the children up those stages. But as this discussion widens, churches will probably be one of the first institutions to give this priority once again because that I believe it will be one of the main things parents are looking for when they join churches.

I suggest people join together into groups of friends for this purpose, perhaps as a subset of a church. They could meet periodically for the purpose of discussing what they think are the stages of maturity and then identify when the right time is to introduce it to their children...as well as to help each other grow to operate at the higher stages. There is no way we will become at choice of what stage of maturity we want to operate upon if we are not even having the conversation about what the stages might be.

For the last 19 years my wife and I have been part of a community we created together of 80 adults and 43 children that have been learning how to re-village our lives in a modern context. We have also conducted a number

of initiations of our teenagers into membership in the adult community. It has been a most edifying experience for all.

There are many theories about stages of maturity. What is more important than which one a group uses is that it enter into the conversation about what they believe the stages are. This will automatically take their minds from 2D thinking into 3D thinking, the next higher stage of maturity of mind. All else will reveal itself as the sincere search for truth continues in the group.

I am currently writing a book on this topic called, **The 7 Stages of Maturity and the Trusteeship Evolution**. Once the book is published, our plan at Trusteeship Institute is to create a weekend training to introduce people to the experience of the stages of maturity we have identified and to assist them to identify the stages of maturity they believe are real. Secondly, we will assist them in the creation of Trusteeship Communities with their friends and neighbors for the purpose of continuing to re-village their lives in a modern context. Finally, we will encourage them to take on specific projects in their communities that are in service to the good of us all, such as launching one of the other three programs mentioned in this paper.

A Consensus Democracy Movement

Thirdly, there is not a global democracy. There are not global unions. But there are global corporations. Clearly they need to be matched with a global democracy and a global labor movement or the equivalent. Without this the balance of interests is greatly skewed toward the interests of a few at the expense of the many.

By the law of the marketplace, Wall Street, and the courts, multinational corporations must give priority to the interests of a few, called “the shareholders.” Now since the shareholders are mostly very dispersed and focused on other things, and are also one step removed from operations and focused primarily on their financial return, the “interests of the shareholders” is often a euphemism for “the interests of top management” - an even smaller few people. Even if Jesus Christ or Buddha was the CEO of a publicly traded, multinational corporation, he would still have to give priority to the good of the few at the expense of the many or lose his job. It is the current nature of the contracts among the parties involved.

With the industrial nations moving away from military competition and into a focus on economic competition - thank God! - the multinational corporations are the most powerful organizations on the planet. They greatly effect what happens in the legislators of the nations and in the international agencies such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and the World Bank.

I do not think we want a planet where the most powerful organizations give priority to the interests of a few at the expense of the good of the many. The entire democracy movement of the last hundreds of years has been focused upon making sure this does not happen and yet here it is happening again. So what do we do about it?

First, we must create a global democratic governance system. Obviously, the current democratic governance system is not working because look where we are - with the same old problem described above. A new democratic governance system must be different in two ways. First, where freedom of association is allowed it must be possible for people to participate without the need of permission or legislation. Secondly, this new democratic process must move beyond the majoritarian democratic systems that are currently prevalent to the more mature consensus democratic model.

The majoritarian democracy system is based on polarizing, competition, and the group that gets the most votes being able to take the lead. Now, I know what you are thinking, "Consensus democracy is impossible? No two people agree on anything!" I do not agree. It depends where we give the priority of our focus.

There are many things upon which we all agree. We all agree the Earth is round, not flat. We all agree that language is a better way of communicating than grunts. We all agree that babies need protection from dangers. I could go on and on. We live in a culture that focuses our attention on the places where we disagree. We could create a culture that focuses on the places where we agree. In fact, we are actually living in a culture where agreements are already given priority as the context for our disagreements. For instance, without agreeing to use language we could not be communicating about our disagreements. We just tend to focus on the places where we disagree which causes us to not notice this.

The task of a consensus democracy movement would be to reverse this set of priorities. It would be to give priority to building a larger and larger context of agreements around our differences.

Our differences would still exist and even be celebrated as the adventures of individuals that are in pursuit of truth. But truth would also be recognized as something we could all eventually agree upon because there is a truth. The Earth is, indeed, round, not flat. Language is a more mature way of communicating than grunts. Our entire world of science is based upon the assumption that there is a truth - there are ways the world works and ways it does not work - that can be identified.

Mohandas Gandhi, the man who led the Indian nation to independence from England, saw the need for this new form of democracy. The last couple years of his life he dropped everything he could drop, moved back to a village, and began to create this new consensus democratic system. Sadly, he was assassinated before he got very far into this process.

Equally sad, 25 years later a man named Jayprakash Naryan built an entire movement throughout India based on Gandhi's idea which got seduced back into the majoritarian democracy world. The consensus democracy organization he originally built in villages throughout India was so strong, however, that when it was converted into a political party it was able to put up candidates and defeat Indira Gandhi in the 1975 elections with only a couple months lead time. That is how strong the consensus democracy movement had become in the minds of Indians. Of course, once in the majoritarian democracy world the political party that was created became caught up in the slings and arrows of competition and slander to win races and no longer exists. Jayprakash Naryan, known as the Second Father of India, said on his death bed that it had been a mistake to have converted the consensus democratic movement into a political party to win one election.

So the first thing I believe the world needs now is to pick up where Gandhi and Naryan left off. We need to build a consensus democratic movement.

Now the nice thing about it is that it will not need the approval of anyone in any nation where freedom of association is allowed. It can be created as a non-profit organization which has no official power. In fact, the fact that it has no official power will be its greatest power! Its power will, therefore, be

the power of attraction rather than force because it will have no ability to apply force. And the power of attraction is the greater power.

This is how it would work, much as Gandhi originally designed it.

In any geographic area, for instance a town, the prominent affinity groups would be identified - the churches, the businesses, the non-profit associations, etc. The group that takes responsibility for creating what we will call the “Common Sense Community” for the town, will go to each of these affinity groups and ask that they choose their senior, most wise and respected member through whatever process they choose to serve as their representative in the Common Sense Community (CSC). These representatives will meet as often as they chose to deal with any issue which emerges within the community that they decide to discuss.

The focus will be upon finding as much agreement as possible while not denying where there are disagreements. The goal is to continually be building a large and large context of agreement around the places where there are disagreements.

The commitment will also be to find truth together and then agreements based on these truths. The motto of the CSC could be:

The Common Sense Community Beginning Agreement

We will create a larger and larger context of agreement in our community around a recognition of our differences so we can live together in greater and greater peace.

We know there is only one truth about the operations of nature and we join together in an honest and open search to agree upon what they are while recognizing also that there is an infinite variety of ways to give these truths expression.

We recognize that given the differing levels of maturity of our community members and the uniqueness of our situation, what we will agree upon will differ from time to time.

We will engage in this consensus democracy while protecting the freedom of each individual to chart his or her own unique route to the discovery of truth in all areas.

This local CSC will be the equivalent of a parallel government. It will have no constituted legal power. Gandhi's expectation was that as the CSC came to receive respect from all in the community because it was bringing everyone together into a more cooperative, healthy pattern, people would slowly evolve to where they gave greater priority to the views of the CSC over those of the majoritarian democratic system. The result would be a non-violent and evolutionary process to where the consensus democracy would be more powerful than the majoritarian democracy. Elected officials would be very hesitant to cast votes that were not going in the direction where the community was clearly in agreement. To the degree it actually succeeded at its task, the consensus democracy would increasingly be seen as guided by the wise elders in the community who were genuinely, directly, and astutely giving priority to the good of all rather than a few.

Such a consensus democratic movement could currently be created in communities all over the world. It could also be created in associations, businesses, and many other organizations. All of these CSCs could send representatives to state, national, and international federations. Together they could become a force on the planet that gives priority to the good of all rather than a few. It could all be done as a non-profit, educational activity and receive tax-deductible contributions to cover its costs.

The only people who will not be allowed to be representatives on the CSC Board will be anyone involved in electoral politics. The reason Gandhi made this a stipulation is quite obvious. People involved in electoral politics are playing an opposite game. They are seeking avenues to gain power by amassing a majority in support of them rather than another person. The result would be that they would naturally give priority to this activity over the building of a consensus. This would result in them using the CSC to distinguish themselves from their opponents rather than identifying the many places where there is agreement. This needs to be judiciously attended to because once the CSC receives respect, the majoritarian democratic process will seek to use it for its own ends. This was what brought an end to Naryan's effort in the 1970s in India.

A Trusteeship Capital Movement

Finally, as I said in the first paragraphs of the last section, I do not think we want a planet where the highest priority of its most powerful organizations is the good of a few. This means we need to create a new financial and

economic sector where the highest priority in the contracts with others is the good of all, not of a few. What are the legal and financial structures which will allow this? I have written a paper on this subject, *What Will Be the Next Stage of Economic Maturity After Capitalism?*, and will only summarize some of its thoughts here.

First, the clearly stated highest priority must be the good of all in all directions at all times within the context of 3D thinking. In other words, this is chosen as the priority because it is a more mature way of thinking and enhances the fulfillment of the individual to a greater extent than if the priority was the interests of the individuals.

Secondly, whenever possible companies do not issue publicly traded common stock because the rules of the stock market demand that the interests of the few be given priority. If they do need to issue publicly traded stock, they will only issue 49% or less so they will not be vulnerable to the rules of the stock market. They must also and make sure the 51% is in hands that are clearly committed to the good of all.

Where possible, rather than issue common stock they will issue preferred shares with a variable rate of return. This provides one of the main benefits of common stock - it is not necessary to pay a return in any one year. Then the goal would be to provide a return of an average of 12% a year which is above the historical average performance of the stock market (11%) and substantially above the average performance of bonds (7%). Then it would retire the preferred shares as soon as practically possible.

Preferably the common stock of the company would be owned by a non-profit which would have seasoned elders on it who are very adept at giving priority to the good of all, especially in a business context. This would be this non-profit board's sole responsibility. The board and management of the business company would be responsible for running the business with the good of all as its priority. It would also be committed to never selling the business unless it was absolutely necessary.

The goal would be to build a larger and larger "trusteeship economy" sector - "trusteeship" was the word Mahatma Gandhi used to describe an economic community where the good of all was the highest priority. Gandhi, recognizing the oneness of all things, saw a person as the trustee of the knowledge and wealth he or she possessed, not the owner, and was

responsible for managing it for the good of all. How much the person kept for himself or herself had to be up to the person because oneness was built on freedom, it did not limit it. Once one has freedom one soon matures into understanding oneness and voluntarily shifts into giving priority to the good of all.

Current multinational corporations could not easily convert to such a system. To give priority to the good of all in all directions over the interests of the shareholders financial interests would be a breach of contract. It will be necessary for the trusteeship sector to either out compete those in the capitalist sector or buy them out and convert them. So this will not be an easy process. But it will occur because it is the next level of maturity after capitalism - the giving of priority to the good of all over the good of the few. The name we have given to this next stage of maturity is "trusteeship," but we have no idea at this time what the common name will be.

We must all dream of the day when competition in the marketplace is taking place based on who the consumer believes is acting in the best interests of the good of all. When all have sufficient income, when all live in wholesome communities where there are respected elders and initiations, when the consensus democracy is given priority over the majoritarian democracy in the search for greater agreement on truth, and when most of the largest companies are trusteeship corporations, we will be living in a society based on the stages of maturity beyond 2D thinking.

Remember, there was a day when all thought the world was flat. Now nearly all think the world is round. Today we live in a world where most people think it is mature to give priority to their own self-interests. Someday all will believe oneness is the correct fundamental assumption about reality and they will freely give priority to the good of all. It will happen. I believe that launching the above four programs will lead us in this direction.

Personal fulfillment comes from being on the cutting edge of ones own maturation process. For those of us who understand the thinking in this paper and agree with it, launching these four programs, and others that are taking us from the world of two dimensional thinking into the world of three dimensional thinking, will be one of the most enjoyable ways we will find personal fulfillment in our lives at this time.