



## **In Search of Islands of Sanity:<sup>\*</sup> “To the Barricades”**

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### **Abstract**

*The need for paradigm shifts in business, politics, and economics is discussed in many places in the world with little apparent impact on what actually happens. The article posits that the changes called for are fully a matter of the mental and moral qualities that distinguish a leader of character. The author observes that good ideas and new methods alone are not enough. Albert Einstein’s formulation of  $E$  equals  $MC^2$  is taken as a metaphor for revealing new insights and engaging with concepts that are beyond our intellectual grasp in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this regard, “human mutuality,” the speed with which people feel connected in an immediate and positive way, is taken as the equivalent of the speed of light in Einstein’s equation. Just as enormous nuclear energy is released by accelerating the speed of light, we predict that enormous energy expansion in human affairs will come from deliberate efforts and projects to accelerate the speed of human mutuality. From this insight, pragmatic pathways are introduced to create character based, paradigm shifting leadership in business, government and community.*

*The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.*

**– Robert Frost**

### **1. The Capacity to lead depends on Mental and Moral Qualities**

*“All prevailing forms of governance in democracies and non-democracies are increasingly ‘dead ends’..., radical [re]design of governance is required, otherwise increasing social costs, ever threatening failures, even to existence are unavoidable... At best, markets are well-suited for delivery service functions. They are not suited for being in charge of and shaping critical future choices.”*

**– Yehzekel Dror<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>†</sup> Charles E Smith, PhD, *The Merlin Factor: Leadership and Strategic Intent*, reprinted from *Business Strategy Review*, Oxford University Press, 1994 and in *The Library of Professional Coaching*.

The conclusion, stated unequivocally, is that good ideas and new methods will make no difference. ***"The changes called for are fully a matter of the mental and moral qualities that distinguish a leader of character."***

Consider that whatever the structure, whether government or corporate, fixing the system doesn't reliably help relationships that are broken down. What helps is *"a matter of the mental and moral qualities distinctive to a leader."*

## **2. From a friend at the recent women's march in Washington:**

*"Susan and I just got back from the Women's March in Washington. We were right in the middle of it all day and couldn't move. We had the sense that we were in a crowd that was way over the 200,000 expected and coming home found out that it was half a million women and men and kids and everybody! It's so great to get home and find out that it's been a global event.*

*It's one thing to be there in the middle of it. It's a whole other thing to get the overview of how huge and amazing it is! It's restoring my faith in just about everything, but mostly the possibility of values-driven relationships in business and society."*

The long-term goal is an economic system based on Human Mutuality. Existing and historical economic systems have always ended up in oligarchy, injustice, inequity, excessive regulation, and the treatment of human beings primarily as consumers, producers, or objects to be used. Free market entrepreneurship is most desirable and legitimate inside a context of Mutuality.

## **3. What's the problem?**

*"Our modern educational systems fail to provide sufficient education about compassion. The time has come to transform this whole system. Society is formed through its educational system, but the educational system does not transmit the deeper human values of compassion and kindness. Then all of society lives with this false view that leads to a superficial life, in which we live like machines that don't need affection.*

*We become part of that. We become like machines. That is because today's society is based on money. A society that is based on money is aggressive, and those with power can bully and behave cruelly to others. This situation produces growing social unrest. A society that depends on money has problems that reflect its beliefs."*

**– The Dalai Lama\***

After 50 years of Organization Development coaching, consulting and training of high level leaders in companies and government agencies, it is my opinion that the quality, mental and moral character of leadership is normally distributed, with 20% at the bottom, 20% at the top, and the rest somewhere in the middle. Sometimes, I think this comes from the fact that the professional and financial success of senior leaders comes from paying attention to

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\*Adapted from Noriyuki Ueda, [The Dalai Lama on What Matters Most: Conversations on Anger, Compassion, and Action](#) Reprinted with permission from Hampton Roads Publishing, 2013.

strategy, growth, structure, cost, quality, schedule, and profit. Attention to the humanity of human beings is subsumed within that primary role.

Some of the finest people and talents I have known are CEOs, Presidents, VPs and Managing Directors of corporations, and heads of government agencies. I am also aware that Oxford researcher and psychologist Dr. Kevin Dutton found that, “*CEO is the profession with the most psychopaths.*”<sup>2</sup> Early in my career, a wise consultant in a global consumer goods company told me, “*The only way to explain what really goes on here is that it’s all designed to keep the people in power.*”

At this point, I do not think so much about why things are the way they are, but focus on what it is going to take to have business and government operate successfully, consistent with the ways human beings really are.

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*“Just as  $E=mc^2$  brought a revolutionary shift to physics, we need a shift of similar power with respect to economic systems that favor elites and few others.”*

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#### 4. Einstein and $E=mc^2$ as a Metaphor

*“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”*

**– Albert Einstein**

Fr. Richard Rohr\* distinguishes “metaphor” as a way of revealing new insights and engaging with concepts that are beyond our intellectual grasp. He goes further in saying that many of the Christian “mysteries” such as the Trinity are designed as metaphors to encourage us to engage with them by exploring possible meanings and intentions, rather than attempting to work out the actual substance of the idea or even believe in something we don’t understand.

Einstein’s  $E=mc^2$  (which mathematically defines the relationship between energy, mass and the speed of light), as such a metaphor, can give a perspective into how the rapid connectivity of masses of like-minded people towards a particular aspect of society or organization can release enormous energy for changing or even transforming the current state of affairs, or society’s relationship with a specific commonly accepted practice.

Just as  $E=mc^2$  brought a revolutionary shift to physics, we need a shift of similar power with respect to economic systems that favor elites and few others. Some see  $E=mc^2$  as, “a metaphor for creating *Islands of Sanity* in the way economics, individuals and leaders in business, government and community operate and manage conflict in today’s world.”

If Einstein’s  $E=mc^2$  represents a sophisticated product of collective endeavor over time..., *why should its potential as a pattern of connectivity not be otherwise explored? If*

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\*See Fr. Richard Rohr, [Center for Action & Contemplation](#), [The Art of Letting Go](#).

$E=mc^2$  is to be considered a fundamental pattern of great generality, is there then not a case for exploring the extent to which it implies a pattern of even greater generality? A new way of operating in economics and business could come about, with the same predictability and impact that follows Einstein's formula.

## 5. What If?

If, in an economic, business, or any relational system, energy expansion is to be considered a new bottom line, following the  $E=mc^2$  metaphor, the available Energy in the system would equal Mass (the number of people involved), times "Human Mutuality" (the equivalent of the speed of light squared).

(In the moment of contact, this experience of mutuality happens instantly, much as Richard Bach said in Jonathan Livingston Seagull; "*Perfect Speed is Being There.*")

This is testable if you believe that policy is best set based on what is good for the system *and its people, as a whole*. It is also mortally threatening if you believe the system is *primarily* intended to serve those who control its most valued resources and structures (e.g. money, power, rewards, promotions, security, etc.).

Just as the "Manhattan Project" used Einstein's formula to invent the atomic bomb, we need to invent ways of accelerating Human Mutuality before transactional, hierarchical, oligarchic or bureaucratic forces suppress or eliminate the human species, environmentally, socially, spiritually, and economically.

## 6. Islands of Sanity: Acceleration of Human Mutuality

**THE LONDON BLITZ.** In 1940, Adolf Hitler ordered the German Air Force, the Luftwaffe, to bomb London and other British cities into submission. For fifty-seven nights, the city was bombarded; buildings were shattered, homes destroyed, men, women and children killed. Civilian morale: With the inspiration of Sir Winston Churchill, the people of London refused to crack, refused to give in. His June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1940 speech was a rallying cry and clarion call for heroic, noble action and a proud acknowledgement of what had been achieved in the aerial Battle of Britain. It also transformed the city and country from a defensive mode to one of commitment to a great future:

*"We shall go on to the end.  
we shall fight in France,  
we shall fight on the seas and oceans,  
we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air;  
we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be,  
we shall fight on the beaches,  
we shall fight on the landing grounds,  
we shall fight in the fields and in the streets,  
we shall fight in the hills.  
We shall never surrender."*

This was Britain's finest hour.

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\* See Anthony Judge, [Union of International Associations](http://UnionofInternationalAssociations.com), [Kairos @ Laetus-in-Praesens.org](mailto:Kairos@Laetus-in-Praesens.org).

**LANDING ON THE MOON.** When Astronauts landed on the moon in 1969, peoples' spirits everywhere uplifted as if we were of one heart. In that moment, celebration, wonder and mutuality happened at once, across the planet. The accomplishment belonged to everyone. The "Cold War" context of competition in a "Space Race" between East and West briefly became a global project for Mankind and the Human Race as a whole, to pioneer into the Universe. Astronaut Neil Armstrong's quote, "*One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind,*" captured this beautifully—he didn't say "*America First.*"

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*"How can Conscious Leadership enable Human Mutuality and high performance without threat, personal, or hierarchical force?"*

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**NELSON MANDELA.** On February 11, 1990, South African President Frederik Willem de Klerk freed anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela, who had spent 27 years in prison. In one step of forgiveness towards those who had brutally oppressed blacks and coloreds, including himself and his wife, Mandela created, with an authority way stronger than the political change that had occurred, the conversion of a black and white South Africa to One Nation of Africans. The vocal support and attendance by Mandela and thousands of black Africans at the Rugby game between the African Rugby team (The Springboks—hitherto a bastion of Apartheid), and the New Zealand All Blacks was an amazing example of this transformation in action (brilliantly depicted in the movie "Invictus" directed by Clint Eastwood).

**THE MARSHALL PLAN.** In World War II, the allies devastated parts of Europe in intensive bombing raids and street to street fighting, with scant concern for human life. After the war, American General George Marshall proposed a compassionate and generous plan to help Germany and other nations rebuild their infrastructures and social systems. This shifted the relationships and contacts between the countries from unconditional surrender and killing to an atmosphere of caring and contribution. This counterintuitive act created mutuality that has lasted for decades, a miraculous change that was a gift of humanity embracing countless people in the act of giving.

## **7. Consciousness is the gateway to Human Mutuality & High Performance**

Consciousness is the state of being awake and aware of one's surroundings. Each of these prominent, dramatic events caused an explosion of Human Mutuality by dramatically expanding consciousness, in individuals and across large groups of people.

Clearly, crisis can induce the experience of Human Mutuality, as can the wonder of collective accomplishment. How then to accelerate Human Mutuality without burning down the house, starting a war, telling lies or inducing crises one way or another?

30-year astronaut Story Musgrave, team leader of the amazingly successful Hubble Telescope repair, says that the extraordinary results produced by NASA teams is a product of integrating mission nobility and transcendence with systematic and exhaustive performance checklists.

The questions are,

“What is Conscious Leadership?” and,

“How can Conscious Leadership enable Human Mutuality and high performance without threat, personal, or hierarchical force?”

## 8. Ten Steps to Conscious Leadership

### 1. **Only Action Causes Results: “To the Barricades”**

Barricades are defensive barriers hastily constructed, as in a street, to stop an oncoming enemy. Imagine massive, continuing demonstrations for Human Mutuality, for the Divine Truth that people and life itself are more important than money.

### 2. **Declare that *Relationality*, the way people are connected, the way they are ‘being’ with themselves and each other, is both sacred and the best foundation of sustainable accomplishment.**

Relationality, relationship itself, is the non-linear Quantum Space that needs to become the essence of Evolutionary Activism. Nelson Mandela, when he became President of South Africa, insisted that racist enemies who had imprisoned him for 27 years be part of a collaborative dialogue. Anything less is simply moving deck chairs on the Titanic.

### 3. **Establish Measurable High-Performance and Transcendent Noble Purpose as dual leadership practices for work and governance.**

Many people with noble purpose seem too soft and flaky. Many with pragmatic and measured purpose seem crass and lacking nobility. Conscious Leadership accepts and integrates the paradox of noble and transcendent purpose with the highest performance standards.

### 4. **Practice Overview Consciousness**

Overview Consciousness appreciates that *the whole of a situation is greater than the sum of its parts*. Upon breaking free of Earth’s gravity and going to space, some astronauts experienced a surprising change in their perspective of life on Earth, named *The Overview Effect*<sup>3,4</sup> by author Frank White. Just as the astronauts achieved escape velocity and saw the Earth anew, it is possible for many here on Earth to break free of the gravity of circumstances that keep them from going for their dreams with courage and conviction.

### 5. **Be Aware of Relational Identity**

Relational Identity is the identity of “*Us*”, the consciousness of “*Us*”, and an element of Conscious Leadership more powerful than “*me and you*” or “*me or you*”. When people feel certainty that, “*We are in this together,*” a positive future becomes more possible.

In 1941, Alfred Korzybski<sup>4</sup> wrote of the necessity for us to change our language from the subject-object framework introduced about 350 BC by Aristotle, which enables and limits what we are able to think and do, even today. He proposes a new ‘General Semantic’ which is non-Aristotelian and is Relationship based. Korzybski’s chart

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\* See OVERVIEW, a film by Planetary Collective on Vimeo, 2012.

(Appendix I) compares Aristotelian subject-object language with non-Aristotelian Relational language.

It is up to us to take his definitions and invent practical usage.

#### 6. **The Merlin Factor/Present Future Singularity**

*The Merlin Factor* is the practice of imagining the future, locating one's mind in that future, and planning backwards to the present moment. It asks us to start thinking *from* the future and building bridges back from that. Consider that the Present and the Future are a Singularity; at any moment, there is only one thing going on—the 'Present-Future.' This proposes that the best predictor of a company's future, a team's future, a person's future, is how they are being, what they are doing, and what they are avoiding, right now.

#### 7. **Maintain Energetic Awareness**

*Energy Flows Where the Attention goes.*

- Can you see that you or a group's energy level predicts success far more than good ideas?
- Do you pay attention to peoples' energy level or to the content subject at hand?
- Does referring to mental concepts rather than your sensory experience keep you stuck?
- Is there high/ low energy and vitality in the person or the group?
- When you look at your own energy, is your 'gas tank' full, almost full, or half-empty?
- What would raise energy in you or with others?

#### 8. **Transmit Conversational Energy**

Organizations with the most connectivity will prevail. Conversational Energy creates connectivity; it is alive. Conversations that Matter<sup>5</sup> get people's attention. More than dead words, they are magnetic. The vibrational aliveness is what connects people instantly. The vibrational aliveness connects me to a wondrous sunset or my son's enthusiasm.

Conversational Energy does not require words. It cannot come from a PowerPoint without the vitality of images, music and heartfelt speaking. Conversational Energy is nonlinear and not simply subjects, objects and verbs. Conversational Energy has intention and flow. It doesn't merely transmit information; it gives context, meaning, and mutuality.

#### 9. **Practice Disvergence**

*Disvergence* is awareness of your freedom to move from 'pedal to the metal' *Convergence* (i.e. linear thinking, focused, on purpose, clear action), to *Divergence* (Quantum Mind,<sup>6</sup> paying attention to opposites, confusions, uncertainties).

*Disvergence* is knowing when you are stuck in 'flow' and non-linear possibility thinking, and that you may have gone too far and it's time to converge and focus, AND vice versa. The practice is to be able to move from linear thinking to quantum thinking at will.

## 10. Listen From the Heart

*The practice is to speak and listen from your heart, and for others to listen.* The result is almost always an evocative physical presence that provokes and enables an energetic transformation, first within each speaker and then somehow, within the listeners. The energetics of the relationships, and the relational identity of all, moves from “me to we.”

Vibrational energy literally shifts; willingness to cooperate expands, as does a sense of open possibility. The impact moves beyond the mental, to the level of ‘heart and gut’, as the sense/sensation within the room moves from the experience of “me as an individual” to the experience of “the potentials of *us*”, as a couple or a team, which holds an opportunity to bring forth what has never existed before.

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*“We must stand in the way of those who fail to meet our needs, and demand that they hold themselves to a higher standard. Only such perseverance will save the Earth and all the peoples on it from becoming a 21<sup>st</sup> century Titanic, a failed experiment in the glorious potential of humanity.”*

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## 9. Visible Action

*Analysis, good ideas, explanations and the force of will are not enough to change a paradigm.* Endless strategizing and theorizing do not lead to action that makes a desired difference. General Ulysses S. Grant said that, “Great strategy always follows action.”

What action can come from “Island of Sanity” thinking? What is now called for is activism, experiments, and Conscious Leadership for implementing paradigm-changing ideas, such as offered in this paper and by many others around the world. Anything less is like moving deck chairs on the Titanic.

Economics was originally defined in both Chinese and Korean as, “to take care of the world and save people.” Small and large groups of activists, disciples, and peaceful warriors devoted to this ideal can drive paradigm shifts and move companies, institutions and even governments substantially toward action based on energy expansion, and in service of the people and communities they impact.

In the past thirty years, the *Star Wars* movie series has helped create a cognitive shift in masses of people, without regard to background philosophies, ideologies, religions or cultures—a shift which appreciates a universal energy field reaching through all sentient life—*The Force*, that infuses and empowers those standing for justice and the good of all peoples, full of noble purpose, shared values and accomplishment. It decries the *Dark Side* of that energy field, which fights for domination, power, control, self-interest and greed.

This cognitive shift leaves us today with awareness of dissonance in everyday life, a dissonance that has people often feeling devalued and insignificant in deference to system



interests, economic interests and political interests not grounded in commitments to their well-being and the wellness of the surrounding world.

This awareness does not allow simply for complaint. It is proving to be a stimulus for broad discord, public dissent and political change..., from all sides of the energetic field. Those of us who aspire to be *With the Force* must find the courage and determination to bring espoused values to life in real world action that demonstrate their effectiveness, quality, benefit and mutuality for people of good will and the world in which we live.

Now is the time to create and require businesses, organizations, institutions and governments to represent these noble purposes and our highest values without compromise. We must stand in the way of those who fail to meet our needs, and demand that they hold themselves to a higher standard. Only such perseverance will save the Earth and all the peoples on it from becoming a 21<sup>st</sup> century Titanic, a failed experiment in the glorious potential of humanity.

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#### **Notes**

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4. Alfred Korzybski, *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics* (Fort Worth: Institute of General Semantics, 1995).
5. Charles E. Smith, "Conversations that Matter," *Eruditio* 2, no. 2(2016): 112-125.
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**Appendix I**

<b>Old Aristotelian Orientations (circa 350 B.C.)</b>	<b>New General Semantic Non-Aristotelian Orientations (1941 A.C.)</b>
Subject-predicate methods	Relational methods
Symmetrical relations, inadequate for proper evaluation	Asymmetrical relations, indispensable for proper evaluation
'Properties' of 'substance', 'attributes', 'qualities' of 'matter', etc.	Relative invariance of function, dynamic structure, etc.
Two-valued, 'either-or', inflexible, dogmatic orientations	Infinite-valued flexibility, degree orientations
By definition 'absolute sameness in 'all' respects, ('identity')	Empirical non-identity, a natural law as universal as gravitation
By definition 'absolute time'	Empirical space-time
Additive ('and'), linear	Functional, non-linear new factors
Eventual 'organism-as-a-whole', disregarding environmental factors	Organism-as-a-whole-in-environments, introducing new unavoidable factors
Two-valued causality, and so the 'final causation' hypothesis	Infinite-valued causality, where consequent 'final causation' is not needed
Avoiding empirical paradoxes	Facing empirical paradoxes