

Rescuing Elephants in the Living Room

***A slide show to be read online
where you can explore hyper-links of documentation***

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Summary

“Elephants in the Living Room” is a name used by family therapists for things, like an alcoholic father, that everyone sees, but acts as if they don’t. This PowerPoint essay surveys various types of “elephants” in the body politic needing to be seen clearly, talked about openly, and acted upon wisely if a benign transformation to ecological and societal sustainability and well-being is to be possible.

Part 1: Taking Stock of our Time maps where we are in the transition to sustainability (pp 3-13).

Part 2: Elephants in the Living Room describes a variety of “open secrets” needing attention (pp 14-28).

Part 3: Toward Rescuing the Elephants proposes a “Teach-In” to open things up for renewal and reform (pp 29-36).

Part 4: My own response proposes an “integral” activism needed at this time (pp 37-51).

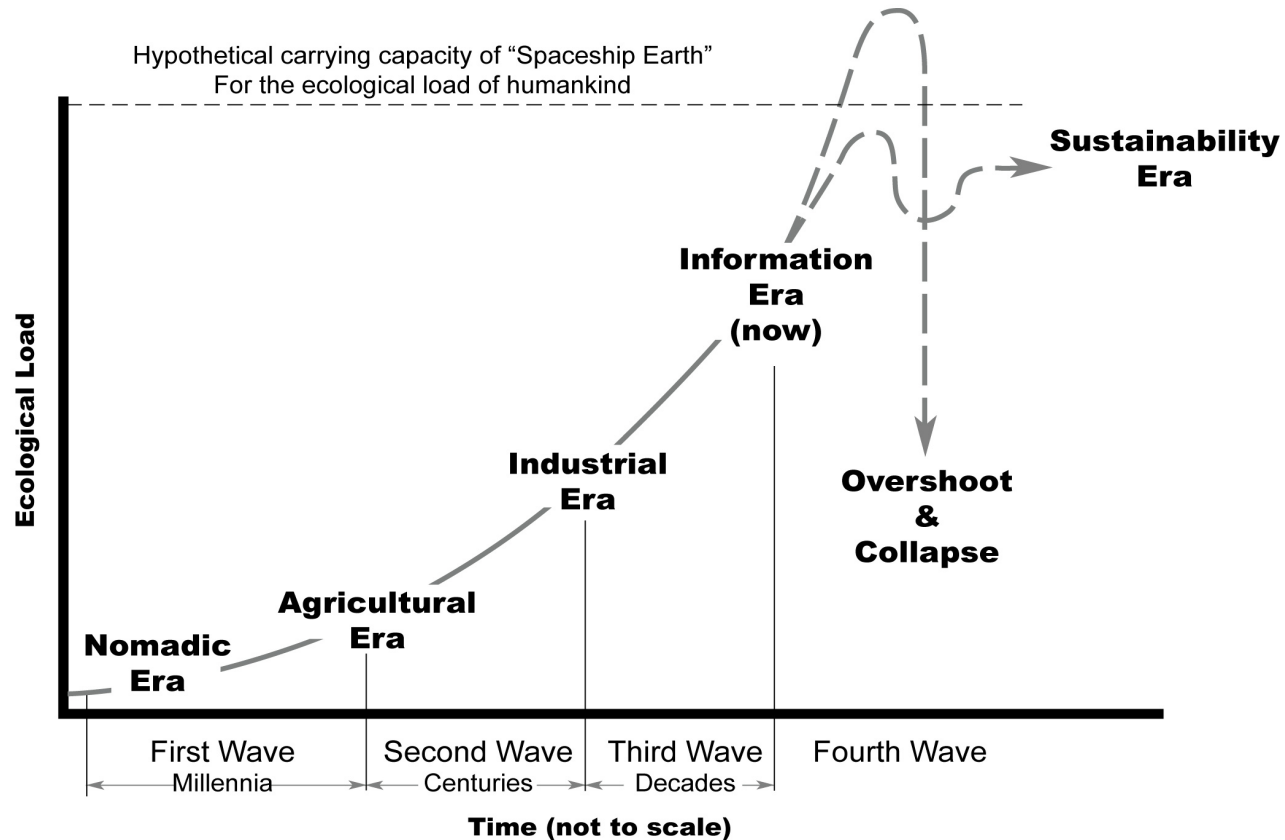
Because of the complexity of what is presented, readers may wish to scan through for a sense of the whole before reading in detail.

Part 1

Taking Stock of Our Time

What does a “high altitude” view reveal about our place in history?

Two Idealized Outcomes to the Threat of Overshooting the Carrying Capacity of “Spaceship Earth”



Source: “The Fourth Wave: A Normative Forecast for the Future of Spaceship Earth,” by O.W. Markley, posted online at www.inwardboundvisioning.com/Docs/SpaceShipEarth.htm

NOTE: This was drawn in 1995 before the current Ecological Load was estimated as approx.1.3 Earths

A Prophetic Observation

“When one species attains a position of dominance over all the other species in the ecology of its planet, if it is both egocentrically greedy, and has a powerful set of technologies through which to amplify the expression of that greed, then unless that dominant species can find a way to limit or to transform itself and its greed-based systems into something more wholesome, it will foul its planetary nest as surely as the night follows the day ... perhaps even to its own extinction.”

Source: “The Fourth Wave: A Normative Forecast for the Future of Spaceship Earth,”
by O.W. Markley, posted online at www.inwardboundvisioning.com/Docs/SpaceShipEarth.htm.

Summary of the Bad News AND THE GOOD NEWS

The following summary of Bad News and GOOD NEWS is directly quoted from *“Awakening the Dreamer, Creating the Dream, a Symposium on Sustainability”* sponsored by the Pachamama Alliance. As noted in the handout containing this summary:

“This is like a medical report on our Mother Earth—not easy to hear, but necessary in order to take corrective action. The facts that follow are based on a consensus of the world's leading scientists and experts. Documentation of sources can be found at www.Pachamama.org.”

THE BAD NEWS

- 1. SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENT - Have the material gains we enjoy (longer lives, more calories, more "things") really brought us fulfilling lives and increased happiness and a sense of meaning and purpose?***
 - The U.S. has the highest rates of mental illness in the world. Alcoholism, drug addiction, teenage suicide, and domestic abuse are rampant. - The use of sleeping pills is up 60% since 2000. We're serving junk culture to our kids (even news, politics, food, art, and education have become "entertainment"). We can't exactly measure the spiritual and emotional costs (worry, fear, anxiety, stress, sleeplessness, addictions, anger), but they fill our minds. We are even, at times, isolated and alienated from our own hearts.
- 2. Evidence for an ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS - Are we using resources faster than they can be renewed? And are we putting more toxins into the environment faster than they can be absorbed by the natural processes of the earth?***
 - Soil - Poor farming practices and overgrazing are causing massive loss of topsoil around the world. 40% of the globe's agricultural lands are degraded_ 20% are in danger of becoming deserts. Globally, we lose approximately 7% of our topsoil every decade. Over the last 200 years in the U.S., we've lost at least 25%, and in some areas, as much as 75% of the topsoil.

- Water - Our water usage is exceeding replenishable supplies. Rivers are receding and running dry. The Colorado, the Nile, and the Yellow River have such a reduced flow that they regularly do not reach the sea during parts of each year. We're over-pumping our aquifers, in some cases at rates 3-4 times the replenishment rates. In the U.S., the Ogallala Aquifer (the largest freshwater aquifer in the world) is depleted in parts of Texas and Kansas. It will likely cease to be productive within the next 40 years. Globally, nearly 2 billion people face water shortages around the world right now, and at current rates of overuse this number will double by 2025.
- Forests - Since the beginning of the Industrial Age almost 70% of our forests have been eliminated. In the last decade alone (the 1990s) we've lost 240 million acres of the Earth's forest cover, the greatest loss of any recent decade. 20% of the Amazon has already been cleared, and we continue to destroy rainforests on the planet *at the rate of a football field a second*.
- Fish stocks - Catches of edible fish in the oceans have plummeted dramatically. 90% of the total weight of the large predatory fish--the tuna, swordfish, sharks--the fish that live at the top of the food chain--have disappeared entirely from the planet.
- Petroleum (oil) availability - Our main source of energy (petroleum) is approaching its "peak," meaning the costs and effort required to produce energy will increase dramatically. Worldwide demand and consumption of energy is projected to continue increasing.

- Toxins in the environment - As toxins in our environment continue to accumulate and destroy the ability of the planet to regenerate itself or to continue providing life-sustaining environmental services, they accumulate in our bodies as well--poisoning us and other species. Dioxin and Mercury found in mothers' milk create health hazards for breast fed babies. Free-floating antibiotics are causing drug-resistant viruses and germs to proliferate, allowing otherwise treatable diseases to spread, sometimes at epidemic rates. Sewer sludge, landfill, and run-off of fertilizers are polluting our waters, and there's now a dead zone at the mouth of the Mississippi River that extends 5,000-8,000 square miles out into the Gulf of Mexico. Carbon dioxide is increasing so dangerously that it's now causing significant climate changes (rapidly melting glaciers, rising sea levels, and extreme weather disturbances).
- Food - For every 1 calorie of food we take in, it takes approximately 10 calories of energy from fossil fuel due to our agricultural system's reliance on transportation, fertilizers, pesticides and mechanization.
- Carrying capacity of the earth - We began to exceed the carrying capacity of the earth in the 1980's. Currently we are using 1.2 Earths. The average American uses 5 times our fair share of the Earth's productivity. If everyone on Earth lived as we do in the U.S., ***we would need 4 additional Earths. Scientists have determined that the Earth's biocapacity per person is 4.7 acres. At present, the world is using 5.2 acres per person. In the U.S., we use 24 acres per person.*** Assess your own ecological footprint at www.footprintnetwork.org.

- Mass extinction of species - Half of all species of life may be extinct in 50 years if we don't take action in the next decade. In 1988, when the American Museum of Natural History scientists released its poll of biologists, 70% were convinced that we're in the middle of a mass extinction of species. In 2005, virtually 100% of the scientists agreed. Nothing this destructive has happened in 65 million years (since the last mass extinction when the dinosaurs disappeared).

3. SOCIAL JUSTICE - Are current trends sustainable based on the principles of participatory democracy (ability to participate in decision-making in a society) and equality (fair access to the opportunity to benefit from societal benefits)?

- Extreme wealth and extreme poverty -The top 1% hold 1/3 of the total wealth and the richest 5% hold more than half the total wealth. The net worth of the bottom 20% was actually *increasing* until 1998. Now each person in the bottom 20% has an average *debt* of \$1,600.
- CEO/worker salary ratio - in other industrialized-countries of the world, the ratio of CEO pay to worker pay is about 20 to 1. In the U.S., *in* 1973, the CEO/worker ratio was 43:1. It hit an all-time high in 2000, at a ratio of 531:1. It now stands at 431:1. As the *Wall St. Journal* reported recently, "The *super* rich are leaving even the rich behind."

- Increase in numbers living in poverty -The U.S. Census Bureau report in 2004 showed that while our economy grew a solid 3.8%, the number of people living below the poverty line *increased* in the U.S. for the 4th year in a row. Worldwide, the per capita income over the last 30 years has actually *fallen* in 80 countries. One billion people in the world live on less than \$1 a day. Another 2 billion live on less than \$2 a day. The combined assets of the 3 wealthiest people in the world exceed the combined Gross Domestic Product of 48 countries. The 447 richest people have accumulated combined wealth greater than half the world's population (over 3 billion people).
- Population - Since the Industrial Revolution, population has spiked, and, on average, people are taller, live longer, have greater health, and enjoy more comforts. But these benefits are clearly not shared by half the world's population, and we also have to ask ourselves, "Is this rate of growth sustainable?"
- Inequality and democracy- When inequality increases and economic power accumulates in the hands of too few, key principles of democracy begin to fail. As a society loses its democracy, it also loses its ability to function in the public interest. 80-89% of Americans want protection of our environment to be a national priority and 79% favor a national health system for *all*, even recommending raising taxes to pay for it.
- Sustainability - Even if the gains in health, well-being and resources were justly distributed, the question remains, "Is it possible to keep *increasing* the gains given the impact on the Earth?" The UN defines sustainability as ***meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs.***

THE GOOD NEWS

1. We have created the greatest challenge humankind has ever faced, which also means we have the greatest opportunity humanity has ever had. As David Ulansey says, "We have the opportunity to live the most meaningful lives that have ever been lived!"
2. We humans have been major contributors to this planetary crisis, not victims of some external force. We've made choices and taken actions. By "waking up," we have a genuine opportunity to create a *new* possibility for our future.
3. Environmental sustainability, social justice and spiritual fulfillment are not 3 separate issues; they are inextricably linked with each other. When we work on one issue, we contribute to the solution of all three.
4. As a society we have allowed ourselves to become entranced with the idea that new technologies can solve all problems. We're now beginning to see the benefits of an unprecedented collaboration of earth-wisdom *with* technology
5. We live inside of unconscious, unexamined assumptions and beliefs (e.g., that we can throw something "away" or that "more is better") that keep us from seeing our alternatives.
6. We've allowed ourselves to be characterized as "consumers" and forgotten when we saw ourselves as "citizens," responsible for generating the well-being of all.

7. We are mistaken, not flawed as a species. We can choose to make different choices and design different alternatives.
8. From the perspective of seeing our fragile, beautiful planet Earth from outer space, we can at last remember our interconnection and interdependence with all life and all species. This *New Story*, that *we're all part of one unified whole*, unites all humanity. This is a story that's accessible and available to everyone.
9. We have a limitless capacity to create a new future. Some of the wealthiest people on the planet (e.g., Bill & Melinda Gates, Warren Buffett, Sir Richard Branson) are becoming global philanthropists to address issues like basic health, education, and alternative energy.

Source: The Pachamama Alliance.
Permission to quote requested.

A final item of good news from a different source

An explosive increase of nonprofit environmental, indigenous rights, peace and social justice organizations is documented in *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming*, by Paul Hawken (2007), as well as a massive network of activities associated with the World Index of Social and Environmental Responsibility (WISER) described in the Appendix to this book. These make it abundantly clear that **things are far more hopeful than they may superficially appear.**

The surprising abundance of activist groups is especially significant due to the promise implicit in Integral Activism and the Imaginal Manifestation Process introduced in Part 4.

Part 2

Elephants in the Living Room

The extended quotes in this section illustrate major *cultural blind spots* that most Americans evidently prefer not to see or to discuss.

Warning: This information can be quite upsetting if you have never looked beyond the “establishment media” for information about the body politic in which we live.

The Gap Between The Country We Thought We Had and what we Actually Have¹

Most people living in Western political democracies believe in the ideal of “government by, for, and of the people.” They believe that society should be based on a wide range of basic universal values, such as freedom, democracy; justice, and equality. Consequently, they believe that society's institutions and social systems should maintain these values and treat everyone equally. Indeed, in the United States, people become upset when they realize that their deeply held values and principles are being violated, especially by power-holder policies and practices.

Power-holders know that social conditions are ripe for change. They are aware that the private and public social system and institutions they head up often violate the people’s cherished ideals. They know that these social systems and institutions unfairly distribute most of society's benefits to an elite minority at the top and most of the costs to the majority, especially those at the bottom. Consequently, they consciously try to keep their actual policies hidden from the public because they fear that a majority of the general public would rebel if it knew the reality.

Power elites do this through a two-track system of ***societal myths vs. societal secrets and official policies and practices vs. actual policies and practices.***

¹ The text on this and the next page is directly quoted from *Doing Democracy: The MAP* [Movement Action Plan] *Model for Organizing Social Movements*, by Bill Moyer et al. (2001). Permission to quote requested.

Societal myths vs. societal secrets

Societal myths are the slogans, beliefs, and values — such as, freedom, free market, democracy, and private enterprise — that the power-holders use to justify their self-serving policies and programs. In contrast, societal secrets are the exact opposite of the publicly proclaimed societal myths. They reflect the ideology that actually guides the power-holders as they carry out the power elite model in which most of the political and economic power and benefits go to the elite minority, while most of the disbenefits are borne by the environment and the majority of the people.

The founding fathers, for example, proclaimed the societal myth that the new nation was to be founded on the principle of democracy, but the societal secret was that democracy was only for a handful of rich white men. They realized that the slogan “Democracy for rich white men” would not go over very well with the 90 percent of the population that they called the “outdoors” people.

Official vs. actual policies and programs

The official policies and practices are those that the power-holders publicly proclaim they are implementing. They are consistent with the high-sounding values of the societal myths. In stark contrast, the actual policies and practices are what the power-holders are really doing, which are consistent with the societal secrets. To use the voting rights example again, until the 1960s the societal myth was that the United States, including the South, was a democracy in which every adult had the right to vote. The societal secret, however, was that the southern power-holders’ ideology permitted only white adults to vote. The official policies and practices were that voter registration offices were open every day and available to anyone who wanted to register to vote. The actual policies and practices were that blacks were prevented from registering to vote through a variety of means: the registrar’s offices closed when blacks arrived, difficult tests were given to blacks but not to whites, and there were grandfather laws saying that you could only vote if your grandfather was registered.

Design for a Grand Area¹

Even before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in December 1941 and drew the United States into World War II, a U.S. foreign-policy elite was laying the groundwork for postwar U.S. initiatives that would capitalize on the consequences of the war and create an integrated global economy dominated by U.S. interests. Haunted by the specter of the Great Depression, State Department planners believed that to curb capitalism's boom-bust cycles, the United States would have to either move to a form of socialism or secure adequate export markets to absorb goods produced in excess of domestic demand. They chose the latter.

Memorandum E-B34, presented on July 24, 1941, by a joint planning group to the president and the State Department, outlined the concept of a “Grand Area.” This was the geographic area the planners estimated the United States would need to dominate economically and militarily to assure materials for its industries while experiencing the fewest possible stresses, “such as unwieldy export surpluses or severe shortages of consumer goods,” that might lead to economic “disintegration.”

The preferred scope of the Grand Area encompassed the entire Western Hemisphere, the United Kingdom, the remainder of the British Commonwealth and Empire, the Dutch East Indies, China, and Japan. It would be expanded by weaving in other areas as circumstances permitted.

The strategic concept called for the initial economic integration of as much of the core area as possible. The more fully the Grand Area could be opened to unrestricted trade and foreign investment, the more readily the economic interests of the United States, as the strongest economic power, would be able to dominate it.

¹ The text on this and the next page is directly quoted (with footnotes deleted) from pp. 194-196 of *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*, by David C. Korten, © 2006. Reprinted with permission of Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., San Francisco, CA. All rights reserved.

The public version of the Grand Area strategy, which was intended to rally the support of those who would be the imperial subjects, called for the creation of a free and equal community of nations and gave birth to the United Nations. The real intention of the United States was articulated in U.S. State Department Policy Planning Study 23, a top-secret document written in 1948 by George Kennan, a leading architect of the post-World War II world.

“We have about 50% of the world's wealth, but only 6.3% of its population.... In this situation we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity.... To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality and day-dreaming; and our intention will have to be concentrated everywhere on our immediate national objectives.... **We should cease to talk about vague... unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.**” [Emphasis added.]

This was the real agenda, and the agencies of its implementation would be the Bretton Woods institutions: the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). In 1955, the World Trade Organization (WTO) replaced the less powerful GATT. The difference between the public and private visions was similar to the difference between the professed ideals of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, which was a document intended to mobilize popular support and the reality of the U.S. Constitution, which institutionalized the power and privilege of a ruling plutocracy. The United Nations had mostly a symbolic moral authority. The Bretton Woods institutions had the power to set rules and back them with economic sanctions.

The Debt Weapon of Mass Destruction¹

As noted in previous chapters, debt has long been a favored instrument by which the privileged use their control over access to money to appropriate the resources of the gullible and the desperate. During the period of its post-World War II expansion the United States pioneered the transformation of debt-funded development assistance into a weapon of mass destruction to seduce corrupt rulers, generate profits for U.S. corporations, and leave the "assisted" countries in the iron grip of international creditors. It is an extraordinary tale spelled out in *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, by John Perkins, whose job as chief economist for a major international economic consulting firm was to generate and defend grossly inflated economic projections to justify super sized infrastructure projects financed with loans from the World Bank and other foreign creditors that the borrowers could never repay."

Intentionally making uncollectible loans to foreign governments may seem the work of fools, but the money flowed directly to the bottom lines of well-connected U.S. construction and energy companies like Bechtel and Halliburton, which built the infrastructure. The perpetual indebtedness of those nations gave global financial institutions a stranglehold over their economic and political resources. The overpriced infrastructure in turn subsidized the operations of transnational mining corporations, agricultural estates, and offshore production facilities.

Most of those involved believed the ideological rhetoric they used to justify it all as a holy mission. Others, like Perkins, who were trained and rewarded to manufacture and defend the lies that turned these programs into weapons of mass destruction, knew exactly the true nature and purpose of their work, as the Perkins account makes clear.²

¹ This text is quoted (with footnotes deleted) from pp. 198 of *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*, by David C. Korten (2006). Reprinted with permission as noted above.

² Several free videos of Perkins telling his provocative story are easy to find on the Internet. Especially good is a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention.

Leading Journalists Expose Manipulations in the Media

The excerpts below are from the revealing accounts of 20 award-winning journalists in the highly acclaimed book [Into the Buzzsaw](#). These courageous writers were prevented by corporate media ownership from reporting major news stories. Some were even fired or laid off. They have won numerous awards, including several Emmys and a Pulitzer.

•[Jane Akre](#)—**Fox News**. After our struggle to air an honest report [on hormones in milk], Fox fired the general manager [of our station]. The new GM said that if we didn't agree to changes that the lawyers were insisting upon, we'd be fired for insubordination in 48 hours. We pleaded with [him] to look at the facts we'd uncovered. His reply: "We paid \$3 billion dollars for these stations. We'll tell *you* what the news is. The news is what we say it is!" [After we refused] Fox's GM presented us an agreement that would give us a full year of salary, and benefits worth close to \$200,000, but with strings attached: no mention of how Fox covered up the story and no opportunity to ever expose the facts. [After declining] we were fired. ([click for more](#))

•[Dan Rather](#)—**CBS, Multiple Emmy Awards**. What's going on is a belief that you can manipulate

- **[Monika Jensen-Stevenson](#)**—**Emmy-winning producer for *60 minutes***. Robert R. Garwood—14 years a prisoner of the Vietnamese—was found guilty in the longest court-martial in US history. At the end of the court-martial, there seemed no question that Garwood was a monstrous traitor. Several years later in 1985, Garwood was speaking publicly about something that had never made the news during his court-martial. He knew of other American prisoners in Vietnam long after the war was over. He was supported by Vietnam veterans whose war records were impeccable....My sources included outstanding experts like former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency General Tighe and returned POWs like Captain McDaniel, who held the Navy’s top award for bravery. With such advocates, it was hard not to consider the possibility that prisoners (some 3,500) had in fact been kept by the Vietnamese as hostages to make sure the US would pay the more than \$3 billion in war reparations. [After the war] American POWs had become worthless pawns. The US had not paid the promised monies and had no intention of paying in the future. ([click for more](#))
- **[Kristina Borjesson](#)**—**CBS, Emmy award winner**. Pierre Salinger announced to the world on Nov. 8, 1996, that he’d received documents proving that a US Navy missile had accidentally downed [TWA flight 800]. That same day, FBI’s Jim Kallstrom called a press conference. A man raised his hand and asked why the Navy was involved in the recovery and investigation while a possible suspect. “Remove him!” [Kallstrom] yelled. Two men leapt over to the questioner and grabbed him by the arms. There was a momentary chill in the air after the guy had been dragged out of the room. Kallstrom and entourage acted as if nothing had happened. [Kallstrom was later hired by CBS.] ([click for more](#))
- **[Greg Palast](#)**—**BBC**. In the months leading up to the November [2000] balloting, Gov. Jeb Bush ordered elections supervisors to purge 58,000 voters on the grounds they were felons not entitled to vote. As it turns out, only a handful of these voters were felons. This extraordinary news ran on page one of the country’s leading paper. Unfortunately, it was the wrong country: Britain. In the USA, it was not covered. The office of the governor [also] illegally ordered the removal of felons from voter rolls—real felons—but with the right to vote under law. As a result, 50,000 of these voters could not vote. The fact that 90% of these were Democrats should have made it news as this alone more than accounted for Bush’s victory. ([click for more](#))

- **[Michael Levine](#)**—**25-year veteran of DEA, writer for *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today***. The Chang Mai “factory” that the CIA prevented me from destroying was the source of massive amounts of heroin being smuggled into the US in the bodies and body bags of GIs killed in Vietnam. Case after case was killed by CIA and State Department intervention and there wasn’t a thing we could do about it....In 1980, CIA-recruited mercenaries and drug traffickers unseated Bolivia’s democratically elected president. Immediately after the coup, cocaine production increased massively. Bolivia [became] the source of virtually 100% of the cocaine entering the US. This was the beginning of the crack “plague.”...The CIA along with State and Justice Departments had to protect their drug-dealing assets by destroying a DEA investigation. How do I know? I was the inside source....I sat down at my desk in the American embassy and wrote evidence of my charges. I addressed it to *Newsweek*. Three weeks later DEA’s internal security [called] to notify me that I was under investigation....The highlight of the *60 Minutes* piece is when the administrator of the DEA, Federal Judge Robert Bonner, tells Mike Wallace, “There is no other way to put it, Mike, [what the CIA did] is drug smuggling. It’s illegal.” ([click for more](#))
- **[Gary Webb](#)**—***San Jose Mercury News*, Pulitzer Prize winner**. In 1996, I wrote a series of stories that began this way: For the better part of a decade, a Bay Area drug ring sold tons of cocaine to the Crips and Bloods gangs of LA and funneled millions in drug profits to a guerilla army run by the CIA. The cocaine that flooded in helped spark a crack explosion in urban America....The story was developing a momentum all of its own, despite a virtual news blackout from the major media. Ultimately, it was public pressure that forced the national newspapers into the fray. The *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times* published stories, but spent little time exploring the CIA’s activities. Instead, my reporting and I became the focus of their scrutiny. It was remarkable [*Mercury News* editor] Ceppos wrote, that the four *Washington Post* reporters assigned to debunk the series “could not find a single significant factual error.” A few months later, the *Mercury News* [due to intense CIA pressure] backed away from the story, publishing a long column by Ceppos apologizing for “shortcomings.” The *New York Times* hailed Ceppos for “setting a brave new standard,” and splashed his apology on their front page, the first time the series had ever been mentioned there. I quit the *Mercury News* not long after that....Do we have a free press today? Sure. It’s free to report all the sex scandals, all the stock market news... But when it comes to the real down and dirty stuff—such stories are not even open for discussion. ([click for more](#))

- **[John Kelly](#)**—**Author, ABC producer.** ABC hired me to help produce a story about an investment firm that was heavily involved with the CIA. Part of the ABC report charged that the CIA had plotted to assassinate an American, Ron Rewald, the president of [the investment firm]. Scott Barnes said on camera that the CIA had asked him to kill Rewald. After the show aired, CIA officials met with ABC executive David Burke, [who] was sufficiently impressed “by the vigor with which they made their case” to order an on-air “clarification.” But that was not enough. [CIA Director] Casey called ABC Chairman Goldenson. [Thus] despite all the documented evidence presented in the program, despite ABC standing by the program in a second broadcast, Peter Jennings reported that ABC could no longer substantiate the charges. That same day, the CIA filed a formal complaint with the FCC charging that ABC had “deliberately distorted” the news. In the complaint, Casey asked that ABC be stripped of its TV and radio licenses....During this time, Capital Cities Communications was maneuvering to buy ABC. [CIA Director] Casey was one of the founders of Cap Cities. Cap Cities bought ABC. Within months, the entire investigative unit was dispersed. ([click for more](#))
- **[Robert McChesney](#)**—**500 radio & TV appearances.** [There has been a] striking consolidation of the media from hundreds of firms to an industry dominated by less than ten enormous transnational conglomerates. The largest ten media firms own all US TV networks, most TV stations, all major film studios, all major music companies, nearly all cable TV channels, much of the book and magazine publishing [industry], and much, much more. Expensive investigative journalism—especially that which goes after national security or powerful corporate interests—is discouraged. Largely irrelevant human interest/tragedy stories get extensive coverage....A few weeks after the war began in Afghanistan, CNN president Isaacson authorized CNN to provide two different versions of the war: a more critical one for the global audience and a sugarcoated one for Americans....It is nearly impossible to conceive of a better world without some changes in the media status quo. We have no time to waste. ([click for more](#))

The pages in this section are posted online at http://www.WantToKnow.info/008/080916_mass_media_manipulations

For a 10-page summary material: www.WantToKnow.info/massmedia

For other resources on the media cover-up: [Media Information Center](#)

More “Elephants” Worth Talking About

- [Government documents](#) released in 2000 through the Freedom of Information Act show that top Pentagon generals approved plans in the 1960s to foment terrorism in major U.S. cities and even kill innocent Americans.
- A [CBS News report](#) in early 2002, quotes U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, "According to some estimates, we cannot track \$2.3 trillion in transactions." That's \$8,000 for every man, woman and child in America.
- In early 2005 “The Pentagon Sought Greater Immunity from Freedom of Information” [[Click here](#) for article]; and late in 2005, the requested FOIA exemption was granted. [[Click here](#) for article.]
- [*In Lies We Trust: The CIA, Hollywood, and Bioterrorism*](#) is a 2 ½ hour documentary about so-called “medical warfare:” effective, non-military methods for using existing civilian infrastructure to control and/or reduce target populations. Heavily documented, its conclusions are almost unthinkable for most people.

The “Big Pharma” Elephant

- A medical report in 1998 estimated that adverse reactions to prescription drugs—taken as prescribed—are killing about 106,000 Americans each year, roughly three times as many as are killed by automobiles. This makes prescription drugs the fourth leading killer in the U.S., after heart disease, cancer, and stroke.
- Prescription drugs are the fastest-growing portion of health-care costs, having risen at the rate of 17% per year for the past few years.
- “[In 2002], The combined profits for the ten drug companies in the Fortune 500 (\$35.9 billion) were more than the profits for all the other 490 businesses put together (\$33.7 billion). As noted by Dr. Marcia Angell [former editor in chief of the *New England Journal of Medicine* (and author of the best selling 2005 book *The Truth About the Drug Companies*), ***“this industry uses its wealth and power to co-opt every institution that might stand in its way, including the US Congress, the FDA, academic medical centers, and the medical profession itself.”***”

Fascism in America?

“The liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic state itself. That, in essence is Fascism -- ownership of government by an Individual, by a group or by any controlling private power.”

--President Franklin D. Roosevelt

In FDR's time, the CEOs of the top 300 corporations paid themselves about 12 times the average wage in their company. Now they take 400 to 500 times what the average workers earn in a full year.

“Today's banking crisis is the THIRD trillion dollar plus US-caused financial meltdown in the last twenty years. Each one of these crises came into being through the same basic mechanism...the fraudulent over-valuing of financial assets by Wall Street - with a "wink and a nod" (and sometimes a lot more) from the White House and Congress. The fraudulently valued assets stimulate the economy, impart the illusion of health and then, inevitably, the fraud goes too far and the whole house of card comes painfully crashing back to earth. “The three trillion dollar plus frauds were:

Fraud #1: The so-called "Savings and Loan Crisis" of the late 80s

Fraud #2: The so-called "Tech Bubble" of the late 90s

Fraud #3: The so-called "Credit Crisis" of today.

“The mechanism of these frauds is simplicity itself: take a shaky financial asset and blow up its value and then sell as much of it as you can. In the "Savings and Loan Crisis," the instrument was junk bonds. In the "Tech Bubble" it was Internet stocks. In the "Credit Crisis" it was individual mortgages collected into pools and then re-sold to investors. In each case, normal, well established "bread and butter" financial principles were consciously thrown away by Wall Street with no hint of protest from federal regulators.”

Source (with more details than can be fit in here): “The financial meltdown explained,” Brasscheck TV Listserv, September 20, 2008. Includes a short video documentary on the political assassination of former Governor Elliott Spitzer after his “whistle blower” op ed piece on sub-prime loans appeared in the Washington Post.

The “Good German” Syndrome

People still blame the “Good Germans” for allowing Hitler to do the evil that he did, and in particular for pretending not to see the Holocaust as it occurred around them.

Can Americans today not see the similarities between Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Fascism, and what is happening in the United States—especially after 9/11, the invasion of Iraq and the Patriot Act? (For more on this, please see the 47 min. video, “The Fascist Blueprint: It can happen here,” by Naomi Wolf posted at: <http://www.brasschecktv.com/page/177.html>.)

Of course, the Germans said that they couldn't have known the evil that the Third Reich was capable of. But with the power of the Internet, Americans can learn, talk about and *responsibly respond* to what our mass media carefully censors – “Elephants in the Living Room” of the body politic in America that we desperately need to be doing something about.

Are you a “Good American?”

Why are people not talking about major “elephants” indicative of fascism in America? Ignorance? Fear? Despair? Denial?

Despair and Denial: A Different Type of “Elephant in the Living Room”

*“The present condition and future prospects of our world engender natural, normal and widespread feelings of distress. Yet, **because of fear of pain, social taboos against expression of despair, and other reasons ... these feelings are largely repressed.** This repression tends to paralyze; it builds a sense of isolation and powerlessness. Furthermore, it fosters resistance to painful, but essential information. It is, therefore, not sufficient to discuss the present crisis on the informational level alone, or seek to arouse the public to action by delivering ever more terrifying facts and figures. **Information by its self can increase resistance, deepening the sense of apathy and powerlessness.** We need to help each other process this information on an affective level, if we are to digest it on the cognitive level” [and have our motivations freed up for action].”*

*“**Despair and empowerment work helps us to increase our awareness of these developments without feeling overwhelmed** by the dread, grief, anger and a sense of powerlessness that they arouse in us. The work overcomes patterns of avoidance and psychic numbing; it builds compassion, community and commitment to act.”*

Source: From the introduction to *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age*, by Joanna Macy (1983), emphasis added. See also Joanna Macy and Molly Young Brown, *Coming Back to Life: Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our World*, (1998), and Macy’s training DVD, *The Work that Reconnects*, (2006). Website: www.joannamacy.net.

Part 3

Toward *Rescuing the Elephants* In the Body Politic of the Nation

How about a massive

Teach-in

(Both face-to-face and online)

?

Teach-In

Defined

An extended session, as on a college or university campus, for lectures and discussions on an important, usually controversial issue. Source: <http://www.answers.com/topic/teach-in>

A teach-in is a method of non-violent protest, first employed against the U.S. government's involvement in Vietnam. The idea was inspired by Marshall Sahlins who taught anthropology at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. The idea was to allow a forum for opposition towards the war. Students and faculty would meet at night in university facilities to argue, ask questions, challenge assumptions and learn about the Vietnam war. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teach-in>, where a great deal of historical detail on teach-ins is available.

Focus the Nation:

Example of a Recent Teach-In

[Last] January nearly a million people at more than 1,900 Focus the Nation events began a conversation on global warming solutions with 64 members of Congress, 15 governors and countless local and state politicians. Colleges and Universities, K-12 schools, community and faith groups and businesses came together for a day of education and action.

Building on the success of January, Focus is continuing to empower young people to accelerate the transition to a just and prosperous clean energy future in four ways:

- 1. Community education on clean energy**
- 2. Sustained engagement with elected officials**
- 3. Networking youth initiatives**
- 4. Developing clean energy leaders**

Source:<http://www.focusthenation.org>

A Modest Proposal

- Begin organizing now to mount a number of teach-ins, with the cooperative involvement of relevant activist communities and networks, on “rescuing the elephants in the body politic of America” (or a more suitable theme title). Incorporate “despair and empowerment work” as appropriate.
- Further details to be filled in after sharing this slide show with and getting comments from prosocial activist leaders.

Three Questions to Help Assess the Risk of Working Radically to “Rescue the Elephants”

1. What are the risks that you would have to take [or maybe have already started to take] to do what is needed in ways that are both *self-critical* and *challenge powerful people and institutions*?

What risks would you have to take to do that?

2. What risks will you take if you don't act in these ways?

Three Questions ...Continued

3. If you decided to take the risks inherent in Question 1, what will you need in order to survive and thrive as an activist and as a person:
 - What will you need from yourself?
 - What will you need from other people?
 - What will you need from the institutions and organizations in your life, both public and private?

Comment on the Three Questions

You might note that people in positions of privilege tend to exaggerate the risks in Question One and under-estimate the risks in Question Two.

Source of the three questions and comment:
Allan G. Johnson, author of
Privilege, Power, and Difference

Quoted by U.T. professor Robert Jensen, author of
*Citizens of the Empire: The Struggle
to Claim our Humanity*

Four Questions to Orient Yourself as a Citizen Activist

1. When I look at what's happening in our world, concerns I have include...
2. My positive vision for what I'd like to see happen is....
3. Steps I can take to move in this direction include...
4. Things I need from myself and others to be effective include...

Source: Based on suggestions in *The Great Turning Times* – a free email newsletter about finding your power to respond to global crisis.

Website: <http://www.GreatTurningTimes.org>

Part 4

My own response:

Promotion of Integrity and Integral Activism

From the standpoint of “root cause analysis,” integrity and transparency are fundamental requirements for what is arguably the highest social policy priority today:

***the transition to ecological and societal
sustainability and well-being.***

Two Definitions of Integrity

- Basic: Honesty, transparency, ethical action
- Systemic: Having all essential elements of complex systems present and working together effectively.

The “4-Way Test” of Rotary International

This 24-word test is advocated by Rotarians world-wide as an ethical guide for people to follow in their business and professional lives involving sales, production, advertising, and all relations with dealers and customers:

In the things we think, say or do:

- Is it the TRUTH?
- Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?"

What if an equivalent of this was to guide personal and social policy in all levels and sectors of society?

Yet Another “Elephant”

A final type of “elephant in the living room of the body politic” is the taboo of owning up to personal lapses in integrity. Moreover, since all people fall short of living a life of perfect integrity, to even talk about the importance of integrity runs the risk of appearing as a hypocrite. As for myself, I can only say that *I try to teach that which I most aspire to learn.*

The Core Vision of the Integrity Project

“The transformation” needs more than conventional political activism to empower it. As a promising “tipping point” practice, an integrative or “**integral**” **approach to social activism** is proposed that would use both *power* and *force* for sustainability-oriented aims such as the uplifting of integrity in all levels of the world in which we live—personal, societal, and ecological:

Power referring to the intentional manifestation of phenomena in the physical world by means of supra-physical causality not involving the necessity of external manipulation— power from within...not power over;

Force referring to the intentional use of conventional causality in the physical world (where power over is the usual deal).

[This distinction is set forth by David Hawkins in his book, *Power vs. Force* (1995); website: www.veritaspublish.com.]

“Integral” Activism

Summary

Combining best practices for
Social Movement Organizing
and

Intentional Manifestation

as an integrative strategy having great promise
for the uplifting of integrity in the body politic
of the world: personal, societal, planetary.

Integral (Integrative) Activism

Detail

Combining best practices for *Intentional Manifestation* (“**Power**”) and *Social Movement Organizing* (“**Force**”) as a promising strategy for the uplifting of integrity and sustainable well-being in all levels of life — personal, societal, and ecological:

Power referring to the intentional manifestation of phenomena in the physical world by means of supra-physical causality not involving the necessity of external manipulation—power from within...not power over. What you can visualize as “**Cornucopia Causality.**”

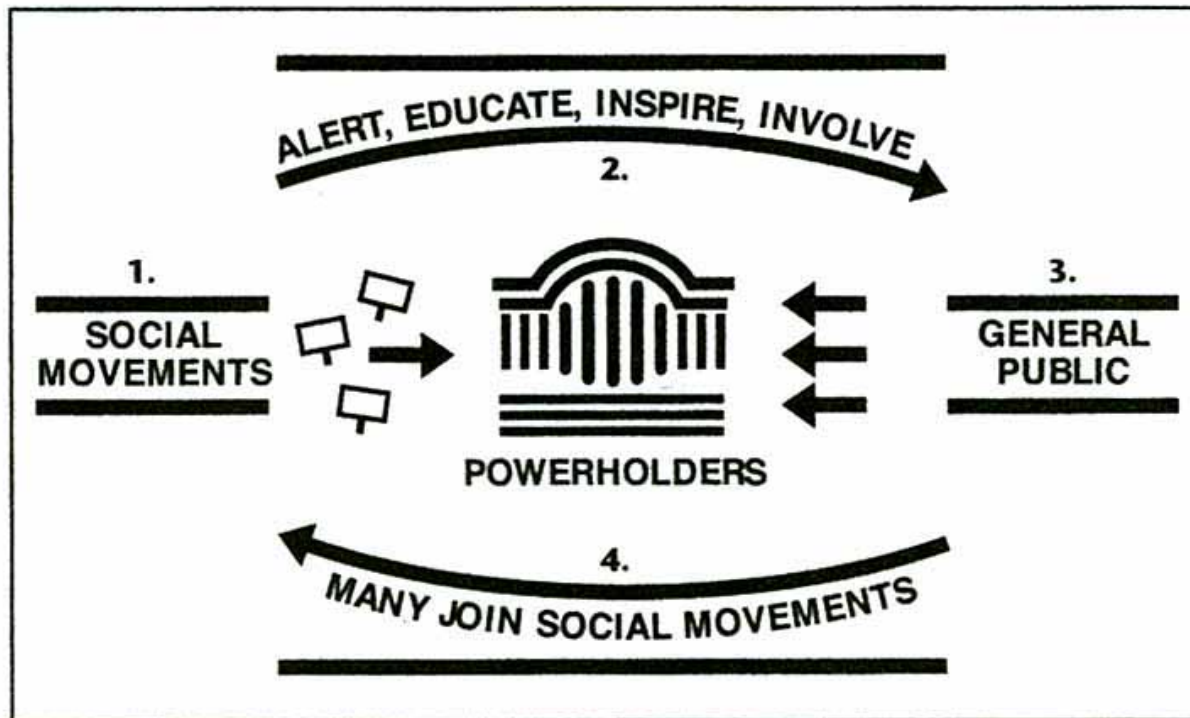
Force referring to the intentional use of conventional, or “**Billiard Ball Causality**,” but in ways that manifest the transformation of “power-over” into something both wiser and more effective.

This distinction is set forth by Dr. David Hawkins in his book, *Power vs. Force* (1995); website: www.veritaspub.com.

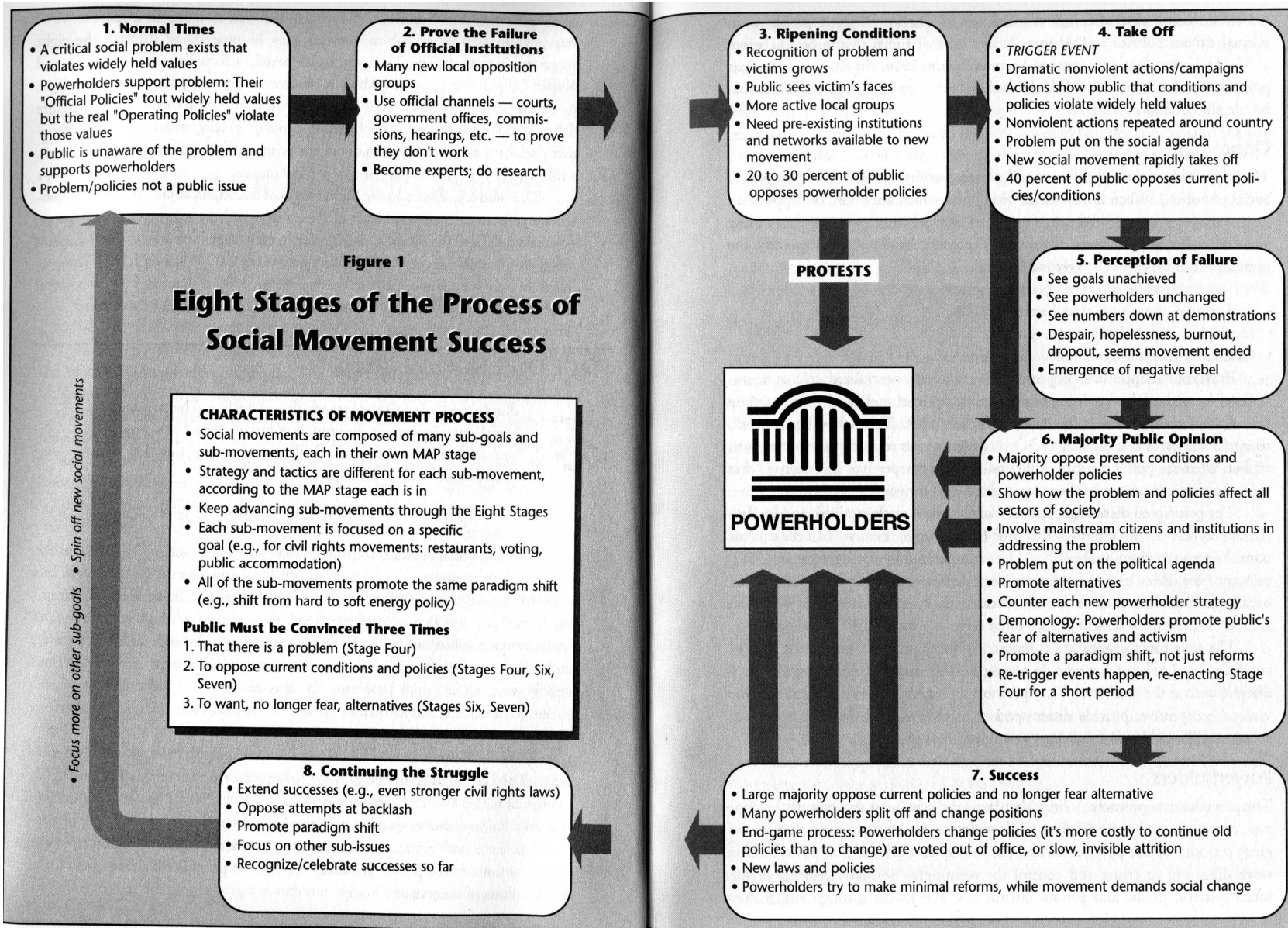
The *Movement Action Plan* (MAP) Model

A “Best Practice” for Organizing Social Movements
(*Doing Democracy*, by Bill Moyer, et al, 2001)

Figure 3: The Grand Strategy:
The Process of Creating Participatory Democracy



The Eight Stage MAP Model for "Doing Democracy"



Other Relevant Practices: Tools for Deep Democracy

Source: Dr. Patricia Wilson, posted online at:

http://www.shambhalainstitute.org/Fieldnotes/Issue3/Deep_Democracy.pdf

Social Technologies for Civic Engagement

| Deliberation | Dialogue | Collaborative Action | Community Conflict Resolution |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Citizen Summits | Public Conversations Project | Study Circles | Community Mediation |
| Citizen Juries | Conversation Cafes | Appreciative Inquiry | Narrative Mediation |
| Consensus Conferences | World Cafe | Community Collaboratives | Circle Sentencing |
| Scenario Workshops | Dialogue Circles | Policy Dialogues | Community Conferencing |
| National Issues Forums | Compassionate Listening | Future Search | Peacemaking Circles |
| Deliberative Polling | Transformational Conversations | Open Space Technology | Healing Circles |

Promising Best Practices for Intentional Manifestation

- The “Powering Up” approach delineated by Lynne McTaggart in her encyclopedic review of research and practitioners in *The Intention Experiment: Using Your Thoughts to Change Your Life and the World* and related publications (Website: www.TheIntentionExperiment.com)
- The “Field Training” approach authored and taught by Philip Golabuk (Website: www.FieldCenter.org)
- The Imaginal Manifestation Process—a synthesis of the above two practices, recently developed and currently being tested by the author (website to be posted after beta testing).

Some Illustrative Findings about Intentional Manifestation

(from McTaggart's *The Intention Experiment*)

- Robust evidence exists for remote healing by intentional influence and/or prayer
- Group intentions are more powerful than individual ones
- Transcendental Meditation (TM) “Super Radiance” has a demonstrated “threshold effect” [where there is a critical mass of meditators in a given region] on reduction of urban crime rates, international conflict, etc.
- Retro-causation [intentional influence of the past] puzzling, but proven.

The Imaginal Manifestation (I-M) Process*

An Audible Software Program for Intentional Power

- Delivered via a unique program of audible instructions that opens users to their own personal “imaginal space” in which to attract a vision of themselves having already realized the desires they intend to manifest
- Unique I-M programs are being prepared for practitioners of various religious faiths in addition to the standard secular version.
- Information available by request to oliver@inwardboundvisioning.com

*For purposes of intellectual property protection, Imaginal Manifestation, the I-M Process and Audible Software should be considered as trademarked until registration with CreativeCommons.com is complete.

Some Illustrative Results

The following are illustrative results for people who pilot tested various versions of the Imaginal Manifestation Process

- Birthing of a new “college for integral living” in which the understanding and manifestation of integrity is a central purpose
- Finding a publisher for an unusual book on holistic well-being and getting it published without overt difficulties
- Realizing success and a new level of depth in meditation by a person who formerly found meditation difficult to do
- Easily finding a new group of simpatico friends at a time when this seemed hard to do.
- Attracting new consulting clients who share values of integrity and social/ecological sustainability
- Getting a “download” in consciousness of a complete book as the “imaginal vision” obtained by using the I-M Process
- Having this slide show come together with exceptional ease.

Next Steps

1. Beta testing of Imaginal Manifestation programs including both the public and selected activist movement leaders interested in promising “new paradigm” practices for sustainability-oriented social activism
2. Continue refining the I-M Process, including intellectual property protection via CreativeCommons.org
3. Seek organizational sponsors for cooperative “meta-level” social movement organizing using integral social activism approaches that fit local needs and preferences
4. Continue research and public speaking about integrity improvement, Integrative Activism and Imaginal Manifestation, and the need for a new activist paradigm.

The Imaginal Cell Story

The caterpillar's new cells are called 'imaginal cells. They are so totally different from the caterpillar cells that his immune system thinks they are enemies... and gobbles them up. But these new imaginal cells continue to appear. More and more of them! Pretty soon, the caterpillar's immune system cannot destroy them fast enough. More and more of the imaginal cells survive. And then an amazing thing happens! The little tiny lonely imaginal cells start to clump together into friendly little groups. They all resonate together at the same frequency, passing information from one to another. Then, after awhile, another amazing thing happens! The clumps of imaginal cells start to cluster together! A long string of clumping and clustering imaginal cells, all resonating at the same frequency, all passing information from one to another there inside the chrysalis. Then at some point, the entire long string of imaginal cells suddenly realizes all together that it is something different from the caterpillar. Something new! Something wonderful! ...and in that realization is the shout of the birth of the butterfly! Since the butterfly now "knows" that it is a butterfly, the little tiny imaginal cells no longer have to do all those things individual cells must do. Now they are part of a multi-celled organism—A FAMILY who can share the work. Each new butterfly cell can take on a different job—there is something for everyone to do. And everyone is important. And each cell begins to do just that very thing it is most drawn to do. And every other cell encourages it to do just that. A great way to organize a butterfly!"

Source: Adapted version of the story by Nori Huddle in from her book, Butterfly

Posted online at: <http://spiritualdeepdish.wordpress.com/2008/08/27/nori-huddle-on-imaginal-cells/>