



POSTSCRIPT: BEYOND MONEY AND CONSUMPTION

After only two verses into the wilderness, the Israelites wanted the food and certainty of Pharaoh. Woody Allen's version of that features two women leaving a restaurant in Miami: One says, "The food was terrible." The other says, "Yes, and the portions were so small." The free market consumer ideology assumption is that we want larger portions of everything that is so unsatisfying. Consumption is the modern version of Pharaoh. Leaving consumption is the fear of our freedom. That is why we need community.

Luckily, there are people helping us resist the return. People who are seriously upending the measures of the current social order. One step is to question the Gross Domestic Product as a measurement of how we are doing and replace it with other measures of well-being. This takes us to measures that speak to the common good. The common good cannot be measured by the total dollars that change hands.

We have TimeBanking. Edgar Cahn (1992) has developed a measure for generosity. He says, "Let's not measure the exchange of money—it's too small, and it is the ultimate commodifying agent. Let's measure good works and call *that* the core economy. When one person spends an hour serving another, that goes in a bank account." TimeBanking is a steppingstone on an alternative path. Cahn is reconstructing an economy. From centers in thirty countries at a time, he is creating a neighborhood economy. And he enlists the capacity of people for whom the market has no use. He calls that co-production (2004). That is a beacon. This replaces Charity: co-production, where benefits accrue to both sides in every exchange.

Mark Anielski (2007) has developed a Genuine Well-Being Index. It replaces the Gross Domestic Product as the measure of success. His book *The Economics of Happiness* joins the movement around the world

to create practices that release us from the cultural dominance of the market economy.

On another front, Peter Pula and his colleagues at Axiom News look for stories that have the capacity to give the community life instead of focusing on its woundedness. And Howard Lawrence and the people working with him on the Abundant Community Initiative in Edmonton, Alberta, are transforming a city, one neighborhood at a time.

These innovations are illustrations of the future existing in the present. They are simply examples that guide us to an other kingdom. They are ushering us into a really new era. What seemed radical a few years ago is now all around us. Not yet mainstream, not yet considered very newsworthy, but soon. This is happening not as a utopian dream, but because the market ideology has reached its limits.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Our basic intent in writing this book is to shrink the market as the primary means of cultural identity, schools as the sole source of learning, systems as the source of care, price as the measure of value, productivity as the basis for being. This shift will be near the center of the transformation.

Given these aims, we are waiting for a social movement, grassroots action where something is ignited. It's hard to predict what that's going to be. When you think of social change movements, even in hindsight, you ask, Why did that event do it and not that one over there? There are social movements happening now; we just have to see them. And hope they are generative, positive ones.

Almost all modern movements were at some time wide-spread yet invisible, and all of them had a precipitate, a trigger. Even now, it's still a mystery why some precipitating factor is necessary. In the seminal days of the Civil Rights Movement in 1949, John and his colleagues sat-in at the State Street Theater in downtown Chicago because black people were required to sit in the balcony. The push for Civil Rights was there, but it wasn't a movement until four students went to lunch at a dime store in Greensboro, North Carolina. The Women's Movement was there, but not visible until people started reading Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine*

Mystique (1963). The Gay Rights Movement was triggered by the police beating people up in the Stonewall riots in Greenwich Village. The Environmental Movement was triggered by *The Silent Spring* (Carson, 1962) and Earth Day; it just suddenly came to life. The Arab Spring was triggered by one young man burning himself up.

For every one of those movements there were all kinds of experiences and discussions, feelings and groups, but it took something else to set them off and made them visible and connect people in a way they never had been. A Kairos moment?

The great changes and shifts that are really significant hardly ever have been designed intentionally beforehand, or resulted because people were trying to make them happen. When he changed his position on the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen of Illinois said, “You know, everything we’ve ever done in Congress we did because it’s time had come” (Byrd, 1994).

Lenin rushed through Russia because he thought what he had predicted had begun to happen. He got on top of it and made himself the leader. We are always living in the early moments of movements, and what we are talking about here is exactly that. Something is going to happen because of the growing sense of isolation and the longing for commonality.

SIGNS OF CHANGE

Not long ago Walter was at a conference of 4,000 young Evangelical Christians. Walter is not an Evangelical Christian, he’s a Christian. The conference was about justice, and these young people were ready to go. Ready to go where they sensed that the cause of justice required one to be.

What was especially striking about those young people is that they were not thinking about their long-term well-being; they were living in the present. They were asking what’s possible now, and what’s required of me now, and what can I do now. The assumption seemed to be that if they did what they could the future would eventually be all right. And that looked like a very prophetic stance: seeing how their capacities matched up with what the present requires and out of that extrapolating their futures.