

Fear and FREEDOM

By Brian S. Germain



We have some problems to solve as a society. I think this is something that we all can agree with. The cumulative apex of all these problems leads us to the following worry: "Will the current generation of children be able to care for the previous, and leave the world a better place when they are finished?" This is not a new question, however, but a business-as-usual aspect of any given generation taking stock in the way things are going. Since we will never really be done creating the perfect civilization, we need to lay off the alarms and criticism, and focus on a constructive way of looking at things.

We always have two aspects of any subject, the wanted and the unwanted. When we clarify the aspects of the subject that are under the category of "unwanted", we learn from this aspect of the situation and therefore expand our vision of the "wanted". We always learn what we do not like through the experience of negative emotion when we think about the subject in a certain way, which is the redeeming utility of all negative experience. If it feels lousy when we think about it, we need to find a different way of looking at this subject or draw our attention in another direction entirely. The trouble with focusing too intently on telling the story of what we do not like is that it sort of sticks to us like glue. We are inadvertently constructing the solutions within the context of the problem, and can never really solve the problem because we can't get our eyes off of it. When we hold the problem as the center of our attention, we cannot get our mood into the new experience of having things solved, because we are still complaining about the problem, and seeking blame and punishment for the cause of the problem. This is never the formula for a paradigm shift, which is the way in which each generation solves the problems of the previous.

I have further discovered that my angle of attack on a problem must involve only a briefest description of the problem state, a modest glance at the worst case scenario, and then a conscious effort to point the conversation in a decidedly positive direction. We do not discover solutions by remaining within the context of the problem. We do that by exploring the best case scenario with our minds.

Rather than spending most of our time restating the problems, if we can get ourselves into the most optimistic mood we can conjure by talking about the "future world" that will have all this stuff licked, we can then approach the world's

problems from that perspective; that emotional feeling. If you actually believe that we as a society are not going to be able to get there from here anytime soon, you might want to postpone the powerful responsibility of taking on heavy issues until you can get in touch with the part of yourself that actually believes that there is a way, and that it is inevitable that human wisdom and love will always triumph.

This is the optimistic perspective that the world craves right now, and the story that those in despair most need to hear. We do not need a more elaborate description the problems, there is plenty of that going on already. As a writer, if the process of telling a story leads me to feel bad because it



elaborates excessively on the aspects of a situation that I find to be "unwanted", I always pause the project until I can do it in a way that makes me feel good in the process. If it feels good to write, it feels good to read, and I know I am on the right track.

One might then point out that there are things in the world that require change, things that are terrible about our current national and world reality. Although this will always be true, we are never served by spending what could be positive visualization time complaining about the way things are. The past is only renewed when we continue talking about it. The revolution that the "Generation Z" people will peacefully wage will not include a single drop of the negative past, and our legacy of paradigm-baggage, what some have called the "memes" of our way of living and thinking, will not be part of the new vision at all. They will simply look at the situation with their "new eyes", and ask the question that humans always eventually ask: "What would be the best?" We do not need anyone to tell us to ask this question. It is inherent in the process of living, and in the creative-genius that is at the very basis of human consciousness.

If nobody ever writes another article about the problems of the present or the past, I would be perfectly happy in my knowing that humanity will get our stuff together in the very near future. We are, in fact, in the process of getting our stuff together right now. I know this because I am a human, and my thought process is not that different from that of others. I desire for love, a feeling of abundance, and something to shoot for in my life that lights my soul on fire. We all want this. If our current lifestyle is not yielding this holistic feeling of wellness, we will always strive for improvement. Without at least briefly living the alternatives to a joyful life, we cannot find our way to knowing what we want for ourselves in the future, and appreciating the positive aspects of what already is in motion.

Even when one considers the state of life in this country right now, with the younger generation's obsession with video games, text messaging and the low scores on standardized tests designed by the previous generation, we have beautiful human commonalities underneath the culture. We all desire for more: more understanding, more joy, more trust, more loving vibes wherever we go. The way that the future generations will unfold these basic desires may not be what we expect, nor what we agree with, but striving for agreement at all costs is the big compromise that leads us to strive for a bland center-line that deprives the human spirit of access to its true essence. We must simply trust and allow this process to unfold; merely being living reminders of one specific way to accomplish these goals. Happiness comes in many forms, and without all of its colors and variations, the whole spaceship earth experiment is a wash. We are not here to paint everything a moderately agreeable grey. We are here to push back the boundaries of possibility and enjoy the ride.

The problem is not the kids, it is us. They are far closer to the life-inspiring energy of authenticity, and are not tainted by the cultural memes that we are suffering from. We must trust them and let them guide us, not the other way around. True, the very young sometimes require gentle loving guidance, but the assertion that we always know best just because we are older is not a healthy model if we are to create emotionally balanced, self-trusting adults that will take care of this world better than we have.



What we most need to offer the younger generation is our recognition of their own inner wisdom, which stems from their emotional "holistic" mind that knows what is best for them. To subject children to an over-controlling methodology by perpetually asserting our perspective over theirs creates, at best, a generation of obedient drones who still look to us for guidance (which only feels good from a power-desire perspective), and at worst robs them of any hope of emotional buoyancy because they are learning from adults who have no idea how to utilize their own emotional wisdom.

We are born with all the clarity we need, and if we are nurtured toward seeking experiences that lead us toward positive emotion, we can access this innate inner genius. It is only through the experience of emotion that we can connect with our highest selves; otherwise we are just banging around in the old paradigm of: "work hard, suffer, complain about your suffering, and worry incessantly about what others think when choosing what to do in life". We have

tried that model, and it has not worked all that well for our generation, nor those before us.

If we assume that the children of today have no wisdom, and must be taught everything that they need to know, the feeling we experience is awful, and the future looks very bleak. Fortunately, that is not the way it is happening. It never has been that way. The old farts have always complained about the young, disrespected them, trying to hard to shape them into their model of right and wrong. In the end, all they accomplished was to disenfranchise themselves from those with the fresh perspective that solves all the impasses of the previous generation. They have the answers, just as we had the answers for the generations before us. We simply live the best we can, derive joy from the cultural and technological context in which we live, and those who follow us will benefit from the strengths and weaknesses of our way of living. It will always be this way, and it is absolutely perfect.

We must do what makes sense to us, and allow every other world citizen to do what makes sense to them. This is a tall order, but striving to make everyone agree on the best way to live is a battle that can never be won. I believe that we are better served by focusing our attention toward how we personally are living our lives, and make the most of that. We are all alive, but are we truly living? Are we stepping so far back away from the edge that we are not squeezing life's lemon enough to feel truly satisfied? This is where our attention must be focused, on maximizing our own personal joy, well-being and universal acceptance of the way that others achieve these things. Let the kids do what their hearts lead them to do, and if we teach them well, they will do the same for us.

The "my way or the highway" method has never worked out for any culture. The spirit of any truly civilized nation is one of liberty: the freedom for all to pursue that which makes them happy. This means that your inalienable rights end where my rights begin, and therefore if I am not stepping on your toes, it behooves you to allow me to live my life in the way that makes sense to me, even if it does not make sense to you. That is a hard pill to swallow, isn't it? If we want to avoid judgment from others, however, we must be as respectful toward them as we desire for ourselves. Regardless of the religious, ideological or political meme that you subscribe to, the one unifying tacit of being a truly free citizen is the allowance of the ways of others. If we each focus on what makes us deeply happy, not worrying about what others think and say about us, we will all be using our own inner wisdom to create the full-spectrum of possibility that this country, this planet, and this Universe craves for us.

BSG