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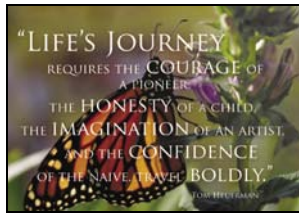
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NEW PHOTOS

The Cultural Creatives

Let it be recorded that Barack Obama came into full possession of the U.S. presidency toward the end of his February 24 (2009) budget speech to a joint session of Congress.

There is a clearer sense that we have a President who will...lead the way forward with the unconquerable gladness of a man invigorated by the tasks before him. Joe Klein, Time

As we continue the world's transformational change journey, begun some time ago, we must understand that the leaders who led us to success in the earlier and now exhausted ways of doing things are rarely the people to lead renewal.

Auto industry executives will not lead a transformation to a new energy paradigm. Traditional editors and publishers will not lead a rebirth of the newspaper industry. Wall Street money men and entitled bankers will not reform the financial system. Influence-peddling Washington lobbyists will not clean up corruption in our Capitol. Those in Congress who led us into the mess of today will not lead us to the future. After all, if they could provide that leadership, they would have long ago.

This dynamic holds true in all organizations and institutions. Almost always the leaders of a paradigm that no longer solves our problems will simply try to recreate what needs to change absent a personal transformation of their own.

President Obama must understand the risk he takes when he chooses Washington veterans for his Cabinet and for leadership roles in his government. Can they see with new

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Cultural Creatives

The Singularity

eyes? He must choose wisely.

Traditional Democrats are the “either” to the Republican “or” in the Washington D.C. political game. We don’t need a liberal version of the same old game to be replaced in eight years by the failed conservative model.

We need a **new game**. President Obama understands this. Can he change the rules for all?

I’ve written since 1996 that we need **new leaders**. People with a new worldview, a new understanding of how sustainable change happens, and a new vision for America and the world—leaders who can step boldly into the unknown and learn as they go.

In 2000 Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson wrote a book entitled *The Cultural Creatives*—a group of 50 million Americans who are creating a new culture in America.

Cultural Creatives care about the planet, relationships, and servant leadership. They have an organic, systemic, and holistic worldview. They value authenticity, believe in purpose, and live by strong values. They are idealistic, altruistic, and spiritual—not necessarily religious. They are creative and optimistic problem-solvers; they model new ways to live.

Cultural Creatives, disenchanted with greed, materialism, and status displays, oppose the abuse of rank; inequalities of race, class, and gender; and the narrowness and intolerance of social conservatives and the Religious Right. They yearn for new leadership at all levels.

In 1994 I **left the corporate world** to join this movement to change how we live, lead, work, and follow in America. My journey took me many places, and I met many ordinary people who live extraordinary lives.

A few of them:

Clair: an engineer by training and poet by nature. A gifted leader, he struggles mightily to transform an energy industry that does not understand the nonlinear in life.

Sharlie: an original pioneer woman who lives in Lyons, Colorado. A true entrepreneur, she makes it in life on her own. The best problem solver I know, she lives in a rural area, raises Llamas, and sells their wool.

Bob and Bill: are former I.B.E.W. union leaders in Minnesota. Gentle men they spent their careers in the tough world of energy industry labor/management battles. They saw the future long before the executives they fought with for the dignity of the people they led and represented.

Tenneson: a deep thinker and a kind soul with a generous spirit, lives in Orem, Utah. With steely resolve, he struggles mightily to live his life true to the wisdom he learns from his studies. He helps people around the world learn to talk with one another and to lead in new ways.

Richard: a retired corporate executive in Youngstown, New York who transformed his leadership style late in his career. He moved from a mechanical approach to management to leadership focused on relationships with spectacular business results. Today he and his wife share their wisdom with others.

Cultural Creatives are **ecological thinkers**--aware and mindful. They see the interconnectedness of life. They detect patterns and surface and examine deep unconscious beliefs.

These people evolve themselves consciously. They reject simplistic linear and **dualistic** (either/or) thinking and seek to optimize systems through creative both/and thinking.

They are the leaders for the times in which we live. They can return our nation to **excellence**. Born of their journeys in life, the leadership they will provide will be mature and responsible leadership. It will replace what Bob Herbert, columnist in the New York Times, called the “reckless, clownish, shortsighted, and self-absorbed” leadership we have grown weary of.

Most of us were not born to these values and skills. Some—the courageous ones--make a conscious choice to live and lead in new ways and risk the dangers of the pioneer as they do.

This psychic reorientation to an ecological worldview requires courage, service, sacrifice, and intellectual vigor. If you wish to join this movement, and all are invited, you must see reality accurately; you must examine your beliefs, values, sense of purpose; and your impact on all forms of life. You must be a learner willing to be a novice again.

This journey within is the personal spiritual, intellectual, philosophical, and psychological shift of consciousness people must make if they want to consciously evolve the

human condition and create a sustainable world.

The outcome of this hard work? A transformation in how you think, feel, and live. The prize for doing this work? A purposeful and interesting life and a deep self-respect.

The leaders, across all disciplines, who have and will emerge from this movement, are men and women of **character** and courage: servants who can set the direction, live their values, hold others accountable, guide people through change, and teach and create meaning. Such people have integrity interwoven consistently throughout their lives.

These new leaders, whatever their vocation, will continue to unite under a shared purpose: to save the world by creating **sustainable** organizations, a sustainable global economy, and a planet that endures for future generations to enjoy.

This **movement**, that began quietly long ago, exploded into public view during the 2008 presidential campaign. Those who share the same values connected with one another—aided greatly by Barack Obama's community building and use of the Internet to involve people. A sense of community developed. Personal issues became public issues.


The people in this movement created the conditions that allowed Barack Obama to emerge from seemingly nowhere to become our president. He is the externalization of their decades of difficult effort--their reward for the risky and thankless work they have done.

Now our President must free the Cultural Creative leaders within our organizations and institutions across our nation from the shackles of an exhausted worldview so they can lead our collective vision to renew the world.

This movement has gained power. Now it needs to use this power to bring about a renewal of life on this planet.

Time is running out. Our ecological crisis and national decline require an acceleration of natural processes: a conscious and sustainable fast-forward of human social evolution without harming life in the process.

We must think big, move fast, and address all our interconnected problems at once. We must see reality accurately, develop a powerful vision for the future, learn to manage massive change organically, and develop trust in others so self-organization and other natural dynamics of life



can burst free from repression and emerge in full creativity.

As we move through this massive reorganization of life, this powerful energy of creativity, no one has a “fail-safe” plan. We live as pioneers who step into the unknown potential of life. We must “plan, do, reflect, and adapt” daily until we find what works.

Creativity is messy and inefficient. Mistakes will be made as we move beyond our knowledge. Not all will be done well. Such is the nature of transformational change. Those who follow can spend the next 100 years making incremental improvements.

We created the world of today that no longer works for us. We can change it.

Each of us has a role to play. We simply do what we can--large or small.

**SUGGESTED READING: “THE CULTURAL CREATIVES”
BY PAUL H. RAY & SHERRY RUTH ANDERSON**