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## How to Save the World: Toward A New Social Movement—“Individual Evolution”

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### Article History

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**Abstract:** We begin with understanding **THE BASIC PROBLEM** humanity faces, a prerequisite for developing a solution. It is our bureaucratic way of life, with its focus on **hierarchy, narrow specialization** and **personal conformity**, that prevents us from fulfilling our evolutionary potential. As a result, given the recent invention of weapons of mass destruction, we are poised to destroy ourselves and become just another life form which has become extinct. Our individualistic and small two-legged great ape ancestors had to form bureaucratic groups for protection when they were forced to come down from the trees in Africa due to declining foliage. For they were confronted by large, powerful and swift four-legged predators. We continue with an evolutionary **VISION** for every single individual who walks the planet, by contrast with our having learned to see ourselves as very limited beings. However, it is possible for us to learn, over time, to adopt that vision, for we are nothing less than learning animals, and we’ve developed language as well as the scientific method. What is essential, following the vision of the Buddha, is that we learn to reward ourselves ever more frequently and move toward an evolutionary way of life with its emphasis on **equality, interdisciplinary understanding**, and **autonomy**. However, to continue to move in these directions, given our lifetimes of having been brainwashed by our bureaucratic way of life, it is essential that we follow the idea invoked by an ancient Japanese proverb: “Vision without action is a daydream; action without vision is a nightmare.” What we require is vision with **ACTION** if we are to save the world. Following a previous book, *Creating Life Before Death: Before Disaster Strikes the Ship of State* (2024, second edition), along with five previous ISAR articles —especially the most recent one published in October, 2024—the individual must learn to evolve. It is the further development of the individual that is the basis for the continued evolution of society. That October article listed ten ways in which anyone can learn to reinforce or reward oneself ever more frequently throughout one’s everyday life. This approach is simplified in the present article, making it much easier to employ, into simply (1) evolutionary perception, and (2) evolutionary action. By so doing, one builds on an evolutionary vision with momentary actions which transform oneself, enabling one to continue to evolve throughout one’s everyday life, and teach others to do the same. Those actions must include one’s mundane everyday activities. As a result, those mundane activities, which normally are perceived as trivial, become elevated as part of a nobler vision. They become part of one’s efforts to develop a widening social movement pointing toward individual evolution. Over time, the result can be nothing less than the trashing of our bureaucratic way of life. This approach to vision and action fulfills Polak’s and Busch’s understanding of what will make for a successful image of the future able to actually transform the future.

**Keywords:** Vision, individual evolution, social movement, the Buddha, reinforcement, image of the future, and invisible crisis.

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## Our Basic Problem

I choose to violate the convention of addressing a scholarly article to some highly specialized audience. Instead, I hope to communicate to readers in all walks of life. For I see what I've learned, with the help of my colleagues, as useful for the entire human family. My personal journey throughout life parallels that of every single reader with its failures no less than successes, and with personal abilities along with my limitations. Yet somehow, after 93 years, I've emerged with ideas calling for the above title.

At this moment in history, nations have succeeded in developing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons which can destroy us all. Yet social scientists with their millions of articles have failed to devise procedures for eliminating war. The result promises to be catastrophic for all of us.

Not only are we moving toward a world war with weapons that might annihilate the human race. We also have a wide variety of threatening problems that remain unsolved, such as lack of control of climate-related catastrophes like wildfires and hurricanes, housing costs beyond the reach of a great many, skyrocketing tuition charged by colleges and universities, the abuse of women at home and in the workplace, mass shootings in schools and elsewhere, rising medical costs, widespread bullying in schools, and problems of suicide and drug-related deaths.

I will illustrate further the danger we humans are now facing, quoting from my book with six co-authors (Phillips, Savage, Plotkin, Weiss, Spitzer, Sanseverino, Porter, *Creating Life Before Death: Before Disaster Strikes the Ship of State* (2nd edition, 2024; **Note: Use only the subtitle to purchase it on Amazon**):

Can you believe that the failure to integrate knowledge by those in charge of nuclear warfare in the U.S. and Russia has resulted in eleven documented near-catastrophes between 1956 and 2010? On each occasion, the world almost stumbled into a nuclear missile exchange because of misinterpreted warning signals.

Except for extremely fortunate circumstances, you might not have survived to read these words, and I might not have survived to write them.

To illustrate just one of these near-disasters for the human race, on September 26, 1983, a satellite early-warning system near Moscow reported the launch of one American Minuteman ICBM. Soon after, it reported that five missiles had been launched.

Convinced that a real American offensive would involve many more missiles, Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Petrov of the Soviet Air Defense Forces refused to acknowledge the threat as legitimate, and convinced his superiors that it was a false alarm until this could be confirmed by ground radar. But what if Petrov had conformed to the wishes of his superiors?

If American leaders had noted this false alarm and had come to believe that it was an excuse for the Soviet Union to launch missiles at America, then the U.S. might well have launched missiles at the Soviet Union in response (7).

A scientific approach calls for initially defining one's problem before proceeding to solve it. Which, then, of the

foregoing issues is our fundamental problem? Or is it the case that none of them is that basic, and that the analysis of G. K. Chesterton, the English essayist, novelist and poet, is correct: "It isn't that they can't see the solution. They can't see the problem."

Tom Savage, a former Minister and Sheriff's Lieutenant, tells a personal story in *Creating Life* which can help us understand the basic problem behind these many issues:

It took place when he was seven years old and had to do with his first crisis of faith. A volunteer Sunday school teacher had just told his class the story of the Israelites' escape from Egypt. At the Red Sea, Moses had parted the waters, and the Jews all went safely through. But when Pharaoh with his army and chariots followed in hot pursuit, Moses closed the waters over them.

At that point, Tom jumped up and yelled, "What happened to the the horses!" The poor teacher, sputtering, could offer no defense. Tom would not calm down, for he believed in an all-powerful and all- righteous God, and he would not tolerate a teacher who dared to stray from those beliefs. The result, however, was that Tom became perhaps the first kid ever to be kicked out of Sunday school [Yes, it really happened].

Tom had uncovered three key components of our **bureaucratic way of life**: Patterns of **(1) persisting hierarchy, (2) narrow specialization without integrating knowledge, and (3) personal conformity to the powers that be** (3-4).

I'm convinced that it is nothing less than our entire way of life, with its patterns of **hierarchy, narrow specialization, and conformity**, that is responsible for our pressing problems. We might see this overall pattern of behavior as our invisible disease, with the above problems as the visible symptoms of the disease. This idea adds a new dimension to all of our current specialized efforts to solve our problems, such as efforts of governments and peoples throughout the world to eliminate wars, halt climate change, or move away from authoritarianism.

What this finding implies is that our present-day efforts to find solutions for our most pressing problems will have limited success, given the persistence of our entire pattern of behavior. The implication of this insight is clear: In addition to our present specialized procedures, we must learn to turn our attention to a problem which has remained invisible, namely, the negative impacts of our entire way of life.

Accomplishing this requires that social scientists gain the understanding essential for such a feat by moving away from narrow specialization. I was most fortunate, as a pre-medical student at Columbia, to have begun to accomplish this as the result of auditing a course at Columbia by C. Wright Mills, a sociologist who had just joined the faculty. A book he wrote several years later, *The Sociological Imagination* (1959/2000), was subsequently rated by the International Sociological Association as the second most influential book for sociologists published during the entire 20th century. This passage from Mills' book, quoted in *Creating Life*, illustrates his interdisciplinary approach:

The sociological imagination...is the capacity to shift from one perspective to another—from the political to the psychological; from examination of a single family to

comparative assessment of the national budgets of the world; from the theological school to the military establishment; from considerations of an oil industry to studies of contemporary poetry (40-41).

Here are two examples of the visible impact of our bureaucratic pattern of behavior, which focus on our basic problems, that I've taken from *Creating Life* :

Recall the 9/11 disaster at the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Specialized knowledge about the potential for that catastrophe was learned by the CIA, FBI, State Department and NSA. Yet there was no sharing among those organizations, which had developed patterns of isolation from one another.

We had the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger due to an O-ring failure. In all likelihood, the O-ring would have been fixed if employees in different departments had pooled their knowledge with one another. Also, employees might well have notified management of the O-ring problem if hierarchical relationships had not severely limited such communication (7).

This overall pattern of behavior teaches us, from the moment of our birth, to become invisible to ourselves. The Armenian educator and philosopher George Gurdjieff has emphasized this very lack of awareness of ourselves, as outlined in *Creating Life*:

George Gurdjieff , , , can help us to understand just how central an outward perspective is with little or no attention to oneself, compared to one's personal development or evolution. He traveled extensively throughout the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia. One of Gurdjieff's students, P. D. Ouspensky, recorded and explained Gurdjieff's ideas in his *The Fourth Way* (1971).

Ouspensky believed that when we try to think of ourselves we can maintain that focus for only a very short time before our minds move toward external phenomena . . . "We say "I am doing," "I am sitting," "I feel," "I like," "I dislike," and so on. This is our chief illusion . . . generally you do not remember yourself . . . we become too absorbed in things, too lost in things (30).

I see this outward orientation as resulting in our failure to see ourselves.

It is here that key ideas from the disciplines of biology and sociology can enable us to understand more fully how we developed our bureaucratic pattern of behavior in the first place.

We can follow the argument in *On Human Nature: The Biology and Sociology of What Made Us Human* (2021), a book by the eminent biologist and sociologist Jonathan H. Turner. When our distant ancestors, the great apes, came down from the trees in Africa because those trees were losing their foliage, they were in immediate danger of extinction. For those relatively small two-legged creatures were no match for the large, powerful and swift four-legged creatures who hunted them down. They managed to save themselves by learning to form groups, despite their individualistic biological background—by contrast with chimps and monkeys—which we humans still carry within ourselves.

That was the beginning of what has continued to this very day: our overall way of life with its patterns of hierarchy, narrow specialization and conformity, which has been called by sociologists a **bureaucratic way of life**. For example, our patterns of **hierarchy** are illustrated by the grading system throughout our schools. **Narrow specialization** is exemplified by the 53 distinct Sections of the American Sociological Association which largely fail to communicate with one another. **Conformity** is shown by the widespread belief that we have a fixed IQ or intelligence quotient.

Our basic problem is a way of life where we all learn we are extremely limited beings. I believe that what we must learn to solve that problem is, based on overwhelming evidence, that quite the opposite is true. To point toward this solution, I turn to an ancient Japanese proverb: "Vision without action is a daydream; action without vision is a nightmare. This implies the direction we shall take in the remainder of this paper: **Vision with action can save the world**.

## Vision

What Tom also achieved with his outburst at age 7 was nothing less than illustrating how to develop the vision we require to help solve the basic problems of contemporary society. He dared to (1) question authority [**"head"**], (2) move beyond the simplicity or narrowness of the ideas of authorities, as illustrated by the good-evil biblical story [**"heart"**], and (3) develop his own understanding [**"hand"**] (*Creating Life*, 3-4).

It is nothing less than all three fundamental components of every one of us—"head," "heart," and "hand"—that must be involved within the vision of our own continuing development as a basis for solving society's fundamental problems. *Creating Life* illustrates this breadth with its two chapters devoted to each of these three elements.

That book follows Confucius, given that "head," "heart" and "hand" make up the nature of the behavior of the individual. He wrote in his *Analects*: "It is man that can make the Way great; not the Way that can make man great." Confucius supports our fundamental belief that appears on page 3:

**"It is the further development of the individual that is the basis for the continued evolution of society."**

Metaphorically, this same emphasis was illustrated by the film, *The Wizard of Oz*. We have the Scarecrow in search of a brain, the Tin Man looking for a heart, and the Lion seeking the courage needed for action which can solve problems. The Wizard encouraged them to abandon their conformity to society's hierarchical way of life where they had learned to see themselves as very limited beings, and to follow Thomas Jefferson's democratic vision in The Declaration of Independence: "All men [and women] are created equal."

Let us now proceed to follow in their footsteps by learning to take the advice of the Wizard, **beginning with our present scarecrow mentality**. Stephen Colbert interviewed on the Late Show Frances Ford Coppola, who had directed *Apocalypse Now* and *The Godfather*, about his latest movie, *Megalopolis*. It portrays the death of Rome's republican form of government and movement into the dictatorship of Emperor Augustus when it allowed its Senators to use Rome's increasing wealth to enrich themselves.

Coppola believes that we need not go the way of Rome, for we humans are all potential geniuses. We can solve world

problems if we learn to live up to fulfilling those potentials. We are way way ahead of any other living thing. We can give to our children and grandchildren the society that they deserve. The society we're living in is not the only possible one. We can make it far better. The future can be wonderful and glorious.

Continuing with our focus on "head," I see the work of Isaac Newton, which points away from narrow specialization and toward integrating knowledge, as a wonderful illustration of an evolutionary orientation. He wrote: "If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

Newton's idea builds on the earlier vision of Francis Bacon, a founder of the scientific method, who wrote, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province." I'm absolutely appalled at how far social scientists have departed from these insights into the pursuit of science.

However, is the idea of the intellectual potential of every single individual really true? Aren't we all limited by our IQ, or Intelligence Quotient? Yet this belief happens to be false, as illustrated by recent research outlined in *Creating Life*. For example, we have David Shenk's *The Genius in All of Us: Why Everything You've Been Taught About Genetics, Talent and IQ Is Wrong* (2010). There are also the findings of Richard E. Nisbett, a psychology professor at the University of Michigan. He documented the idea that IQ can be changed in his *Intelligence and How to Get It: Why Schools and Culture Count* (2009).

I was most impressed by an earlier experiment described by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson in their book, *Pygmalion in the Classroom* (1968). Experimental psychologists gave teachers in an elementary school lists of students who were supposedly "late bloomers" or "spurters." Actually, however, those students were chosen by a table of random numbers. After a one-year period those very students demonstrated substantial increases in their IQ scores, especially by comparison with other students in their classes. It was concluded that this was the result of their teachers' heightened expectations for their development.

*Creating Life* looks to our very biological nature to understand the nature of our "head," as analyzed by the eminent biologist Stephen Jay Gould in his *The Mismeasure of Man* (1981): "We are, in a more than metaphorical sense, permanent children . . . In other mammals exploration, play and flexibility of behavior are qualities of juveniles, only rarely of adults. We retain not only the anatomical stamp of childhood, but its mental flexibility . . . Humans are learning animals" (333-334). I would argue that this ability includes learning to stamp out war as well as the full range of our threatening problems.

Given our development of language, including written language, we can interact with—and learn from—anyone among billions of individuals living and dead. By comparison with any other organism, it is we who are the creatures with by far the greatest capacity for learning.

I see our entire physical universe, including all of those galaxies out there, as interactive to some extent, given that no part of the universe can be completely isolated from any other part. However, our complex languages enable us humans to be the most interactive entities throughout the entire known universe. The result is our amazing capacity to continue to learn how to solve personal and world problems throughout our lives.

The psychologist George A. Kelly succeeds in contradicting the widespread view of scientists as a most elite group, different from the rest of us, with his unique view:

Let us . . . have a look at man-the-scientist . . . Might not the individual man . . . assume more of the stature of a scientist, ever seeking to predict and control the course of events with which he is involved? Would he not have his theories, test his hypotheses, and weight his experimental evidence? (1963: 4; *Creating Life*, 13-14).

I follow Kelly's view that we need not see ourselves as lesser beings than Albert Einstein or Madam Curie, for we all make use of scientific behavior throughout our everyday lives. Just as Kelly claims that "the blueprint of human progress has been given the label of 'science,'" our own everyday scientific behavior can succeed in pointing society in a progressive or evolutionary direction.

Given the idea that we are all scientists in our everyday lives, we can learn to emphasize our learning to use the full power of science to move in evolutionary direction, by contrast with ceding usage of science and the scientific method to a specialized group centered on continuing our bureaucratic direction.

For example, I look to Thomas Aquinas, the 13th century Catholic saint, for emphasizing the importance of science by joining science with religion, as explained by Therese Cory of the University of Notre Dame:

Aquinas is a giant of Western philosophy and theology, and for good reason. His writing is clear, well organized, free from bombast—ideas shine through his words. Famously, he insisted that faith and reason are in harmonious partnership, integrating the known science, philosophy and theology of his day into a comprehensive, interconnected system . . . Aquinas continually drew inspiration from other thinkers with whom he did not share a faith: He cites the Persian Muslim philosopher physician Ibn Sina, or Avicenna, the Jewish rabbi Maimonides, the Roman statesman and skeptic Cicero and Aristotle himself (Herald-Tribune, Nov. 29, 2024: 11A).

Before we move from "head" to "heart," let us be clear about the limits of society's intellectual vision, as distinct from our own view of our intellectual potential. The societal view does not follow Coppola's idea that we are all potential geniuses, nor does it follow the Wizard's view that we're all basically equal intellectually. As we shall see as we move into "heart" and "hand," there is the same contrast between society's view and our own, granting that society has managed to achieve a good deal despite this profound limitation.

**Let us move now to our present emotional or "heart" limitations, as illustrated by the Tin Man,** coupled with our own alternative vision of the possibility of continuing emotional development. Here is the problem that the Buddha—Gautama Siddhartha Sakyamuni—discovered 2500 years ago, seeing it as **the central problem of the human race**, as outlined in *Creating Life*:

He unearthed a central problem that we humans have with respect to our goals or aspirations. He identified the problem of *dukkha*, or negative feelings linked to what people want and are actually able to get. This is our aspirations-

fulfillment gap or goal-fulfillment gap: the canyon separating what we want in life and actually achieve (67).

The Buddha's insight linked with key ideas I and my co-authors had developed in *Creating Life* emphasizing that gap between wants and achievement for contemporary society. Harlan Cleveland—a President of the University of Hawaii—believed in a continuing “**revolution of rising expectations**” resulting from the productive achievements of modern science and technology (68), yielding unrealistic aspirations.

Emile Durkheim a founder of the discipline of sociology, adds to our understanding. He wrote this about the industrial revolution in his book, *Suicide* (1897): “greed is aroused without knowing where to find ultimate foothold” (69).

Karen Horney, a psychoanalyst, develops a similar analysis, writing this in her *The Neurotic Personality of Our Times* (1937): “For economic reasons, needs are constantly being stimulated in our culture by such means as advertisements . . . For the great majority, however, the actual fulfillment of these needs is closely restricted. The psychic consequence for the individual is a constant discrepancy between his desires and their fulfillment” (70-71).

Back in 2007, I along with my co-author of *The Invisible Crisis of Contemporary Society*, carried forward the analyses of Cleveland, Durkheim and Horney. We tested this hypothesis against the research and ideas of thirty-three sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, historians, novelists, attorneys and political leaders: “*The gap between aspirations and their fulfillment is in fact increasing in contemporary society,*” Lo and behold, the evidence supporting this is was absolutely striking.

Granting that this gap remains a fundamental problem throughout contemporary society, the vision expressed in *Creating Life* is partly based on the Buddha's Eastern strategy: lower one's aspirations so that they mesh with a realistic approach. I add to this a Western strategy of employing the scientific method to help one understand how to solve one's problems.

It is this East-West strategy that can succeed in avoiding the frustration of an aspirations-fulfillment gap and yield increasing fulfillment of one's aspirations. Here, then, is a solution to what the Buddha had called the central problem of the human race, namely, a problem of one's emotions. He travelled throughout India to teach people the importance of an Eastern strategy.

**Moving now from “heart” to “hand,” illustrated by the Lion**, once again we can turn to a passage in *Creating Life* which illustrates successful behavior:

We have an example of such personal evolution from the rapid reconstruction of German and Japanese industry following World War II, financed by America's Marshall Plan. Focusing in particular on Japan, what developed throughout their companies was a culture of continuous improvement, where all employees no less than management were actively involved.

They developed the idea of “*kaizen*” or “continuous improvement.” The idea of *kaizen* was accompanied by both emotional commitment to this idea as well as actual improvement. This approach was by no means limited to long-term projects. An improvement could take place within a few hours or a day. *Kaizen* includes both the

reorganization of an entire area of production as well as the improvement by an individual of his or her own work.

Crucial to the achievement of *kaizen* was the use of the scientific method by workers and administrators, and not just by professional scientists. A central figure in helping the Japanese make use of that method throughout the workday was William Edwards Deming, an American engineer, statistician, professor, author, lecturer, and management consultant with a background in mathematical physics.

As a result, Japanese products experienced a metamorphosis from cheap throwaways to extremely high quality, as illustrated by the worldwide purchases of Toyota cars. The Emperor of Japan awarded Deming the Order of the Sacred Treasure in 1960, and an annual Deming Prize was set up. In the U.S., President Ronald Reagan honored him with the National Medal of Technology, and the National Academy of Sciences presented him with the Distinguished Career in Science award.

This example of the *kaizen* approach to “hand” completes my presentation of this section on my vision of the continuing evolution of the individual as a basis for changing the world. Yet let us recall that ancient Japanese proverb: “Vision without action is a daydream; action without vision is a nightmare. We move now into the final section of this article in order to fulfill my mantra: **Vision with action can save the world.**

The actions listed below are different from the visionary actions listed above, for they illustrate the fundamental changes in the individual which are essential for actually changing our bureaucratic way of life. By contrast, the visionary actions above, although illustrative of developing one's evolutionary vision of oneself, do not change that way of life. We should recall the enormous importance of the actions below, for that change is essential for altering the fundamental threats to the existence of our species. For such individual evolution is necessary to yield solutions to our basic problem of avoiding extinction.

I want to emphasize this point, for it is crucial to understanding the distinction between vision and action. If indeed we are to develop ourselves sufficiently to move from our bureaucratic into an evolutionary way of life, it is essential that we change habits we've developed throughout our lives. From the day of our birth we've learned to emphasize hierarchy, specialization and conformity. To accomplish this is no easy task, but it can be done once we realize that this change is essential if we are to avoid the future wars and other catastrophes which will result in the end of the human race. We must develop the new habits of behavior that the actions below illustrate, by contrast with the actions above that can yield a vision of the genius of the human race.

## Action

If indeed, following the Buddha, the present-day fundamental problem of the human race is our negative feelings about our achievements, then I'm convinced that what we require to address that problem is positive feelings accompanying our behavior.

The first step toward fulfilling that mantra was the publication on October 25th, 2024, of an article in the *ISAR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences* ((2)(10), 99-105): “Personal

Evolution: A Paradigmatic Solution for Personal and World Problems.”

That ISAR (International Scientific and Academic Research) article listed no less than ten actions for gaining such positive feelings about ourselves as we proceed with our daily tasks from one moment to the next. Yet one’s ability to act in these ways depends on one’s believing in a vision of one’s own incredible potential for continuing personal evolution, as presented in the above section of this paper. Thus, it is absolutely essential to follow the Japanese proverb’s requirement of combining vision with action.

The first five actions are changes in how we perceive the world and ourselves from one moment to the next, as quoted below:

1. **Perception of inanimate phenomena:** By adopting an evolutionary perspective, we can look at the earth, the sun, the stars, and feel better about my own greater possibilities for interaction than any non-human entity.
2. **Perception of organisms other than humans:** Given our own usage of language and the scientific method, once again we can reinforce ourselves when observing, for example, the grass, insects or animals.
3. **Egalitarian perception of other human beings:** Looking at other people, even well-known entertainers, authors and heads of state, we can feel proud of ourselves—given the equality of our joint potentials at birth—as their equal.
4. **Perception of the products of the human race:** Perceiving the work of Rembrandt, Shakespeare and Einstein, as well as the most outstanding products of the human race throughout history, once again we can reinforce myself because of our essential equality, and we can take pride in those achievements.
5. **Perception of one’s own body, thoughts, feelings or actions:** After seeing our own bodies or becoming aware of any aspect of our own behavior, we can feel good about the fact that we are the most interactive entity throughout the entire known universe. It is here that one can reflect on moving from one’s past toward one’s future. And it is here that one can integrate one’s overall understanding of one’s incredible potential by contrast with a hierarchical way of life (102).

To understand the significance of these actions, we must first understand that we perceive phenomena from moment to moment. Thus, any change in our pattern of perception will have a dramatic impact on our behavior. And they are indeed great changes in the way we all have learned to perceive phenomena, for we emphasize looking outward, paying very very little attention to ourselves. Note, for example, how the vision we require for our continued development presented above helps us to emphasize our own importance, instead of resisting positive feelings about our own successes.

The episode “Catspaw” from the early Star Trek series—with Captain Kirk, Spock and McCoy—illustrates the power of perception to shape our lives. When they beam down on the planet Pyris VII for a routine investigation, they are confronted by Sylvia, who threatens to destroy the Enterprise—with a realistic image of that possibility—unless they reveal the nature of their scientific knowledge so that she can employ it for destructive purposes. Needless to say, Kirk manages to destroy Sylvia’s ability to create

powerful illusions, resulting in her reverting into her true state: a tiny boneless blob of jelly, squeaking in a thin wail, by contrast with her former human shape. My own journey to “where no man has gone before”—the mantra of the Star Trek series—builds on that idea of exploring outer space by pointing toward inner space. As a result, we equally build on the work of Freud, Jung and Adler.

The next five actions equally enable one to reward oneself so as to feel good emotionally without depending on others for praise. Yet they differ from the first five alterations of one’s perception in that they involve visible interaction with one’s environment, with others, or with one’s own everyday behavior from one moment to the next:

6. **Expanding on positive sanctions from others:** We can recognize them as legitimate praise for what we’ve accomplished, instead of resisting positive feelings about our own successes.
7. **Acting more effectively in one’s everyday-life behavior:** After World War II Japan’s rapid industrial recovery was based to a large extent on workers’ emotional commitment to “kaizen,” or continuous improvement, emphasized by managers. We can apply that same idea to the full range of our own everyday behavior, and we can feel proud of our accomplishments.
8. **Reversing negative sanctions from others:** When others treat us negatively in uncalled for ways, not only can we understand that behavior as a result of their lifelong commitment to a way of life emphasizing hierarchy. We can also feel good about recognizing the power of that way of life over us no less than them, and also our potential for moving toward an evolutionary way of life.
9. **Reversing negative sanctions from oneself:** This is an extremely important ability, for we believe we are our own worst enemy as the result of our lifelong conformity to hierarchical patterns of behavior. Yet this very awareness can be the basis for rewarding ourselves because of achieving that awareness.
10. **Resisting repressive behavior:** Instead of burying negative experiences, we can learn to reinforce ourselves for bringing them to the surface where we can move away from self-blame.

The publication of that ISAR article on October 25th, 2024, was the beginning of a profound change in my life. I was beginning to learn to occasionally use some of the 10 evolutionary procedures. After my 93 years of my victimization by our bureaucratic way of life, I was beginning to move into an evolutionary way of life.

Given our present outward-oriented bureaucratic way of life, can we in fact build on our individualistic genetic heritage from the great apes in the forests of Africa to actually move toward personal evolution? That October 25th article certainly pointed in that direction. But try as I could, ten ideas were too complicated for me to make much headway, granting that it was a start.

For a week I struggled and struggled to move away from my lifelong patterns of disorganization in my personal life, granting that I was able to achieve a great deal academically, as illustrated by my entire academic career summarized in my article, “My Academic Journey” (ISAR, July 2024). Other recent articles prepared me for what was to come (ISAR, August 2024, June 2024, November 2023).

Then, on Friday, November 1st, I finally hit pay dirt by compressing the five perceptual actions into a single one, and doing the same for the five actions describing my everyday behavior addressing one situation after another. In other words, I emphasized only two actions: evolutionary perception, and evolutionary action.

The result has been absolutely amazing: my movement from personal disorganization to personal organization to an ever greater extent.

For example, for the first time in my life my desk is continuing to be well-ordered. For the weeks since November 1st I've not lost, even for a minute, the convictions I'm expressing in this article. I'm feeling more relaxed and less pressured than ever before. I'm driving more safely instead of going substantially over the speed limit by feeling that every second counts. I'm eating a more healthful diet. When I wake up after a bad dream I realize that it's a product of my past victimization by our hierarchical way of life and do not feel put down. I'm finding the time to exercise. My dreams have changed from negative to positive ones.

Granting all of these changes, there are other developments illustrating my movement ever further in an evolutionary direction. For example, I will be giving a seminar having the same title as this article on January 20th, 2025, in Sarasota, Florida, at Plymouth Harbor on Sarasota Bay. It will be available later that week on YouTube through my website, [behavioral-scientists.com](http://behavioral-scientists.com). And I will reach out to the movers and shakers of the world with these ideas, writing to well-known individuals who might be interested in what I'm accomplishing. I will be able to respond to readers and others who reach me at [bernie@behavioral-scientists.com](mailto:bernie@behavioral-scientists.com).

More generally, I and my colleagues are planning to spearhead a widening social movement— **individual evolution**— aimed at nothing less than moving educational and other institutions throughout the world in the developmental direction outlined in this article. For example, I'll be helping them in their publication of articles illustrating their own movement in an evolutionary direction. And I'll be making full use of the social media to get my message out very widely. This includes sending out this article to sociologists and other social scientists.

Our approach will follow the vision of John Dewey, who envisioned in his *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920/1948) that “the supreme test of all political institutions and industrial arrangements shall be the contribution they make to the all-around growth of every member of society.” He believed that the central mission of government, business, education, religion and the family should be to “educate every individual into the full stature of his possibility” (*Creating Life*, 11). From our own perspective, that “full stature” is unlimited.

Granting my having learned to rebound from my failures and develop increasing successes, we all can learn to do the same. I'm asking every single reader to do something that is most difficult: Assume that you can actually learn to continue to develop yourself intellectually, emotionally, and in your ability to solve problems throughout the rest of your life. Then proceed to work to develop the habits of behavior that will fulfill this promise.

Based on the seminars I've given in Sarasota, Florida, in 2021 and 2024, this will be a difficult task. What I'm asking you to do is nothing less than oppose the way of life you've followed ever since you were born. However, given your understanding of the

ideas in this article, accompanied by emotional commitment to the vision expressed here, and joined by perseverance despite a series of failures, I know you can succeed. By so doing, you will be able to join what I'm convinced will become a rapidly widening movement toward **individual evolution**.

My rationale for this belief is partly based on the publications of two individuals, as described in

*Creating Life*:

Fred Polak—a Dutch sociologist and well-known futurist—believed in the enormous power of visions. After having studied the entire history of Western civilization (1961, 1973), he wrote: “The more powerful the image of the future is, the more powerfully it acts in determining the actual future” (1961, II: 341).

What, then, are the characteristics of such an image that make it effective? How effective, in the sense of promising to yield actual changes in society, is our own vision?

The contemporary sociologist Lawrence Busch based his doctoral dissertation (1974) on Polak's achievements. In an article following his dissertation, Busch focused on answering the question of “What conditions appear necessary to construct the future successfully, either as individuals, as organizations, or as a society” (1976: 29).

Key requirements for a successful image of the future that Busch discovered mesh with our own vision of how to move toward personal and world evolution (40).

Busch states a precondition for a successful image of the future: “a crisis must be widely perceived in the existing order. The crisis is the catalyst that makes the new image of the future meaningful as an alternative” (Busch, 1976: 36). I have been deeply influenced by the importance of Busch's list of seven characteristics of a successful image of the future:

1. **An image of the future must be holistic if it is to achieve wide-spread acceptance . . . .** The image must provide a grand panoramic view of an achievable future state . . . . It must hold the promise of resolving the immediate problems of the day as well as explaining all that the old order explained. It must offer a new epistemological base upon which to construct knowledge itself. It cannot restrict itself to a particular problem but must forthrightly address *all* the problems plaguing the present . . . .
2. **A successful image of the future must provide the promise of the resolution of the anomalies and contradictions of the existing order . . . .** Like scientific paradigms, images of the future are historically specific . . . . The problems of a decaying Roman Empire were vastly different from those that confront us now . . . . On a societal level, a new image of the future must soon include the promise of solving in concert the problems of environmental decay, maldistribution of food and resources, overly powerful military machines, authoritarianism in the workplace, sexism, and racism. . . .
3. **The future must be constructed in the present, not the future.** The personal commitment of individuals to a new image of the future changes the context in which the present is interpreted. The future does not begin after the present but has its groundwork laid in the present. The future we envision is only directly relevant to us now, in the present, and not to the people of some future present . . . .
4. **A successful image of the future must provide an escape from the existing order, but it must find that escape within the existing order itself.** It is impossible to provide an

alternative image of the future that captures the imagination and loyalty of the entire society by retreating to a place spatially remote from the rest of society. While such places may serve as testing grounds for experimental organizational forms, it is only by active involvement in everyday life within the larger society that a new image of the future becomes a meaningful alternative. Most nineteenth-century utopian communities and the present day retreat communes . . . share this major flaw . . . .

5. ***A successful image of the future must provide an operationalizable methodology for the individual . . . .*** This is not to say that everyone should go off and “do their own thing” . . . . The choice, though made by individuals on a conscious level, nevertheless remains within strict limits that are unique to each situation . . . nor by methodology do we mean the creation of a highly disciplined, clandestine organization with an elaborate hierarchical structure . . . . What is meant by an *individual* methodology is a set of rules and examples that provide the individual with a modus operandi similar to the rules of a game (Huizinga, 1950). They make clear what needs to be done without the necessity for an order from some higher authority. The early Christians had no need to consult with a priest before acting as Christians . . . .
6. ***All successful images of the future are structured. . . .*** The shape and form of the structure will vary from image to image, stressing one portion or another of human life. Hence our present-day image, originating in the Protestant Reformation, has tended to stress economic life. The ancient Greek image apparently stressed the political . . . . There is a tendency on the part of many who are concerned with replacing the existing structure to expend a great deal of time and energy combating the existing order and to devote almost no time to the structure of the alternative they propose . . . . It may be that the lack of a clear image was Marx’s greatest failing . . . . By comparison, we may examine the activities of America’s founding fathers, who felt that their image of the future had to have its structure defined in writing. . . .
7. ***A meaningful image of the future must involve the mundane.*** Its proponents must be concerned about details of everyday life, for it is the collapse of the routine of everyday life that directly affects everyone . . . .

When money ceases to have value, when essential goods are nowhere to be found, when essential services cannot be delivered, when laws are enforced erratically, when tomorrow appears completely uncertain, then the routine of everyday life collapses along with the legitimacy of the existing order. The challenge to a new image of the future is to be ready to re-establish the routine of everyday life in a new way (Busch, 1976: 29–36).

**[Instructions to ISAR editor: (1) Eliminate the above space that my computer insisted on making. (2) Start each of the 7 points above after skipping a space between it and the previous point. (3) Skip the spaces below, which my computer, once again, insisted on].**

I believe that societies are presently experiencing Bush’s pre-condition for a successful image of the future, given increasing problems such as climate change, growing authoritarianism throughout the world, threats of using nuclear weapons, continuing wars, and much more. And I am equally convinced that this article points a direction for fulfilling all seven of Busch’s analysis of what will make for a successful image of the future. We should note, for example, Busch’s emphasis on the importance of a holistic or interdisciplinary approach, as well as the centrality of individual development, including one’s mundane everyday

activities. As for the idea of structure, this indicates the importance of our moving away from old habits of both putting ourselves down and allowing others to do the same. By contrast, I’m convinced that we must learn to reward ourselves ever more frequently.

Following my story, “Wizard of Oz 2,” in my book, *Personal Evolution through Film* (2014), Dorothy is joined by the Scarecrow, Tin Man, Lion, the Munchkins, Auntie Em and Uncle Henry. They travel on that same yellow brick road, which now leads far beyond Emerald City and points in an evolutionary direction. The Wicked Witch of the South, sister of the Wicked Witch of the West, lures them off the yellow brick road with M & M’s, cream puffs, fruit tarts, cupcakes, ice cream cones, lollypops, and the keys to a Mercedes-Benz. But Glinda, the Good Witch of the North, appears and shows them on a large screen their future obesity, and they move back on the road. Dorothy bursts into song: “Today I’ve wished upon a star, And look at how the clouds are far behind me. I’m way above the chimney tops, Far from all those fancy shops, That’s where you’ll find me. Birds fly over the rainbow. If they can then so can I!”

Dear reader, here is a summary of the basic ideas within this article. I begin with awareness of the basic problems we’re all facing. I continue with a vision of the incredible potentials of every single one of us. I conclude with a program for a movement which will solve these problems by fulfilling those potentials.

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