

Playfully Transforming the World

The Premise of The Infinite Game Platform

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New Four Noble Truths

Buddhism places the awareness of “impermanence” at the center of their teaching (= *dharma* = that which holds (us) and that which (we) uphold). In living life and in being involved in the work of transformation I make the following four assumptions:

1. Bi-terminality of my life: My life has a beginning and an end and therefore I am here only for a brief moment of time relative to the entire lifespan of the universe (even with a transhumanistic technological augmentation).
2. Bi-terminality of the human race (*Homo sapiens*): In the cosmic scale of time *Homo sapiens* will someday become extinct and therefore we humans are here only for a brief moment of time (relative to the entire lifespan of the whole universe with or without transhumanistic technological augmentations.)
3. The world will change or transform absolutely without me and therefore in the cosmic and planetary schemes of things my existence is utterly inconsequential.
4. My existence, as a *singular cosmic event-destiny*, is uniquely significant for the brief moment of time while I am so fortunate to have been given the gift of life.

The tentative experimental answer to the question of how to live my life and what to do in my life arises from the context informed by these four assumptions.

The purpose of life is *to be*, which is ongoingly fulfilled until we exist no more. And what is left to do in life is *to play*. In other words, being is the purpose while doing is the play, and in becoming the purpose is fulfilled as the play.

You may have heard of the four noble truths (assertive propositions) of Buddhism:

- (1) Life is suffering (existential suffocation).
- (2) There is a set of causes that makes life suffering.
- (3) There is a way out of life of suffering.
- (4) The way out is an eightfold path (“noble eightfold path”)

I have an entire new set of four noble truths (declarative propositions):

- (1) Life is joy.
- (2) You are the source of joy.
- (3) There is a way to live your life as an evolving unfoldment of joy.
- (4) The way is an eightfold path of play (“noble eightfold play”).

While my colleagues and I are engaged in serious subjects and issues that concern humanity and affect the world, the visionary platform and activist community we are co-creating, The Infinite Game Platform (IGP) and The Berlin Future Forum (BFF), and the transformational work in which we are engaged are conceived and actualized as a game-playing platform and a play community.

Our work is not for dispelling darkness (suffering and problem); our work is for increasing light (happiness and joy). In the process darkness will become progressively less, because darkness is nothing but the absence of light and the presence of light is inversely proportional to the presence of darkness.

Thus, we look at the problems of the world and the issues of the planet as challenges and opportunities that are always inherent in all well-played games.

Let us transmute our compassion from “suffering together” (the original etymological meaning of the term) to “rejoicing together” (the new original meaning – rejoicing and delighting together with passion – the deepest desire of the soul) and bring our inner joy, inner light, to every place where there is suffering.

“Compassion is probably the only antitoxin of the soul. Where there is compassion, even the most poisonous impulses become relatively harmless. One would rather see the world run by men who set their hearts on toys but are accessible to pity, than by men animated by lofty ideals whose dedication makes them ruthless. In the chemistry of man’s soul, almost all noble attributes—courage, honor, hope, faith, duty, loyalty, etc.— can be transmuted into ruthlessness. Compassion alone stands apart from the continuous traffic between good and evil proceeding within us.” —Eric Hoffer

In compassion, in the sense of “karuna (Sanskrit)” or “snying-rje (Tibetan)” translated as “tenderheartedness” or “loving kindness,” moral righteousness or spiritual-intellectual superiority often subtly present in other moral virtues is absent. To be compassionate means to simply allow other people to touch your heart so deeply and totally that you also touch their hearts. Healing occurs through this mutual touching of your and their hearts.

What you may say or do is unimportant and nonessential. It is always spontaneous and individual and appropriate to the relational context in which it takes place. Therefore, it cannot be reduced to a generalized mode, pattern, or model of action or behavior. Further, when the healing, the transformation, happens, you are clearly and acutely aware that it is not your doing at all. You are simply present to the healing, the transformation, that takes place in the space of compassion, of mutual touching of the hearts. You simply feel grateful for the opportunity.

Suffused with the sense of gratitude and feeling of compassion, let us play!

The Primacy of Quest

Question: Our society has become so complex that nobody can claim to understand it — global warming being an obvious case. If we can't seem to make the choices required even there, where data is abundant and the risk is immediate and existential, how much faith does our governance system merit when we consider problems like managing the rise of artificial intelligence?

Answer: The degree of complexity of a subject is relative to the intelligence that perceives it. A subject that appears highly complex to one person may be very simple to another person who has thoroughly studied the subject and thus has developed his or her intelligence relative to it.

Learning is that process through which complexity becomes transformed to simplicity. Through the right process of learning we develop our intelligence and come to perceive simplicity on the other side of complexity.

That which properly guides the right process of learning is not right answers but right questions. It is through asking questions that we learn. Therefore, intelligence, the aptitude for learning, is primarily the aptitude for asking questions — right questions.

In the process of learning, in the process of asking questions and thereby developing intelligence, we develop our perception that allows us to see simplicity where we previously saw complexity.

Through the process of learning we increasingly gain knowledge, and yet the prime mover of our learning process, if it is authentic, always remains unanswered questions — that is, the unknown, not the known.

“The smartest person in the world is the one who has the most questions. He is smart enough to ask them, for to ask a question you need to know a great deal already. The more you know the more you learn that there is more to learn. The more you know the

more you become aware of your ignorance. New knowledge opens up a new horizon of the unknown and brings forth a new set of questions. This is progress. "(From my 5/5/11 FB post)

This never-ending process of learning, of asking questions, I call *quest*. My primary interest in life is not to solve problems of the world but to create a world that is fit for quest—for wonderers and explorers who are in quest.

The problems of the world will be solved, resolved, or dissolved and the complexity of the world will become (perceived to be) increasingly simpler, and yet the Heart or Passion of the wonderers and explorers lives always and forever in their never-ending quest.

The Infinite Game Platform that my colleagues and I are developing is not primarily a platform for solving problems but a platform for co-creating a new kind of world that is fit for wonderers and explorers who are into their infinite game that is their eternal quest. In the process and inside this platform, as a necessary consequence of quest and play, we will innovatively solve problems and creatively transform seeming complexities into elegant simplicities.

Quest and commitment unite, whereas ideology and opinion divide. Science has evolved because scientists are united in their quest for greater truth. Technology has developed because engineers are united in their quest for greater efficiency. Whereas, neither politics nor religion has evolved because people are perpetually in conflict, divided by their beliefs, ideologies, and opinions—that is, by the answers they hold.

For this reason, my approach is not based on any ideologies, beliefs, or opinions—that is, on any answers. That which my colleagues and I propose, in the spheres of problem solving, is akin to a scientific postulate or hypothesis. We try and experiment with it. If it works, we will improve it. If it does not work, we will discard it and construct another proposition (postulate/hypothesis).

Now the question: "Our society has become so complex that nobody can claim to understand it — global warming being an obvious case. If we can't seem to make the choices required even there, where data is abundant and the risk is immediate and existential, how much faith does our governance system merit when we consider problems like managing the rise of artificial intelligence?"

This question is loaded with unexamined or unquestioned assumptions that are taken to be facts. When, through examination, assumptions are recognized as such, we gain freedom, including the freedom to create a new and different set of assumptions.

This question, on the one hand, consists of a confession of unexamined assumptions and, on the other, implies one question: how to control or manage what is (assumed to be) uncontrollable or unmanageable based on the assumption that to solve a problem means to manage or to control it.

Beneath the need and desire for control there exists the inability to powerfully and playfully deal with or dance with insecurity (emotional) and uncertainty (intellectual).

Throughout history, the humans have equated solution (to societal problem) with control. For instance, political power as a solution is the power to control the masses through coercion and force.

Even good people with good intentions who want to create a better world want to control the process and the outcome. They want to become benevolent dictators whose benevolence can easily turn into malevolence, as seen over and over again throughout history. Hence, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

You can be in charge and in control without controlling, and you can be authentically in charge or in control only of your own actions. We must completely let go of our desire or need to control other people and their actions. That is, *let go* and *let be*.

We offer an entirely different approach to problem solving that is not based on (the desire or the need for) control and management but on playful participation and engagement through game creation and game playing.

If the game is played well, if the game is a well-played game, not only we will have had a lot of creative fun but also the problem will have been solved.

Transcending the Victim-Savior Matrix and Other Points

Question: As I have had the opportunity to go through these texts (“Playfully Transforming the World”), the question that arises for me is: “How does all this relate to the people that are just miserably struggling to survive (in Africa, some parts of Brazil, and many other parts of the world)? How do we get the whole society engaged in this new game?”

Answer: To respond fully to your question requires the rest of my life and the rest of our lives together! My brief response is twofold – philosophic and strategic.

1. One prevailing paradigm in which the problems of the world are seen is through the filter of victimhood. Victimhood or victim consciousness is the default mode of human consciousness, while the ego-logical consciousness is the default program.

Inside this victimhood paradigm, there exists a tetrad (a set of four) of victim, perpetrator, judge, and savior.

In this tetradic structure, one person sometimes identifies himself or herself with more than one role: the victim and judge, the savior and judge, or the victim, judge, and savior at the same time. Who the perpetrator is, differs from one situation or ideology to another.

In the U.S. we now have the 2016 presidential election. On the Republican side, we have Mr. Donald Trump who presents himself as the savior-rescuer of the common people who are the victims of the perpetrator—the inept government officials and corrupt politicians. On the Democratic side, we have Mr. Bernie Sanders who presents himself as the savior-rescuer of the common people who are the victims of the perpetrator—the “evil” capitalists, that is, the Wall Street bankers and the multinational corporations.

The only difference between them is whom they identify as the perpetrator of the injustice done to the same victims—the common people. They both also paint their political opponents as being a party to the perpetrators.

Please make no mistake. In real life people, including us, fall victim to some misfortunes, some severe and some less severe. However, falling victim is not the same as falling into victimhood and developing victim consciousness. Victims with victim consciousness judge and blame, and some take on the causes of rescuing other victims as their saviors. They all have some people or some groups as the perpetrators.

History is fraught with examples of countless unspeakable atrocities that have been perpetrated by one group of humans against another group of humans. However, the perpetuation of victim consciousness and of what is called “savior complex” (the other side of victim consciousness) is never going to solve or eradicate the problem because this paradigm disempowers people from claiming self-responsibility by perpetuating the blame game.

We must therefore be very self-vigilant against savior complex and acting as saviors when we engage ourselves in action to solve or eradicate problems. This implies that we must be very self-aware of the possible existence of victim consciousness in the shadow side of our own psyche.

The new paradigm described in the last two papers is devoid of the trap of savior complex and perpetuation of victim consciousness.

2. There exist two kinds of problems or deficits: (1) functional deficit—what is not working and (2) actualization deficit— what is missing in actualizing the solution to a functional deficit.

As we look at the problems of the world, usually we see functional deficits – that is, what is not working. Solutions to functional deficits taken in isolation from actualization deficits are not too difficult to find or develop because they remain theoretical.

For instance (let me use a rather bad idea to highlight the point), according to Forbes, in 2015, a total of 1,826 people made to the list of billionaires, with their total net worth \$7.05 trillion. If they all *voluntarily* agree to pull together 10% of their individual assets, strategically (i.e., bypassing governments) provide basic income to everyone in the world below or at the poverty level, along with the basic necessities of physical survival such as clean water, food, and shelter, and then build the 21st-century state of the art educational and healthcare systems to make everyone a healthy self-sufficient citizen of the world, the problems of poverty will be basically solved, along with a host of other problems. Would this ever happen? It is highly unlikely, so unlikely that the probability of it ever happening is in actuality zero.

Basically, in the same or similar way most problems of the world persist because of the ever-present actualization deficits. Even if we can see a clear solution to a functional deficit, we do not often have the strategic intelligence to solve the actualization deficit. A really good solution would address both the functional and actualization deficits in an integral, comprehensive, and strategic manner.

If you are moved to solve a problem not reactively as a savior but responsively and responsibly as a part of your life's calling and of your transformational quest in life, then you need to clearly identify both the functional deficit – what is not working – and the actualization deficit – what is not there in the process of transforming dysfunctionality to functionality.

We can discuss, look into, and find a solution or resolution for a specific problem or issue that is close to your heart. While most major problems of the world are interrelated and interconnected, each problem requires a specific configuration of strategies and approaches to be effective. Each solution is thus required to be uniquely transdisciplinary.

The world changes through us as we change, while we change as we become engaged in world-changing action. World transformation and individual transformation constitute one inseparable transformational movement. It is not either the inner or the outer, but both the inner (consciousness) and the outer (the world) that become transformed in the evolutionary process of co-transformation.

Therefore, in order to be effective as a change agent, it is essential that we each uniquely engages in the work of inner self-transformation while participating in the work of world transformation.

3. "How do we get the whole society engaged in this new game?"

Great inventors and engineers have changed the world but they do not involve the whole society in the process of their invention. The whole society benefits from their technological inventions as the users of them. That is, the whole society gets involved as the users of technology but not as the inventor of it. The same applies to social engineering.

The official number of those who have been called the Founding Fathers and Framers of the United States—the social architects and engineers responsible for the founding of the United States—is a little over 100. Of course there were more people who partook and influenced the revolution and independence in differently significant ways, but they still constituted a very small minority amongst three million people.

Thus, history is made always by small groups of committed people who have new visions and ideas and who can transform their visions and ideas into working models and then eventually into actuality. No mass movement has ever succeeded in history and in fact no mass movement is ever necessary to change the world.

We need to carefully gather together a group of dedicated individuals with a shared vision who can work together in alignment beyond agreement.

"Truth always rests with the minority, and the minority is always stronger than the majority, because the minority is generally formed by those who really have an opinion, while the strength of a majority is illusory, formed by the gangs who have no opinion — and who, therefore, in the next instant (when it is evident that the minority is the stronger) assume its opinion... while truth again reverts to a new minority." — Søren Kierkegaard

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." —Margaret Mead

"History is made by minorities--or, more precisely, history is made by intellectual movements, which are created by minorities. Who belongs to these minorities? Anyone who is able and willing actively to concern himself with intellectual issues. Here, it is not quantity, but quality that counts (the quality--and consistency--of the ideas one is advocating)." — Ayn Rand

"Almost always, the creative dedicated minority has made the world better." — Martin Luther King, Jr.