

THE 2012 EDITION

GLOBAL SENSE

JUDAH FREED

*A spiritual handbook on the nature of
society and how to change the world
by changing ourselves*

Does your life make global sense?

Test your beliefs by responding to the ten statements below:

Agree Disagree Unsure

- I can change the world by changing myself.
- I am connected energetically to all life on earth.
- My personal and spiritual growth affects the world.
- What I eat and everything I buy has a global impact.
- The current world economic system is unsustainable.
- Global climate change is real and threatens humanity.
- Addiction to authority keeps people feeling powerless.
- Competitive alpha male rule is preventing world peace.
- Real democracy is possible if people are enlightened.
- Humanity is evolving into global consciousness.

If you agree with three or more of the belief statements above, you probably are a global thinker. If you want to feel more empowered to uplift your life and our world at the same time, this book is for you!

GLOBAL SENSE *makes common sense.*

“*Global Sense* explodes the old myths that we are essentially evil, that hierarchy and dominance are natural law. Judah Freed reveals how ancient ‘male rule’ and ‘authority addiction’ restrain our innate power for self government. Democracy can work, he argues, when we are willing to do the personal and spiritual growth needed to manage our freedom and society responsibly”

– **Thom Hartmann**, author, *Screwed, Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight*

“*Global Sense* is about personal and social transformation, starting with the inner self feeling a genuine recognition of our rights and responsibilities. The book is a declaration of our global interdependence rooted in Gandhi’s principle of personal sovereignty.”

– **Dr. Vandana Shiva**, author, *Stolen Harvest; Earth Democracy*

“Modern culture struggles at the crossroads of reckless technology and the duty to uncover the spirit on which the healing of mankind rests. *Global Sense* helps us choose the path of healing.”

– **Malidoma Somé**, author, *Of Water and the Spirit*

“Judah Freed proposes a cultural/political Big Bang. He argues that we can best empower one another by empowering ourselves. The breakthrough idea of this important book is that with personal growth and global thinking, we can have both safety *and* liberty.”

– **Dave Wann**, co-author, *Affluenza*; author, *Simple Prosperity*

“Judah Freed reminds us of the continuing relevance of American patriot Thomas Paine while transforming Paine’s message of democracy and human rights into the spiritually-rich and psychologically-informed discourse of the 21st century.”

– **Rabbi Michael Lerner**; author, *The Left Hand of God*; editor, *Tikkun*

“It makes ‘global sense’ to read Judah Freed’s book, and then to act mindfully to make a difference in the world.”

– **Thomas Crum**, author, *The Magic of Conflict; Three Deep Breaths*

“The book is fascinating, and certainly useful.”

– **Joanne Greenberg**, author, *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden*

“Read this book!”

– **Pete Seeger**; folk singer and activist

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*A spiritual handbook on the nature of
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JUDAH FREED

Inspired by Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*

Hoku House
Kauai, Hawaii USA

Global Sense: The 2012 Edition

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and how to change the world by changing ourselves**

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GLOBAL SENSE: The 2012 Edition.

*A spiritual handbook on the nature of society
and how to change the world by changing ourselves.*

(Inspired by Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*)

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1. Spirituality.
2. Contemporary Affairs/Social Issues.
3. Personal Growth/Self Help.
4. Philosophy/Ethics.
5. Politics/Government.
6. Communication.
7. Gender Studies.

Dedications

*For Thomas Paine, who showed up, paid attention,
told the truth, and let go to Nature's God.
May his old soul smile in peace.*

*For Mohandas K. Gandhi, who embodied the change
he wished to see in the world. May we all do likewise.*

*For Melissa Mojo, who loves light and dispels shadows.
May she always be blessed as a blessing in the world.*

Common sense is not so common.

- VOLTAIRE

GLOBAL SENSE

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New opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed
without any other reason but because they are not already common.

- JOHN LOCKE

INTRODUCTION

2012 and the Ascent of Humanity

Millions of people today believe a prophecy the world will end in 2012, according to interpretations of the Mayan calendar. Some expect total destruction, maybe from a reversal of the magnetic poles. Many expect the mass “ascension” or “rapture” of people shifting to a higher dimension, spiritually or physically. Others say the world *as we know it* will end — a transformation of society worldwide. The skeptics, in contrast, claim the Mayan calendar does not really end in 2012 because the ancients simply ran out of rock.

Until we see what happens in 2012 and beyond, why not address the global social and ecological problems we all face together? Why not be fully enlightened people who change the world by changing ourselves? Why not use the power of our global connectivity?

Because we are globally interactive, *everything we think, feel, say and do has a real impact in the world*. When we “think globally and act locally,” our daily choices tend to be enlightened. A global sensibility affects what foods we eat, what clothes we wear, what cars we drive, what books we read, what jobs we accept, what candidates we elect. “Global sense” affects how we live, love, learn, work, play, pray, and vote. Each enlightened choice, in turn, helps enlighten our world — whether gradually or miraculously. Indeed, we are powerful!

The cause of global awakening is the cause of all humankind. The outcome of our choices in the next few decades will impact all life on earth for hundreds or thousands of years.

Granted, the one percent of humanity now ruling our world resists global sense. To repress protests like the Occupy Wall Street or Arab Spring movements, they've declared "endless war" on the demonized advocates of human rights and social responsibility. They distract us with mindless media mayhem while desensitizing us to real human suffering. They promote ignorance by undermining public education as zealots stay busy banning books. Such abuses of natural law must concern everyone who trusts the power of love and reason.

We are at a "tipping point" when our civilization may rise or fall. To survive and thrive, each of us now needs to ascend to our highest human potential. We cannot afford to remain hopeless and afraid. We cannot afford delays. We need to claim our global power. We need to take action in ways that make global sense.

My initial inspiration in writing *Global Sense* was Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. In an age of doubt, fear and social unrest, his pivotal 1776 essay turned around public opinion in favor of a bold American revolution. In this completely rewritten 2012 edition of the book, I'm hoping now to help shift public opinion in favor of global evolution. I have asked Spirit to use me to produce a useful guidebook for these times that try our souls. I have done my best to get out of the way, so sacred messages come through with resonant clarity.

Regardless of our age, gender, race, class, party, or religion, a clarion call of alarm for the future of all life on our homeland earth is long overdue. Among those worldwide today working to connect spiritual growth and social change gratefully stands...

Judah Freed,
Kauai, Hawaii

PART I

**Worldwide
Awakening**

For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver.

- THOMAS PAINE

1

Global Enlightenment

Shortly after the big May Day 1971 antiwar protests in Washington, DC, I am blessed at age 20 by my first true experience of global sense. That awakening transforms me.

On Saturday, May 1, I arrive with a backpack and sleeping bag at the protestors' encampment in West Potomac Park. The U.S. Park Service has granted a camping permit for the peninsula on the tidal basin near the Thomas Jefferson Memorial. A half million Americans are gathering in the nation's capital for a demonstration of civil disobedience on Monday morning. Because the U.S. government will not stop the war in Vietnam, we will stop the government for one day by blocking traffic.

After eating lunch in the communal kitchen, I go to a general assembly training on nonviolence — how to get arrested without getting hurt. On Saturday night is a Beach Boys concert at the Washington Monument. I'm invited to help out backstage by singer songwriter Billy Mitchell, whom I'd met that spring in New York when working nights in Greenwich Village at the Fat Black Pussycat, the folk music room of the Feenjon coffee house on McDougal Street, where Billy often headlined.

A stagehand falls and cuts his knee, so I take him to the nearby medical tent. When the short-staffed doctor in charge hears I have Red Cross First Aid training from the Boy Scouts, he asks me to stay and help.

Toward the end of the concert, a man in his thirties enters the tent and says he's taken some bad acid. He's the fifth person that night on a bumper LSD trip. He tells us that he's a federal agent assigned to give bad acid to protest leaders, so they get sent to the hospital. He says he took a tab of the bad acid by mistake instead of the pure acid in his other pocket, which he says was his bait for getting close to the protest leaders. When an ambulance carries him away, I think to myself, what a wild hallucination!

On Sunday morning, as I'm watching the sunrise from the Jefferson Memorial, the encampment is surrounded by the National Guard while helicopters overhead blare loudspeaker orders evicting everyone from the site. I find out the camping permit was revoked because of all the people going to hospitals on drug overdoses. The line of armed troops will not let me back in the park to get my belongings. I later learn that everything left behind was bulldozed onto trucks, taken to the dump and burned.

The protestors regroup at local churches that morning. We will proceed with a planned march despite the parade permit being revoked. A vast sea of chanting demonstrators fill the streets of Washington as we march past federal office buildings. I'm feeling that together we really can change the world. When federal troops outflank us and charge, my young legs barely outrun the screaming soldier swinging a billy club at my head.

That night I sleep on the floor of a church under a donated blanket. In the morning, still wearing the medic's armband I was given Saturday night, I join the medical unit off DuPont Circle, where some of the worst fighting occurs between protestors and federal troops. Since I am indoors treating bruises and eye burns from pepper spray or mustard gas, I avoid being among the largest mass arrests in U.S. history (13,000 protesters in one day) Seeing so much violence on both sides sickens me.

I return Monday night to my sister's home in suburban Maryland. She and her husband, a former Air Force Academy cadet, support the war. On Tuesday morning at breakfast, we argue fiercely. Seething in resentment, I storm out the front door and go for a walk in the nearby woods.

I need to calm down, so I decide to try a Tibetan meditation I'd learned a week earlier in New York. My best friend at the coffee house, a mellow "go with the flow" Buddhist, had been my informal teacher.

In a grove of trees, I settle into a half-lotus posture, close my eyes, and begin circular breathing from my belly. Soon an electric tingling starts in my feet, spreads up my legs to my hips and rises up my spine as an energy halo forms around my head. A soft drone hums in my ears.

My noisy mind falls quiet. For the first time in my life, the constant mental chatter ceases. I sit in stillness, fully alive, fully awake, aware of myself being aware of myself. All my boundaries melt away. I float in an ocean of joyful peace, gently serene in the eternal now.

After minutes bathing in bliss, savoring sweet nectar in the back of my throat, I open my eyes to look around. The leaves and flowers glow with vibrant colors beyond any rainbow. The air itself feels granular, filled with specs of dancing light, tiny bits of living prana energy.

A sublime wave of love washes through me, connecting me invisibly to the grass below, the trees above, the white clouds, an ant crawling across my knee, the barn swallow gliding past in slow motion. I feel one with all life in the forest, all life on the planet, all life in the universe.

The sensation of oneness fades when I stand and walk out of the forest, back to "normal" reality, yet that awakening still guides my life.

The Emergence of Global Sense

I have rarely met anyone in the U.S. or any other country who, if asked, has not voiced faith that humanity will become enlightened one day, even if in the far distant future. Yet too few of us see that our survival depends upon shifting into higher consciousness *now*.

Are we ready for global enlightenment? This depends on how we define "globalization." If we define globalization as the establishment of some corporate superstate above all governments, then we are not

ready, and we never will be ready. If instead we mean the awakening of humanity to a conscious sense of our global connectivity, then we are more ready now than ever before.

Showing our readiness, color photographs of our planet floating in space are penetrating our cultural consciousness. In these photos, we see no lines between nations, so we cannot pretend to live apart from one another and the planet. We sense our global oneness. An awareness that all life on earth is interconnected alters our thinking about the nature of the universe, the nature of our Creator and the nature of our souls. From a religious belief in our unity with all life, the earth photos offer visible evidence of it. We can advance from the Age of Faith into the Age of Knowledge.

Astrophysics asserts that the whole of life interacts at the subtlest levels in our universe. Literally, *all life is light*, or energy slowed down into matter vibrating below the threshold of $E=MC^2$. Every atom in our bodies came from stars and nebula. We are stardust. We are all related at a subatomic level to everyone and everything on earth and in the universe, including lifeforms in other dimensions. The Lakota say it cleanly — *hau mitakuye oyas'in* — all my relations.

Quantum physics further shows that subatomic particles respond to the mental intentions of observers. Werner Heisenberg called this the Uncertainty Principle, admitting the power of mind over matter, which noetic science is proving in the Global Consciousness Project. *We all exist in a quantum space where our minds turn waves of infinite possibility into particles of finite experience.*

Our global oneness is expressed in philosophy, too. Ross Ashby's ideas on cybernetics led Ludwig von Bertalanffy to General Systems Theory. Peter Russell wrote about the Global Brain, *Gaia*, our living and awake planet. R. Buckminster Fuller invented a geodesic sphere and dome to model "spaceship earth." Marshall McLuhan said mass media is uniting us in a "global village." Pierre Lévy told how global

media induces “collective intelligence.” Ken Wilber has proposed an integral “theory of everything.” These and many other global thinkers influence us in every culture, reshaping our view of life.

The press talks about our *interdependence* in news stories on global trade, global warming, global health hazards, global overpopulation, global food and water shortages, the global war on terrorism. Media advertising is indoctrinating us as globalization consumers in a world marketplace that links fishing villages to farm towns to major cities. Ironically, in conditioning us to see global “free trade” as good, the transnational corporations behind the mass media foster the global thinking that prompts us to support “fair trade” instead.

On top of these trends is a growing spiritual and even sociological awareness that everything we think, feel, say, and do affect ourselves, our families, workplaces, communities, regions, nations, world, and the universe. We hear sages say: *We create our own reality*. Because we all create reality together, simultaneously, we all are “co-creators” with one another — and energetically with the Source of life.

All these factors and more contribute to the emergence of global thinking today. *Global sense is a good idea whose time has come.*

Governing Ourselves in a Global Society

When we connect to the infinite power that flows from being one with the planet and the universe, we realize that every act of our bodies, minds, hearts, and souls affects our lives, the lives of others, and the earth itself. Self control comes more easily. We stop needing others to control our lives for us. We can govern ourselves.

When we sense that everything in the universe is composed of vibrating energy, that because we exist we are one with this universal energy, from that moment onward, we can tune into our oneness with gratitude and manifest miracles in our lives. In 1990, for example,

after I'd tried every known method to quit smoking, I was guided in meditation to "invent" a way of quitting on the spiritual level, which worked so well that I lost all desire for tobacco in any form.

Our inner change shifts our outer reality. As we change what we attract to us vibrationally, we start making better choices, day by day progressing toward whatever better life we imagine. Looking back after months or years, noticing how we've changed and our world has changed, we call this a miracle. Such a practical miracle is what we need now to create a sustainable global civilization.

I believe "civilization" is the story of humanity learning to accept responsibility for free will. If we managed our lives sensibly, we'd need no high government to control our lowest impulses. Granted, there may be people who never recant criminality, but if the vast majority of us were raised from childhood to heed our conscience and reason, we'd barely need any government at all.

The laws of nature — *natural law* — should be governing us. However, that's not current reality. Today's reality is a corrupt world filled with greed, jealousy, hatred, violence, and suffering.

Why? Society reflects the web of mass consciousness we weave daily through our thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. This matrix shapes ourselves, our society, and our global ecosystems. Our harmful habits are reflected in society while society reinforces these harmful habits in us, so we vibrationally attract more of this negativity to us. To break the cycle, we need to cultivate spiritual mindfulness, express our true selves, and consider the lasting consequences of our choices. Uplifting how we see ourselves will uplift how we govern our world. *Enlightenment is the key to governing ourselves in a global society.*

Unfortunately, such common global sense faces resistance.

In our era of globalization, two specters haunt our world — the spirits of *genuine democracy* and *absolute tyranny*. Humanity lives in the broad spectrum between these two extremes.

On one side we find a grassroots movement for open democracy guided by an enlightened sense of our global oneness — inspired by visions of a peaceful, creative and sustainable future. With a strategy of changing the world one person at a time, people are building the *critical mass for a quantum shift of society*. The “Occupy Wall Street” movement is an expression of this trend. Given the world economic crisis and accelerating climate change, we hope humanity will reach the “tipping point” for this global shift before it’s too late.

On the other side are global corporations and religions ruling us through puppet governments that exploit our addiction to authority. If they have enough compliant followers to maintain the status quo, those in charge stay in charge. The top one percent of us at the center of this matrix realize their cultural mind control game is threatened by the global enlightenment movement. They resist our awakening with all of their cunning. They fear a revolution.

These two cultural forces are competing for power in the world. Which way goes our world hinges on which way goes each one of us. Our daily choices are deciding the fate of life on earth.

Thomas Paine inspired the frightened American colonists back in 1776 by saying, “Nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined declaration for independence.” To promote now an open declaration of our global interdependence, I’m praying this book helps to inspire humanity into global thinking. For the highest good, I’m praying for a miracle. I believe in miracles. Do you?

Mindful Self Rule and Personal Democracy

Some predict we are heading for a global corporate tyranny. The risk is real, yet I agree with seers like don Miguel Ruiz, Eckhart Tolle, Jean Houston, Paul Hawken, and others who predict a quantum jump of human consciousness into global enlightenment.

For us to change the world by changing ourselves, I believe that we need to practice both *mindful self rule* and *personal democracy*.

What do I mean by these terms?

*Mindful self rule** is the fine art of making life choices that make global sense, that benefit the world. When I quit smoking in 1990, that was an act of mindful self rule. When I commune with nature, that is an act of mindful self rule. When I forgive another person, that very definitely is an act of mindful self rule.

As we'll explore in Part IV, mindful self rule flows from our inner knowing, which is guided by our moral *conscience* — shaped by logic experience, intuition, emotions, physical senses, and spiritual senses. Knowing our true selves empowers mindful self rule. Psychology calls this an “internal locus of control,” that is, self control.

Personal democracy is the art of expressing mindful self rule in the world. When I offer amends to a person I've mistreated, that is an act of personal democracy. When I buy local organic food, that is an act of personal democracy. When I vote my conscience on election day, that very definitely is an act of personal democracy.

As we'll explore in Part V, personal democracy extends from our moral center to shape all our relationships and choices in the world. When our sense of global connectivity guides our lives, our spiritual consciousness empowers personal democracy.

Mindful self rule and personal democracy interact.

Within Taoism, the feminine *yin* energy stimulates the masculine *yang* energy as *yang* stimulates *yin* — both forming a dynamic loop. *Yin* and *yang* are one, interconnected and interdependent.

In the same way, *mindful self rule stimulates personal democracy as personal democracy stimulates mindful self rule*. In essence, our hearts and minds affect our words and deeds as our words and deeds affect our hearts and minds. They interact.

* To show the power of the self, I do *not* hyphenate “self-rule” and related compound terms.

One of the most stubborn issues in my life, for example, has been time management. I've struggled with arriving places when expected and meeting deadlines. Behind this behavior has been perfectionism and petulance rooted in this life and past lives. I've worked on loving myself as I am, releasing the belief that I must be perfect to be loved. I've come to see the issue as a matter of personal integrity. As a result, I have improved my relationship with time.

As above, so below; as within, so without. If enlightenment guides mindful self rule and personal democracy, then our awareness and behavior are in sync. We live in integrity. We express our authentic selves, our true selves, our loving souls that radiate peace, generosity and compassion. Letting go of struggle, we live in the free flow of life, allowing the universe to abundantly support us. The people, resources and circumstances we need are drawn to us daily. A global sensibility transforms our lives and our world.

But what if our inner wisdom conflicts with our outer actions? In *The Anatomy of Self*, Takeo Doi explains that Japanese culture sees a difference between outer face (*omote*) and inner truth (*ura*). Social standards or mores (*tatemaie*) may disagree with our inner knowledge of what is natural and right (*honne*). Any conflict between inner and outer can twist us into knots. This occurs in all cultures.

A primal inner conflict makes us vulnerable to the allure of kings, messiahs, ayatollahs, shoguns, warlords, dictators, elected presidents, or all other charming leaders who promise security in trade for our mindless obedience — the opposite of mindful self rule.

As we face the deep impact of the global changes today, we are like sleepers rudely roused from slumber by cold water being dumped on our beds. We may not welcome our awakening, but now that our eyes are opened to the power of our global oneness, we cannot return to living in a stupor as we did before. We need to accept our global reach and commit to living in a way that makes global sense.

Given global climate change and global economic upsets, we may never get another chance like today to induce world enlightenment. Any hesitation now may be fatal. We already have inside the spiritual power to create a civil society. All we lack is the political will.

We are akin to the frog placed into a pot of cool water over a low flame, floating placidly as the slowly rising heat boils us alive. If we do not act now, we will die. I believe that we will remain trapped in a fiery cauldron of ruthless wars and environmental disaster until we finally claim our power for true self government.

“To put the world right in order,” wrote Confucius, “we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must first put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must first cultivate our personal life; we must first set our hearts right.”

Those of us evolving a global consciousness already abound in all the power needed for moral self rule. Intelligence flourishes in every corner of our minds. We find ways to solve problems as they arise. Our willpower is superior to all those still reliant on despots. We feel compassion, and we act on it. We daily expand freedom, justice and peace on earth. We daily uplift humanity and help to heal the planet through what we think, feel, say, and do. We daily improve the world by improving ourselves.

The wise leaders we need on earth look back at us in the mirror each morning. By seeing our global oneness, we can fill the vacuum of visionary leadership in our homes, communities and world. “Our knowledge is hourly improving,” wrote Thomas Paine. “Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate?”

2

Self Government

My guide in Mumbai is frustrated with me. The year is 1998. We stand at the Gateway to India, the 25-meter arch built by the British colonial government during the Raj to commemorate the 1911 visit to India by King George V and Queen Mary. Following my guide's stern orders to avoid any eye contact with the beggars filling the square, I briefly admire the architecture, decline to buy anything from the vendors he points out, and tell him I'm ready to go.

As we return to his battered Tata automobile, he proposes taking me to a bazaar and then a brothel. No, I want to visit a Ganesha temple on this feast day, and I want to see the Bombay home of Mahatma Gandhi. Since my hotel's driver can get no kickbacks if I spend no money on his private clients, he is clearly frustrated with me.

Trying to figure out the crazy American, he asks me questions in Hindi-accented English. He learns I'd spoken that week at India's first Internet World conference and trade show in Delhi. I'd talked about educational media and interactive TV, plus I'd moderated several panels. I report that India is on the verge of a business boom, starting with computer services and software design. I tell him that India, the most populous democracy on earth, could become a global economic power in the 21st century, rivaled only by neighboring China. He is skeptical.

After crawling through city traffic, we arrive at Shri Siddhivinayak Temple, Mumbai's main center for the elephant-headed Lord Ganesha, the remover of obstacles, patron of new beginnings. On an average day, this temple built in 1801 attracts about 25,000 people, my guide says, but more than 100,000 people are expected on this feast day.

The atmosphere feels charged as we move from station to station in the temple. I'd brought along chocolate candy as my offering, which I give to a priest in the three-doored sanctum housing an ornate statue of Ganesha. I receive back a Prasad, an offering for either of two large silver statues of mice, believed to carry devotees' prayers to Ganesha. Emulating my guide, I set my offering at a statue's feet, put a hand over one of the mouse's ears and whisper in the other ear. Thinking of Christianity's St. Francis, I pray to be a channel for peace.

Before entering the temple, against my guide's advice, I'd given a piece of chocolate to a young girl. When we emerge, she meets me at the curb with a hundred friends, all of them with their hands out. My driver shoots a reproachful look at me over his shoulder as he pushes through the mob like a plow, shoving children out of our path to open the car door for me. He pushes his way around the car to climb into the right door behind the wheel and starts the motor. The car creeps slowly through the crowd of screaming children beating on the windows. I sit in the back seat, feeling torn apart inside. Was my gift to that child wrong?

We weave through the traffic until we reach a residential district and park the car at 19 Laburnam Road — the private residence of Mohandas Gandhi from 1917 to 1934. The two-story house called Mani Bhavan is now a museum and research center.

As my driver watches impatiently, I slowly walk through each room, viewing Gandhi's meager belonging — his books, writing desk, the pallet where he slept without his wife. I linger in the upstairs gallery, looking at photographs and dioramas showing key events in his life — his return from Africa, the salt march to the sea, the end of British colonial rule, the

partition of India and Pakistan, his assassination by a fundamentalist Hindu. I think of the hate-filled history between Hindus and Muslims. I think about the fears that drive us to kill our prophets.

When we leave the house, I am too overcome with emotions to speak. The most I can mutter is that I wanted to go to the closest beach to put my feet in the warm Arabian Sea. We ride in silence. I feel forever changed by encountering Gandhi's presence so intimately.

At the ocean, I remove my shoes and wade in the surf as children play nearby. So much filth sloshes against my ankles that I quickly leave the water, wash my feet at a public spigot, and put on my shoes. I stand alone as the setting sun lights the horizon red and gold.

At last my voice returns, strong and clear. I walk over to my guide, smile and say, "I'm ready to go back to the hotel now. Thank you."

He sighs and walks to the car. He clearly is still frustrated with me.

Spirituality and Politics

Each of us creates our lives daily through our thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. Our vibrational energy fields affect ourselves and our world — by design or by default. Because we do have an impact, whether we see it or not, we may as well live deliberately.

Once we awaken to a global sense of our connectivity, we tend to use our global power more wisely and responsibly. We tend to be alert to the consequences of our choices. We eat differently. We shop differently. We work differently. We vote differently. Changing our choices changes our lives and the world in which we live.

People who seek personal and spiritual growth today often want nothing to do with politics and social change. They may contribute to environmental or humanitarian causes, like saving whales or feeding children, but they rarely volunteer for grassroots campaigns. They equate politics with corruption. Many do not bother to vote.

In contrast, people active in politics and social change today often want nothing to do with personal and spiritual growth. They may be active in a religion, like going to church services, but they rarely go to counseling or do spiritual growth workshops. They equate mysticism with escapism. Many do not bother with self examination.

I believe this gap between spirituality and politics needs to close. By bridging the split in consciousness between self improvement and world improvement, I contend, we'll see how the two already are one. We'll see how our choices already change the world. The change may be big or small, incremental, but the change will be real.

Discovering our global oneness decades ago stirs my call today for a union of spirituality and politics. I am *not* talking about uniting religion and government, for that unholy union historically breeds theocracy and tyranny. If you believe everyone is sick, if you believe you have the only cure, then you logically have a moral duty to force your cure upon everyone else — for their own good. Such thinking led to the torture chambers of the Spanish Inquisition.

A separation of church and state, in my view, protects our rights and liberties more effectively than almost any other measure to avoid abuses of power. I would not breach this divide.

Rather, I'm saying that global thinking can unify spirituality and politics in a good way. A global sensibility offers common ground for everybody seeking spiritual growth, social reform and environmental recovery. When we share an awareness that each of us (individually and collectively) daily creates our lives on earth, without any formal organization guiding us, we innately use our sacred energetic power for personal, social and planetary transformation.

When the people devoted to personal and spiritual growth unite with those devoted to social, political and environmental change, we change ourselves and our world at the same time. Working from the bottom up, at the grassroots, we can build the world anew.

Do you fully grasp the essential role of spirituality in governing society? To show what happens in any society that loses its spiritual grounding, please allow me now to explain the nature of government through a parable about an ideal community. From this fanciful tale, you may gain insights into why our world is the way it is.

An Island Utopia

Let us imagine a small group of brave humans who settle on a large, remote and unoccupied island paradise surrounded by a vast ocean. Let us further imagine these settlers are enlightened people, attuned to the cosmos, aware that everything is vibrating light, that all life is one. Each feels inner peace and love for themselves, the other settlers, and the earth. A sense of oneness guides their choices.

Among the settlers is a young man named Kodesh. Like all the others, he freely shares his true self in each interaction. His emotions are fully expressed and accepted. He treats others and himself with respect, empathy, kindness, and compassion.

Kodesh joins his fellow settlers in building a small hamlet inland from the shore. At the center of a forest clearing, he helps to plant a sapling tree as a symbol of the settlement's faith and unity. He joins other settlers using their inner sight to discern ley lines and power places for building their huts along the paths of the sun and moon. He helps study the plants and creatures on the island and in the sea, learning their properties for healing and nutrition.

Since human beings are social animals innately unfit for solitude, Kodesh cannot satisfy all desires by himself. He turns to others for help just as others turn to him. Self sufficiency is valued in this new settlement, yet talents are most readily noticed through service, such as divining where to dig a well in a drought. Facing hardships together forges strong bonds of community among all the settlers.

In their open society, rights and duties on the island are shared fairly among all as equals. Aside from women bearing children, they have no gender roles. Each one's talents and interests guide the jobs they do for the community. For instance, Kodesh harvests grain; his friend Shakti mills flour; another bakes bread. One breeds sheep; another weaves wool. A man or woman can do any task.

Kodesh now realizes that his friendship with the beautiful Shakti has grown into love. The more time they spend together, the more their hearts open. They appear in one another's dreams. Their souls meet when making love. Declaring themselves married, they begin a family by happily producing two children.

Like all others, Kodesh makes decisions as situations arise, often with advice from those with more wisdom or experience. If a dispute arises with Shakti or another settler, he relies on conscience, intellect and intuition to discern the best solution. If any person is offended, forgiveness comes easily. Kodesh realizes that everybody always does the best they can do, given what they know at the time.

Occasionally the community holds a meeting at the tree of unity to decide an issue affecting everyone, like where to build a reservoir. Everybody talks until a decision is reached by consensus.

The settlers live together in harmony because these enlightened people govern themselves from within. Their spiritual consciousness makes the constraints of formal laws and government unnecessary. The settlers share an unwritten, tacit "social contract" to govern their community through *mindful self rule*.

Mindfulness means each person considers how her or his own choices may affect themselves, others people and the island itself — and then they act accordingly. In this way, the people balance freedom and responsibility. Their sweet utopian anarchy lasts as long as all of the people behave themselves.

The Rise of Democracy

By the third generation on the island, the enlightenment of the first settlers has dwindled in their descendants. Kodesh and Shakti taught the spiritual habits of mindful self rule to their children and grandchildren, yet sensitivity to magnetic energy fields requires extra effort by the youngsters. They are too distracted by exciting changes sweeping through the community as the population grows.

The cultural mandate for self rule steadily erodes with each new generation. Initiation into the harmonic vibrations of consciousness becomes a ritual with diminishing substance. People retain awareness of universal oneness in their heads more than in their hearts.

Without a spiritual conscience guiding behavior, human frailties and vices increasingly surface. Envy and jealousy disrupts harmony, such as family resentment at how Kodesh's great-grandson, Seth, has prospered more than others in the clan. Seth's youngest grandchild, Damara, voices the shifting social values when she defiantly declares, "The other kids threw rocks at the turtle, so why can't I?"

While still rare, the community now faces instances of cheating, theft, rape, and even murder. For safety, women subtly cede power to stronger men, who start to compete for the most desirable women. For safety, people hide their true selves behind a public face. Distrust grows. The social fabric unravels at the edges.

Since too many people are not ruling themselves responsibly, the community reluctantly consents by consensus to form a government that regulates society. They see the need for a formal social contract, a governance agreement. They collaborate to write a "constitution" specifying people's rights, liberties and duties in society.

Imagine the community gathering around the sacred Unity Tree. Under its spreading branches, the assembly discusses proposals for public rules to control harmful behavior. Feelings of sadness fill the

meeting, for they wish this fateful step was not necessary, but people need to protect themselves. Because a few heedless individuals pose threats, the rule of law must replace personal sovereignty.

All adults have a seat in the council. The Seth family has an equal voice to the family of Rashi, the shoe cobbler. Whenever a consensus cannot be reached, they vote. All votes are equal, one vote per person. The people thereby form a “direct” or *genuine democracy*.

The initial rules carry the muted titles of “Guidelines.” As more offenses occur, “Regulations” follow. These laws are enforced mainly by social disdain — a cold shoulder. In extreme cases, such as when a jealous man from Seth’s clan kills a woman from Rashi’s clan, the killer is banished to a secluded part of the island until he sincerely repents and returns to rejoin decent society.

In this way, although they lack the spirituality for mindful self rule without a government, the people balance freedom and responsibility. By respecting the rule of law, their genuine democracy lasts as long as most of the people behave themselves.

Forming a Republic

The original settlement becomes a big town. Other towns appear as people inhabit more parts of the large island. The early emphasis on agriculture shifts as simple industries emerge to meet people’s needs. Mining and smelting yields metals for tools and machines. Miners find gems and minerals that people soon trade for goods and services. Commerce replaces consciousness as the focus of life.

The outer forms of spirituality matter more than real awareness, such as wearing an insignia for initiation into a secret society that’s merely a social club. The vestiges of enlightenment are codified into a formal religion. Instead of preaching mindfulness, the priests now preach the new dogma that prosperity proves God’s approval.

In each town on the island, one or two families excel at building wealth. These families are usually controlled by powerful men, such as Peter Seth, who generously helps less affluent neighbors and funds such public works as an islandwide irrigation system.

In general, men do most of the physical labor while the women's primary role is motherhood. Mrs. Peter Seth is praised for bearing eight children. Women also do household tasks and charitable work, such as tending the elderly and infirmed.

Widening gaps in wealth incite more crime. The Great Council of all adults on the island enacts laws administered by sheriffs who report to judges, often the towns' elders. The punishment for crime usually is imprisonment; the growing population makes banishment impractical. After prison, released criminals are shunned.

As the community concerns increase, meetings at the Unity Tree grow too unwieldy to make decisions speedily. Hours of fiery debate yield few decisions. Also, many people live too far away to attend all Council meetings. Direct democracy feels like too much work.

As attendance at council meetings slackens, people discover the "necessity" of agreeing to leave the job of lawmaking to a few wise heads — elected by the entire island as their proxies. People decide to let these elected officials run the island's affairs.

The constitution is amended by a community vote. Power now officially transfers from the people to their leaders. Under this new social contract, the people form a *representative democracy*. To use the correct term, the people form a *republic*.

Delegates in the new congress share all the same concerns as those electing them islandwide, so the representatives vote the same as the whole community would vote if they all were present.

To avert corruption, all election costs are paid from the public treasury, funded by minimal taxes. Each candidate gets equal time at public meetings in every region. People research the candidates and

issues before they vote. Elected representatives and voters trust and support one another. On such a relationship depends the strength of any republic and the happiness of the governed.

In this way, people ask their leaders to help them balance freedom and responsibility. Such a republic lasts as long as citizens elect wise leaders and as long as most people behave themselves.

Corrupting the Republic

The island republic is now two steps removed from enlightened self rule. With each passing decade, government makes more choices that people once made themselves, such as when to harvest a field, where to grind the grain, how to bake the bread, and what price to charge. The habits of mindfulness that once ensured harmony have been replaced by the habits of obedience.

Consciousness of energy vibrations is relegated to a few mystics and healers who are publicly revered but denied real social influence. Mainstream clergy now preach that all people are sinful, so salvation and a place in Heaven depend upon obeying the law.

In the successive generations, distinct districts develop with small cities as their hubs. Every district is dominated by a closed group of wealthy families on estates guarded by fences and gates. Each elite family has public spokesmen, such as the northern district's religious leader, Albert Seth Cartman, a firebrand preacher.

Population growth prompts a constitutional amendment to let each district choose its own congressional representatives. Elected by a majority of voters, these delegates should vote in congress as the majority in the district would vote if they all were present.

In reality, secret deals decide public policy to benefit the elites. When the press exposes that new congressman Al Cartman accepted bribes from Landlop Mining, he confesses being paid for backing a

proposal granting immunity to water polluters. Cartman repays the bribe, humbly begs for forgiveness, and leaves his congressional seat. His case prompts calls to stop the rising tide of corruption.

To create *checks and balances* in government, the people amend the constitution to establish a “separation of powers” between three new branches of government — legislative, executive and judicial.

Congress is divided. An upper senate represents wealthy people and a lower house represents common people. Each legislative body supposedly checks the power of the other. In reality, the two bodies fight each other rather than serve the people.

The chief executive, called the president, is elected by a popular vote. This man (always a man) manages the agencies that administer all government services, from child education to law enforcement. A president’s budget must be approved by both houses of congress, but the president can veto laws passed by the congress.

A president appoints judges for life with approval by the senate. The lower house has no vote on judicial appointments, so only judges favored by the elites win senate confirmation.

Cartman runs for president, but voters soundly reject him. After this humiliation, he says public funding of elections denies “freedom of speech,” and elections cost the taxpayers too much. He launches a campaign demanding that all elections must be funded by donations from private citizens, businesses, trade unions, and civic groups. This time he succeeds. The constitution is amended again.

The privileged elites becomes more powerful than ever. The rich donors paying for elections feel they own the candidates they help to elect. In their new capital building beside the old Unity Tree, elected politicians. spend more time fundraising than lawmaking. Still, their job *is* lawmaking, so they pass more and more laws. Seeking problems to solve, they generate a vibrational field that attracts more problems to solve with more laws. They fail to see their trap.

The people only see that money buys the ballot box. They believe their votes do not count or are not counted. Many people stop voting. They feel powerless. They lose hope. They disdain politics. As apathy spreads, power shifts even further to the leaders.

The entertainment and sports industry deflects public attention away from government sins. Media pundits like former congressman Cartman confound the people by saying that government itself is the problem. On the pretext of reducing the size of government, public funds for education and the arts are slashed, which effectively keeps most people ignorant of their plight. Meanwhile, funding for state security keeps growing every year.

In this way, leaders use fraud to deny people's freedom of choice and deprive them of responsibility for making wise decisions. Such a corrupt republic lasts as long as the citizens elect tricky leaders and as long as enough people behave themselves.

The Fall into Tyranny

In subsequent generations, the gap between the rich and the poor widens. People's struggle to survive in their false "republic" diverts them from recalling their previous prosperity in a direct democracy. Memories of life without *any* government vanish into myth. People forget about ever practicing self rule. Children are told in school that the first settlers themselves created a strong government.

Two hundred years after settlement, the only uninhabited areas on the industrialized island are private lands reserved for agriculture, controlled by big corporations. Genetically modified crops and farm animals produce higher yields and larger profits for investors.

Feeding the people does not justify polluting the environment, argue dissidents and community organizers like Kodesh Adoni Rafi. Through a grassroots campaign, he urges people in cities and towns

to boycott “fake food” and eat organic. The corporate-owned media — including the men behind a new network of networks, called the “Internet” — marginalize the activists as “nature nuts.”

A reactionary new political party arises, the Food and Prosperity Party, led by Cartman’s grandson, Jason. He blames all of the island’s social woes on the nature nuts and “pagans” who cling to old ways, who hate the modern world, who would destroy society.

Using lavish private funding, Jason Cartman is elected president. Six months later, his agents bomb the Unity Tree. Cartman blames pagans for attacking the “homeland” and calls them “eco-terrorists.” Congress grants him emergency powers. He says that people need to temporarily give up a few minor liberties for the sake of “homeland security.” He equates dissent with treason.

After a second bombing, the terrified people do not object when Cartman declares martial law. He builds a private army and posts his troops on street corners. Cameras atop all buildings watch everyone. The state monitors all phone calls and electronic mail. Spies infiltrate citizen groups. The secret police detain dissenters without trial. Rafi is arrested, tortured into a video confession and found dead in his cell. Anyone questioning his mysterious death suddenly disappears.

Cartman is a dictator who yearly gets more entrenched. He makes sure the people feel dependant on him for protection and guidance. Cartman, in turn, feeds on the people’s worshipful attention.

Security fears isolate Cartman and stymie his decision-making. His staff tells him only what feeds his ego. They filter out proposals that do not fit his cause or ideology. He endures in a self-contained echo chamber. Foolish and short-sighted policies prevail.

After 20 years of repression, people swallow bland public policy pabulum without thinking. Individuality is suppressed; conformity is rewarded. Free speech dies. Cartman and his cronies can get away with anything. Government loses all accountability.

People forget the meaning of “freedom.” They are willing puppets who cannot be free because they do not know they have a choice. To bemuse the masses, state media promotes food, sex, drugs, and violent sports. People turn numb to suffering. They lose connections to the land. Without feelings of community, the social contract breaks.

As the aging Cartman nears death, as society disintegrates, rising anxiety breeds chaos. People fear the end of the world. Rafi’s vengeful son, Intikam, arises as a charismatic savior. His “people’s army” leads a bloody revolution, but shortly after invading the capital, the rebel forces split into factions. A civil war erupts. Intikam prevails. Fueled by rage, he orders the torture and murder of thousands.

This new Intikam tyranny lasts until it collapses under the weight of its own stupidity. Dystopian anarchy follows. Daily life is a pitiless fight for brutish survival. Paradise becomes a living hell.

A few enlightened souls still dare to teach spiritual mindfulness. After lonely years studying rare books in dark basements, they bring to light that people once lived both safe *and* free. The secret, they say, is realizing the vibrational oneness of all life.

A few dare to listen. Transformed by a spiritual rebirth, a small group of brave souls decide to leave and find another remote island to start over. They build wooden ships, set a course and go.

The Nature of Self Government

Our parable shows how good people can migrate from mindful *self rule* to a direct *democracy* and representative *republic* before falling into the corruption leading to *tyranny* and then *chaos*. The foothold of freedom forever stands on a slippery slope.

In reading this parable, perhaps you feel reminded about why you dislike politics and politicians. Perhaps you feel resistance to the idea that any spiritual person like yourself should bother thinking about

government and social issues. You might bother with politics in your next incarnation, but not this one. Maybe you believe politics lowers your vibration too much, so it should be avoided.

Maybe you think the world will end soon, or you will ascend soon and leave this world behind, or space aliens will descend soon, so you doubt if this even matters. Besides, you may feel, the problems facing us are too big to fix, and nothing we do makes any difference....

Please accept that, like you, I've felt these feelings. I've thought these thoughts. I know first-hand how a sense of powerlessness drains hope with paralyzing despair. I know first-hand about all the damage we do by giving away our power for self rule to some authority figure promising to save us from ourselves (see Part II).

For now, I'm asking you to keep your mind and your heart open to the possibility that spirituality and politics *already* are connected, that your consciousness and choices already shape society.

If everything we think, feel, say, and do influences our world — intentionally or not — our global connectivity means each of us is globally powerful. *Pretending to be powerless is an excuse we use to avoid moral responsibility for using our power wisely.* Accepting individual responsibility for our power, being accountable for our choices, is the best test of self government and the basis of a civil society.

Please note that society and government are not only different, they have different origins. Society is produced by our human wants and needs, but government is produced by our misconduct. Society promotes our happiness by combining our virtues. Government curbs our vices. "Society in every state is a blessing," wrote Thomas Paine. "Government even in its best state is but a necessary evil, in its worst state an intolerable one."

If we honestly want to change our world, we need to accept that the nature of government is defensive. All forms of government arise from our failure to govern ourselves. Government secures our lives

and property against our own abuses of freedom. If we had more self restraint, we'd need less government restraint. No matter how much we pretend otherwise, no matter how much our split perceptions may shield our minds, we know inside this is the truth.

If everyone heeded the universal *still, small voice* within each of us, government would be unnecessary. Given our ancient fear of anarchy (whether responsibly utopian or recklessly dystopian) we establish all governments by the same reasoning that advises us, when faced with two evils, to choose the least evil.

Because we choose external government over internal self rule, we surrender part of our liberty and fortune, such as airport searches and sales taxes, so the state has the means to safeguard our lives and our property. Paine wrote, "The best form of government is the one most likely to secure our freedom at the least expense." Sadly, governments too often are wildly expensive and unduly limit our liberty.

If the sole valid role of a government is protecting us from force and fraud, as libertarians contend, a government should not use force or fraud to stay in power. We suffer in too many lands on earth from abuses by our government. We may think our government is evil, but let's admit we ourselves caused our own suffering by consenting to be ruled by that government. If consent was forced at the point of a gun, is our survival worth our freedom? What's true for you?

If each of us creates our personal and social reality, rather than thinking of ourselves as innocent victims, we need to accept personal and social responsibility for true self government. We need to choose an internal locus of control over our lives. This choice opens the door to mindfulness and global change.