Possibilities that are YOU!

Volume 16: Associative Patterning and Attracting

This is 16th in a series of 22 short books, what we call Conscious Look Books, that are conversational in nature, taking full advantage of the reader's lived experience to share what can sometimes be difficult concepts. We live in a world that is tearing itself apart, where people are out of control and wanting to control others, rebelling from years of real and perceived abuse and suppression of thought. Yet, this chaos offers us as a humanity the opportunity to make a giant leap forward. By opening ourselves to ourselves, we are able to fully explore who we are and who we can become. With that exploration comes a glimmer of hope as we begin to reclaim the power of each and every mind developed by the lived human experience!

These 22 concepts are part of the learning journey of which we are all a part, the Intelligent Social Change Journey (ISCJ). This is a developmental journey of the body, mind and heart, moving from the heaviness of cause-and-effect linear extrapolations, to the fluidity of co-evolving with our environment, to the lightness of breathing our thought and feelings into reality. Grounded in development of our mental faculties, these are phase changes, each building on and expanding previous learning in our movement toward intelligent activity.

These little books share 22 large concepts from the Profundity and Bifurcation of Change (which is written from an academic viewpoint). Each book is independent and includes seven ideas offered for the student of life to help us become the co-creators that we are. These books, available in soft cover from Amazon, support idea exploration, class discussion, other discussion groups or can be used as special occasion gifts.

Possibilities

that are YOU!

Volume 16: Associative Patterning and Attracting

by

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Our Earth, one shared thinking organism
With collective mindset energy
Diversity becomes synergy
Forming a world of determinism.

Attracting thoughts and living patterning
Associating through resonance
Setting self-governing precedence
Through diverse associative mattering

Learning from the past using deference
Solving problems through reminiscence
Building for tomorrow's quiescence
In this world, we all make a difference.

-Cindy Lee Scott

Preface

This book is for YOU. Regardless of economic success or educational prowess, beyond cultural influences and habitual routines, YOU have been and continue to be a student of life. And since our time in this learning sphere is precious, the challenges and opportunities are both rapid and continuous, always offering new insights. YOU are a verb, not a noun. Forget what you were taught in grammar school!

Now, we live in a world of demanding challenges, where people and systems are rebounding from control, rebelling from eras of real and perceived suppression of thought. With the acceleration of mental development over the past century has come increased awareness of human capacity, with economic success in small bites for many and large bites for the few, and for some coming with an arrogance that says, “Look at me. I’m right, you’re wrong, and I’m not listening.”

Because of our Economy’s focus on the material, economic success begets economic success and the separation of wealth grows larger, flaming the difficulties of surviving in a CUCA world, that is, a world of accelerating change, rising uncertainty, increasing complexity, and the anxiety that comes with these phenomena.

Yet all of this **offers us, as a humanity the opportunity to make a giant leap forward.** By opening ourselves to ourselves, we are able to fully explore who we are. With that exploration comes glimmers of hope as we contemplate the power of each and every mind developed by the lived human experience!

As YOU move through your life of thoughts, feelings and actions—even when you have to repeat things over and over again as part of the experience—YOU are advancing toward the next level of consciousness.

Here's the bottom line. Everything that has been learned and continues to be learned is out there … and as a student of life, YOU have access to it all. So often it is expressed in ways that don't make sense because of the language and media being used. It just isn't presented conversationally, and you don't have a chance to ask questions from your unique point of view.

So, these little books—which we refer to as Conscious Look Books—are specifically focused on sharing key concepts from *The Profundity and Bifurcation of Change* series and **looking at what those concepts mean to YOU**.

These books are conversational in nature, and further conversations are welcome. We invite your thoughts and questions, not guaranteeing answers because there is still so much to learn, but happy to

join in the conversation. Visit Mountain Quest Inn and Retreat Center www.mountainquestinn.com located in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia or email alex@mountainquestinstitute.com

As my partner David reminds us: *Run with the future!*

Our gratitude to all those who take this journey with us, and a special thanks to the colleagues, partners, friends, family and visitors who touch our hearts and Mountain Quest in so many ways.

With Love and Light, Alex and David

Contents

Introduction

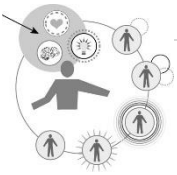
What does it mean when we talk and write about associative patterning and associative attracting? They sure are odd concepts! And what exactly is this little book about? Well, maybe we should start at the beginning by just defining those three words and figuring it out from there. Okay?

So, first word: *associative*. Certainly, an adjective taken from the word associate, which would mean to relate two or more things together. Wonder if the dictionary agrees with me? Yep, pretty close.

Second word: *patterning*. Patterns are themes that reoccur in events, objects or movement. There is a Conscious Look Book on *Connections as Patterns*, and it says that patterns can be based on repetition (the same thing appearing again and again), periodicity (reoccurrence at regular intervals), similarity (likeness, qualities or features in common), or symmetry (balanced proportions, exact correspondence in position) and translation (a change in form or state, transference to a different place). "Patterning" with an "ing" would mean to create patterns. This refers to the great joy of creating, where we integrate parts to make a whole, where we bisociate two or more thoughts and come up with something new.

Third word: *attracting.* To attract is to offer something that someone else wants, which would be something of interest to others, or one thing that pulls another thing to it. For example, magnets. In systems theory an attractor is a condition, or a set of numerical values, toward which the system is evolving. In the scenario we are addressing in this little book, we are talking about thoughts which attract similar thoughts.

So, in this little book we are going to pull together thoughts and concepts from other little books, and look at our role as co-creator from the viewpoint of the thoughts and thought forms we are creating. Now, that should take a little work! So, hold onto your thoughts [pun intended] and let's get started.



Idea 1: There is wonderful variety in our playground of Earth.

We live in the habitable zone of our nurturing Sun. Not too hot. Not too cold. For hundreds of millions of years, the rocky crust of Gaia has supported just the right amount of liquid water delivered from water-bearing comets originating from the far reaches of our planetary system. Not too much. Not too little. And Earth has a wonderful tectonic plate that acts as a thermostat. We were set up perfectly for long-term possibilities, at least what WE in our short lifespans can consider long-term!

It was 1960 when astronomer and astrophysicist Frank Drake was in Green Bank, West Virginia, speaking, 13 miles down Route 92, at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory's first SETI meeting. For those of you not familiar with SETI, that stands for the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, that is, monitoring electromagnetic radiation for potential transmissions from other forms of life. While the SETI program stopped for a while, it was started back up again in 2017.

It was at that 1960 meeting—right down the road—that Frank introduced what has come to be

known as the Drake equation, a probabilistic argument that estimates the number of advanced civilizations that just might be out there in our galaxy. Isn't it funny that we're touching pieces of history even when we don't know it's going on! And it's kind of fun thinking about the kind of comments Frank must have gotten during *that* presentation! Back then, we didn't really have a very good idea on the size of the Universe, much less the number of potential planets like ours! So, the Drake equation is based on a lot of conjecture or suppositions, or perhaps we could call them educated guesses.

There were three primary "guesses" which started with trying to figure out the number of planets in our galaxy, then looked at what percentage of those planets on which life could exist, and then the percentage of those upon which a civilization could have emerged that was advanced enough to develop a culture. That's a lot of guessing. Now, to be honest, Frank had some help in the guessing, other people such as Carl Sagan, with whom you are most likely familiar.

Now, there's no doubt that in terms of microbes and their equivalents, life is prevalent throughout the Universe. However, paleontologist Peter Ward and astronomer Donald Brownlee argue that "not only intelligent life, but even the simplest

of animal life, is exceedingly rare in our galaxy and in the Universe."[1]

I have a tendency to agree with them, and the more we're finding out about our Universe, and, well, life itself, the Earth appears to be pretty unusual. Now, please don't take this as a belief that we're the only ones around in this Universe, or that we're at the center of everything. Still, I think our Earth is pretty special, and, well, unusual in terms of variety. In a 2011 study led by Camilo Mora of the University of Hawaii and Boris Worm of Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, it was estimated that there are 8.7 million eukaryotes species living on Earth, with 6.5 million of those found on land and 2.2 million in the oceans.

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INSIGHT: **A 2011 research study estimated that there are 8.7 million species living on Earth!**

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Further, it was forwarded that 86% of all land species and 91% of ocean species have yet to be discovered, described and catalogued! As Camilo says, "The question of how many species exist has intrigued sciences for centuries and the answer, coupled with research by others into species' distribution and abundance, is particularly important

now because a host of human activities and influences are accelerating the rate of extinctions. Many species may vanish before we even know of their existence, of their unique niche and function in ecosystems, and of their potential contribution to improved human well-being."[2]

Did you notice that word "eukaryote"? That means organisms that have cells which contain membranes enclosing complex structures. This estimate includes: 7.77 million species of animals, of which 953,434 have been described and catalogued; 298,000 species of plants, of which 215,644 have been described and cataloged; 611,000 species of fungi (that's molds and mushrooms), of which 43,271 have been described and cataloged; 36,400 species of protozoa (single-cell organisms with animal-like behavior, that means movement), of which 8,118 have been described and cataloged; and 27,500 species of chromista (that's brown algae, diatoms, water molds), of which 13,033 have been described and cataloged.[3] Of course, that was in 2011. Since then there have been estimates of as few as 2 million and as many as 12 million. There was even one study that suggested Earth could be home to a trillion species!

There was a new estimate of Earth's biodiversity in 2017 in a research study from the

University of Arizona of roughly 2 billion living species on Earth. That estimate is a thousand times higher than the one referenced earlier! And, rather than dominated by insects, which was the previous belief, this life is dominated by bacteria, which is 70-90% of all species![4]

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INSIGHT: **In 2017 a new research study estimated there are roughly 2 billion living species on Earth; and 70-90% of these species are bacteria!**

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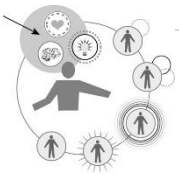
While I'm not very excited about the thought of all that bacteria—whether good or bad bacteria, hopefully the latter—those numbers are pretty exciting. Still, there are estimates that 200 species a day are going extinct, and that humans are causing this to happen a thousand times faster than evolution would! We recently lost Sudan, the last male white rhino, and that was certainly a biodiversity loss. *Variety is so important to providing our ecosystem with resilience as we face change*.

There's a lot of reasons for that accelerated extinction rate, and we're at the middle of all of them with habitat loss, hunting and our fiddling around with nature in terms of introducing invasive species and diseases to "help" one situation, then causing

something far worse than we've fixed! And then, there's all the stuff related to climate change.

Still, *you and I have had the opportunity to be a part of this magnificent playground*, and to enjoy (and sometimes not enjoy so much, like poison ivy) the wide array of the diversity of life, and all the experiences that come with that diversity.

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 2: The learning mind is an associative patterner.

Have you ever noticed that really significant ideas appearing on the global horizon have connections to the really significant ideas you've been spending weeks, or months, or years reflecting upon? We might even go so far as to say they are in relationship with each other. They are.

In a sense, everything we learn is patterns, whether repetitious patterns or patterns that provide meaning because of the way we interpret them. As biologist and philosopher Tom Stonier suggested, "In both the computer and the brain information exists in the form of patterns. The software resides in the computer as a pattern of on/off switches; the mind resides in the brain as patterns of neural connections."[5] These patterns are groups of neurons with their synapse connection strengths between the synaptic spaces.

For example, a single thought like "one" might be represented in our brain by a network of a million neurons, each connected to one thousand other neurons via neurotransmitter chemicals that pass through the synaptic cleft, a space between an axon of one neuron and a dendrite of another. As neuroscientist Eric Kandal notes, "The neural circuits concerned with memory have synaptic

connections that change in strength with learning. This mechanism forms the basis of memory and higher cognitive functioning."[6]

Very different than a computer, the human mind is uniquely prepared to address and respond to an environment that is continuously shifting and changing, and to context-rich situations and opportunities. Our mind is an associative patterner, engaged in a continuous learning process. Incoming external information (new information) is mixed, or semantically complexed, with internal information, creating new neuronal patterns in the brain that may represent understanding, meaning, and/or the anticipation of the consequences of actions; in other words, information or knowledge that is unconsciously tailored to the situation at hand.

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INSIGHT: **As an associative patterner, the human mind is uniquely prepared to address and respond to an environment that is continuously shifting and changing, and to context-rich situations and opportunities.**

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Let's take a closer look at this process from the inside out. Imagine a 3D snapshot that lasts a tenth of a second. This picture, or pattern, is a part of the sequence of coordinated patterns and an understanding of their relationships that we call

consciousness, supported by an associated set of non-conscious coordinated patterns. For example, in this picture I'm simultaneously gardening with one hand, swatting a buzzing fly away from my eye with another, and feeling the warmth of the day and the freshness of the air, while visually catching a glimpse of the blue haze of distant mountains and mentally reflecting on the potential value of a knowledge state. In the truest sense, the mind, considered to be the set of three-dimensional neuronal patterns within the brain, as introduced above, is multidimensional, and we live every second of our lives multi-tasking.

During that tenth of a second, visual, aural, olfactory, and kinesthetic sensory inputs combine with mental thoughts, emotional feelings and internal patterns to create an internal perception and feeling of external awareness. The firing of networks of neurons creates the internal patterns of the mind that express our awareness of the external world. As a general rule, the human brain processes at a rate of approximately 10^{15} cycles per second.[7] While this certainly represents incredible processing power in any terms, there is an even higher number of signals continuously bombarding us, but many of these come in without being recognized. For example, light waves and sound waves outside the range of our sensors.

Aspects of these incoming patterns may cause random firings, form uninteresting patterns, or create a pattern that has historical significance. In the brain, everything is relative, that is, *every individual has their own internal sets of patterns and their associations that enable them to make sense of the world*. Relationships between two patterns are quasi-unique to each individual because (1) the patterns are different in each brain and (2) each of us has built our personal frame of reference from different pattern relationships.

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INSIGHT: **Every individual has their own internal sets of patterns and their associations that enable them to make sense of the world.**

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The patterns in the brain are a result of our physiology and differing representations of, and relationships with, the world, some of which are consistent with the external world and others that are only consistent and integrative within the individual. For example, my sense of the color red is consistent with the color related to red when I was a child, but it is not necessarily the same color that another individual related to red as a child. However, if I was inclined toward the study of art, I might learn to discern many variations of red, expanding my previous associations of the term and color. While still associated with red, each variation would be

represented in the mind as a unique pattern. So, while over the long-term, thinking/perception may agree with physical reality much of the time, since pattern relationships are built on different sets of experiences and observations, each set is context sensitive and situation dependent. This is why the creation of knowledge is unique to each individual, such that if I try to communicate understanding of a phenomenon it doesn't necessarily mean it will make sense to someone who has a different set of patterns and pattern relationships that represent their understanding.

As we gain experience, we create neurons as well as new synaptic connections. Thus, "Experience creates new synaptic connections among neurons and also alters existing patterns of connections."[8] For example, if you bring in a new concept, such as the pattern created when you think about the Intelligent Complex Adaptive System Model of organizations,[9] it is first associated with other related patterns you have in your mind, experiences and the patterns associated with those experiences. The new pattern focused on the situation at hand is built on these associations, that is, relationships with other patterns already in your mind that provide meaning. If the process of learning and understanding creates sets of patterns (larger patterns made out of smaller patterns), it exists in the mind in relationship to patterns already there and in relationship to new

patterns coming in from the external world. See Figure 1.

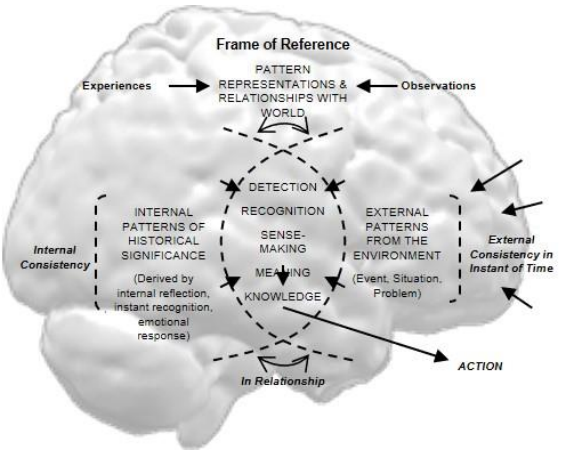


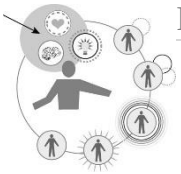
Figure 1. *Learning as associative patterning.*

In summary, and a foundational concept in this little book, the *interpretation and meaning* of incoming patterns, then, are very much a function of preexisting patterns in the brain. As our resource Tom explains, "Meaning … involves the integration of a message into the internal information environment of the recipient. Such a process creates a new information unit: the combination of the external information, complexed with the information provided by the internal information environment."[10] Knowledge is created by recursive interactions between external information and internal patterns of historical significance. The

intermixing of the external patterns with the internal patterns may create recognition, sense-making, meaning, and ultimately knowledge.

The discussion above conjures up a very different perspective of mental health in terms of the physical brain (nutrition), neuron-firing (use it or lose it), and the patterns and pattern of patterns coming in that form the basis of our frame of reference to the world. In regards to these patterns, what does this tell us about reading daily headlines focused on death and destruction, or watching the dearth of horror movies emerging in the market place, much less the daily news? Recall that the patterns we take in combine with internal patterns of personal historical significance to form the framework for the way we view the world and interpret future incoming patterns. Thought (in terms of patterns) *does* create our reality, and what we learn is heavily influenced by what we know.

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 3: We build memory through experience.

Let's specifically explore memory in relationship with the mind/brain. Similar to the discussion in Idea 2, both memory and learning are expressed physiologically in the formation of new synapses, the connections between neurons, and the strengthening of existing synapses.[11] "Brains have complex rules of guessing that allow them to extract information from incoming signals and create meaning and understanding without storing the full incoming signal."[12]

For years, memory was thought to be stored somewhere in the brain. It is now widely agreed that there is no "grandmother" cell that "represents" a grandmother, no separate center in the brain where memories about grandmother are permanently stored. Instead, "a long line of evidence shows that information storage follows a principle that is conserved across both vertebrates and invertebrates. Memory appears to be stored in the same distributed assembly of brain structures that are engaged in initially perceiving and processing what is to be remembered."[13]

Biologist Gerald Edelman's third theory postulates that memory is nonrepresentational; that is, a memory is not stored in the sense that a

computer stores data. Rather, memory is the ability to *repeat, recreate, or suppress a mental or physical act or past experience*. These acts, being sequences of flows of interconnecting neuronal patterns, are internally experienced as thoughts, feelings, etc. These patterns may also cause muscles to change shape and therefore influence physical actions. Memory is seen as the capability of the brain to change its internal patterns and sequences of patterns to create the repetition of performance.

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INSIGHT: **Memory is seen as the capability of the brain to change its internal patterns and sequences of patterns to create the repetition of performance.**

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This really does seem to make sense. We tend to think of "memory" as a thing, sort of like a book, or a file on our computer. But, since we are verbs, not nouns, changing continuously in the instant, where would we store a static memory? Hmmm. I know it's been said before, but there certainly are more questions than answers.

This whole process of memory is facilitated by the associative patterning process introduced in Idea 2. As our resource Gerald (who is also a medical doctor) and his colleague Giulio Tononi (who is a neurobiologist) detail: "In a complex brain, memory

results from the selective matching that occurs between ongoing, distributed neural activity and various signals coming from the world, the body, and the brain itself. The synaptic alterations that ensue affect the future responses of the individual brain to similar or different signals. These changes are reflected in the ability to repeat a mental or physical act after some time ... for example in 'recalling' an image.

"It is important to indicate that by the word *act* we mean any ordered sequence of brain activities in a domain of perception, movement, or speech that, in time, leads to a particular neural output. We stress repetition after some time in this definition because **it is the ability to re-create an act separated by a certain duration from the original signal set that is characteristic of memory** [emphasis added]. And in mentioning a changing context, we pay heed to a key property of memory in the brain: that it is, in some sense, a form of constructive *recategorization* during ongoing experience, rather than a precise replication of a previous sequence of events."[14]

Thus, memory is not a fixed rule that pulls up a past representation. It is *recreated* each time by the dynamic links and patterns between neuronal groups. This explains why memory is often unreliable and rarely recreated exactly the same each time a memory is recalled.

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INSIGHT: **Because memory is recreated each time it is pulled up, it is rarely exactly recreated and often unreliable.**

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Humans have three distinct forms of memory storage capabilities: sensory memory, short-term memory (including working memory) and long-term memory. Sensory memory is quite short, generally a few seconds in endurance, and refers to information received through the senses. Short term memory takes over when information is transferred from sensory memory to our consciousness.[15] While short-term memory lasts longer than sensory memory, it is still initially very limited, engaging approximately 5 to 9 bits of information for approximately 30 seconds or so.[16] However, a second phase of short term memory is working memory, which occurs when material is kept in conscious focus for a longer period of time,[17] and can happen when we are studying, repeating or rehearsing, focusing (for a period of time) on a core issue, etc. Because short-term memory can only handle 5 to 9 bits of information, displacement occurs when it is full and a new bit of information enters. An example is trying to remember a phone number and the last couple of digits dropping out of memory.

Psychologist Christopher Heffner says there are typically six reasons information is stored in short-

term memory: through the primacy effect (first information received), the recency effect (last information received), distinctiveness (stands out, different), frequency (rehearsed, repeated, "memorized"), associations (linked to something important, acronyms) and reconstruction (filling in a memory blank in the instant).[18] One way to sharpen short-term memory is through rehearsal, which can bring in multiple senses through visualizing, hearing, speaking, singing, and keyboarding information repeatedly.

Another way is through chunking, that is, bringing ideas and concepts together to create understanding through the development of significant patterns useful for solving problems and anticipating future behavior within a domain of focus. A study of chess players concluded that "effortful practice" was the difference between people who played chess for many years while maintaining an average skill and those who became master players in shorter periods of time. The master players, or experts, examined the chessboard patterns over and over again, studying them, looking at nuances, trying small changes to perturb the outcome (sense and response), generally "playing with" and studying these *patterns.*[19] In other words, they use working memory, pattern recognition and chunking rather than logic as a means of understanding, memory recall and decision-making.

Long-term memory is relatively permanent and can be thought of in terms of declarative memory and nondeclarative memory. *Declarative memory* includes the areas of semantic memory, factual knowledge such as meanings, concepts and math,[20] and episodic memory such as events and situations.[21] Note that declarative memory may take the form of explicit or tacit knowledge. *Nondeclarative memory* includes those acts and habits which are done by rote due to extensive practice and conditioning. An example would be riding a bicycle, which involves embedded tacit knowledge that has become part of the structure of cellular memory, what we refer to as embodied tacit knowledge.

Memory encoding, storage, and recall/recognition/retrieval all *occur at the level of invariant forms*, what David Hawkins, who is a clinician, scientist and teacher, describes as "a form that captures the essence of relationships, not the details of the moment."[22] The entire cortex is a memory system, storing *sequences of patterns, recalling patterns auto-associatively, and storing patterns in a hierarchy*.[23] As a working definition, *memory systems* refer to the full set of memory patterns stored throughout the mind/brain/body.

There is no equivalent concept in computers for invariant forms. While a computer would encode data using 1's and 0's, the invariant forms that are encoded in the human mind would be associated

with a previous memory, image, sound or emotion. As David describes regarding a simple thought experiment, “This task is difficult or impossible for a computer to perform today, yet a human can do it reliably in half a second or less. But neurons are slow, so in that half a second, the information entering your brain can only traverse a chain one hundred neurons long. That is, the brain ‘computes’ solutions to problems like this in one hundred steps or fewer, regardless of how many total neurons might be involved.”[24]

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INSIGHT: **The entire cortex is a memory system, storing sequences of patterns, recalling patterns auto-associatively, and storing patterns in a hierarchy.**

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Of course, now we know **the brain is not computing the answers to problems at all**. It is rather *associating* new incoming information with stored patterns, the process of associative patterning, with a continuous stream of information from the environment moving through the human senses.

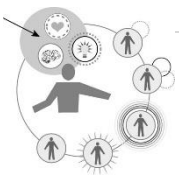
This brings us to a discussion of what is generally known as the binding problem. To form a complete memory, fragments of associated patterns need to be combined in some way, thus the term "binding". As mathematician George Christos

describes, “Fragments of attractors need to be combined in some way (called the ‘binding problem’) to form a complete memory. The hippocampus may be involved in this function. Another particularly interesting candidate is the thalamus, which is the gateway to all sensory information entering the neocortex and for some reason also receives reciprocal information from each of the areas in the neocortex that it sends information to. It is also known that neurotransmitters like norepinephrine are implicated with learning and are thought to be released from the locus coeruleus when something is to be learned. This needs to be coordinated with the task of observation.”[25] Note the usage of the term "attractors". This concept of attraction becomes more prominent as consciousness expands. We are going to talk about that more in the next Idea.

A second issue has to do with memory traces, which do not necessarily involve pathways identical to incoming information. The greater the differences from the original incoming thought, the fuzzier the memory.[26] This is where Gerald Edelman’s neural Darwinism comes in, the fact that pathways are continuously being corrupted or weakened. The less the pathways are used, the faster they become corrupted.[27] There is a competition of thoughts (neural Darwinism) coming into consciousness. There are, however, exceptions. As our resource Tom Stonier describes, “The evolution of the brain

has created special categories of nerve traces which become relatively incorruptible. For example, those created during the developing embryo relating to vital functions are probably stable during our entire lifetime. Those involving imprinting phenomena in juveniles, likewise, are less prone to decay. The same thing may be said for those which become habits and those learned during emotional stress."[28]

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 4: Thoughts are things.

The material world is an effect, not a cause. Change occurs from the inside out. This is such a foundational concept that we've said this a number of times in our Conscious Look Books.

Change begins with thought, then energy follows thought and becomes thought forms. Thus, thoughts and images have a profound creative and motivating power within human consciousness, with the mind controlling energy and building form. These are not physical forms, rather "energy complexes on the subtle levels of reality that are analogous to physical things. They are forms made of emotional-mental matter."[29]

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INSIGHT: **Thoughts and images have a profound creative and motivating power within human consciousness, with the mind controlling energy and building form.**

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As produced on our mental and emotional planes, thought forms are sent out into the environment where they attract sympathetic vibrations, that is, those who resonate with the thought being produced. This can be difficult to accept for those who suffer from the Cartesian

dichotomy between matter and mind and want to bring everything to the physical level. Even bringing it to the physical, we now understand from neuroscience findings the power of the mind/brain and that our thoughts actually change the structure of the physical brain as well as impacting all of our human systems! Further, we now recognize that we are in continuous two-way communication with all those around us. Our thoughts are permeable and porous.[30]

Each thought that is definite has a double effect, producing both a floating form and a radiating vibration. Each thought form differs in both density and quality. In analyzing the qualities that have significance for the meaning of the thought form,[31] each has color, shape and distinctness of outline. Color has to do with the *emotional quality* of the thought; form has to do with the *intent* of the thought; and distinctness of outline has to do with the *degree of concentration* of the thought. The radiating vibration is a complex one, with every rush of feeling associated with thought producing a permanent effect.

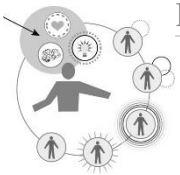
Interesting examples are thought forms built by music. While sound is often associated with color, it also produces form. As Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater describe: “Some such forms are very striking and impressive, and naturally their variety is infinite. Each class of music has its own type of

form, and the style of the composer shows as clearly in the form which his music builds as a man's character shows in his handwriting. Other possibilities of variation are introduced by the kind of instrument upon which the music is performed, and also by the merits of the player. The same piece of music if accurately played will always build the same form."[32]

Lower mental thought forms diminish the capacity for higher thought forms to function, and increasingly have an effect on an individual's ability to create higher thought forms. This is because thought forms linked through logic limit the ability to perceive the larger truth of conceptual thinking.

In their book on *Thoughtware*, businessmen Philip Kirby and David Hughes assert that if you change an organization's thinking, the organization will change itself. This is based on the belief that behavior is rooted in thought and that people's thinking and collective interactions drive organizational performance. *Thought and the thought forms produced through thought are directly related to behaviors and actions*. As Philip and David describe, thinking and action are "synonymous and integral at the point of change."[33]

[Your Thoughts]



Idea 5: Resonance is a quality of the larger Field of which we are a part.

As the self (that's you) experiences and learns, we have the opportunity to expand our consciousness. From the viewpoint of the physical, mental and emotional planes, what is different? Certainly, the subconscious continues to process incoming information through the seven senses, comprised of the five senses of form and the two inner senses, which emanate from the heart connecting people, and from the crown connecting us to the larger ecosystem of which we are a part. However, while the associative patterning process continues, *the personality plays an expanded role*.

The personality is working 24/7 for the self. In the early years the personality is charged with three things: survival, avoidance of pain, and pursuit of pleasure. But as the self develops preferences, beginning to make decisions and expanding consciousness, the personality is no longer tethered by a focus on the physical, mental and emotional planes. It now has greater access to the higher Field of thought—whether the conscious mind is actively participating or not—and can *proactively and aggressively access thoughts in the Field that resonate with the focused thought of self.*

The Field refers to the larger energy Field of which we are a part, whether you call that a Consciousness Field, the Zero Field, the Noosphere, the God Field, or the Quantum Field. Through vibration *there is an attraction of thought to thought*, a resonance, much like the bisociation of ideas in verbal dialogue and conversations with others.

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INSIGHT: **Through vibration, there is an attraction of thought to thought, a resonance between the thoughts of self and the thoughts in the Field.**

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Let's briefly explore the idea of resonance from different frames of reference. First, there is a human urge to seek close relationships built on personal resonance, an event moving far beyond surface meaning to connecting values, beliefs and dreams. Psychologist Louis Cozolino notes that empathy is a "muddle of resonance, attunement, and sympathy."[34] *This resonance, then, is with the relationship of circumstances and another individual in terms of feelings and understanding.* A mechanism that aids in the synchronism of two individuals is the adaptive oscillators that are part of our physiology. These oscillators are created by stable feedback loops of neurons. There is a state of mutual entrainment that occurs, which is a measure of stability that oscillators have when they lock in with each other.[35]

This is the resonance of connection that can lead to empathy, compassion, and love.

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INSIGHT: **The resonance of connection can take the form of empathy, compassion and love.**

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Second, inducing resonance is one approach to accessing tacit knowledge. In this process the self moves to the lead in terms of focus and choice and, through expanded consciousness, deepens the connection with tacit knowledges. This resonance between an incoming idea and the beliefs, values, etc. within the individual, *is a resonance between the conscious choices of self and the processing preferences of the personality*. An example of inducing resonance is participating in or attending a debate, where ideas that are thrown back and forth, presenting two sides of an issue, catch hold of beliefs, values, experiences that are in the unconscious such that you surface preferences, which can be extremely strong preferences, even though you were previously unaware of them!

Third, there is the resonance of ideas, which plays a large role in today's global world in developing and sustaining trust. Idea resonance, an emergent quality of our new paradigm, refers to value built on relationship of, respect for, and resonance with ideas. Ideas with which we resonate

are generating energy as well as expending energy. *This is a resonance among people based on similar or complementary ideas that excite the mental and/or emotional planes.*

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INSIGHT: **Ideas with which we resonate are generating energy as well as expending energy.**

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Fourth, there is the social phenomenon of collaborative entanglement, which is analogous to the natural activities of the brain. Recall from our previous discussion that in the associative patterning process, information coming into the individual through the senses resonates with internal patterns that have strong synaptic connections. When resonance occurs, the incoming information is consistent with the individual's frame of reference and belief systems. Collaborative entanglement describes this same process from the point of view of a community. *This is a resonance among people in a lived relationship based on possibilities and consistent with mutual frames of reference and belief systems.*

Fifth, we can consider reverberation as a repeating echo that may have far-reaching or lasting impact. Harmonic reverberation occurs when two or more individuals or groups between or among whom no forces exist *reflect and consider the thoughts and*

feelings of the other, with an emergent quality representing the best of multiple streams of thought and feelings. While there is certainly an overlap with resonances introduced above, *this is a resonance among people based on the comingling of ideas resulting in the emergence of something more.*

Sixth, from a neuroscience learning perspective, we now know that *significant social relationships* stimulate learning and knowledge creation and shape the brain.[36] For learning, the brain actually seeks out an affectively attuned "other", someone with whom we resonate. *This is a deep resonance among individuals based on trust and respect.* Further, continuous creativity thrives on exposure to a broad range of knowledge and experiences—places and people and thoughts in resonance with *who we choose to be*. *This is a resonance based on possibilities.* Also, from a neuroscience perspective, mirror neurons facilitate *neural resonance between observed actions and executing actions*.[37]

Seventh, there is Rupert Sheldrake's hypothesis of formative creation proposing that memory is inherent in nature, with a collective memory inherited from previous generations.[38] This process of the past becoming the present—involving formative causal influences transmitted through both space and time—is called morphic resonance. *This is a resonance among ideas from the past and focused*

thought in the present. Through morphic resonance, our thoughts have the capacity to influence other people, making it more likely for others to think in the same way we are thinking.[39] *This represents a resonance among thoughts and people occurring in the NOW.*

As can be seen, regardless of the lens through which we look, resonance is a quality of the larger Field within which we live. See Figure 2 below.

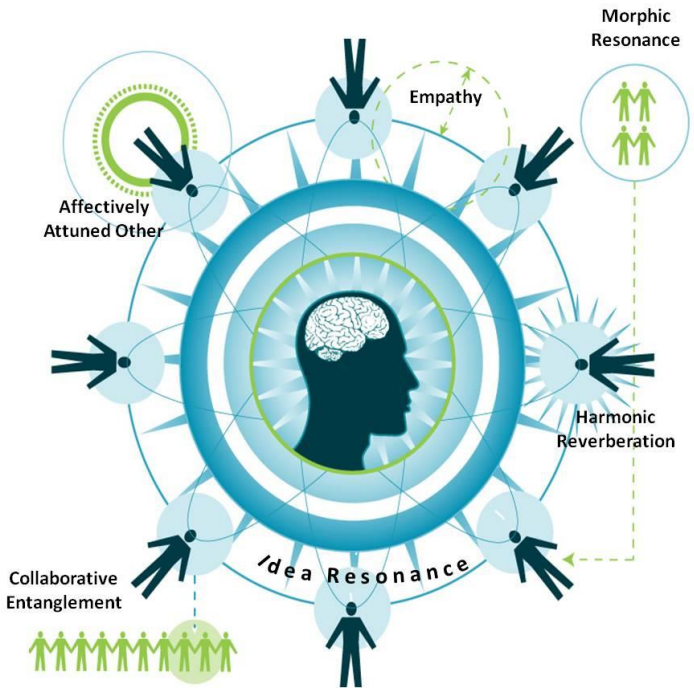

Figure 2. *Resonance is a quality of the Field.*

When discussing the Field of ideas, we are referring to a Field where thoughts as thought forms with specific characteristics are already present, waiting to be discovered, and recognizing that when there is a resonance between the thought and the thinker, a connection occurs. Author Lynn McTaggart refers to an incessant dialogue that we carry on with the Field, in which we can gain access to a *shared accumulation of information*. "In that sense, our intelligence, creativity and imagination are not locked in our brains but exist as an interaction with The Field."[40] We can describe this Field as the connectedness of all things, a Oneness.

This Field is "within." In a discussion of time and space, a difficulty in understanding space in the physical plane is the fact that while our material bodies exist in space, space also exists in these same bodies; space is a property of all material bodies. Thus, as a body moves through space, it takes with it all of its properties, even the space which is within it. If you will, imagine the Field as space. Of course, it is much more than the concept we currently have of space, but for the sake of this analogy let's imagine it as space. The Field, then, exists both outside of us and inside of us, and as we move around, we carry it with us. Thus, we are always connected to the Field. Similarly, bringing in the idea of morphic resonance, we are always connected to the past as well as the ever-unfolding present.

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INSIGHT: **The Field exists both outside of us and inside of us, and as we move around, we carry it with us. Thus, we are always connected to the Field.**

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Now, imagine ideas (thoughts) as lightening bugs. This is an interesting analogy since we often picture ideas as light bulbs. Even more appropriate, when we watch lightening bugs the light flashes on and off in a continuous flow of punctuated movement. Such are ideas, where there is a flash that seems to quickly go away, then, as we keep watching (focusing) perhaps another in the general area. Even when we are not focusing, when we close ourselves off in our houses for the night, the lightning bugs are still moving and still flashing their lights. So it is with ideas.

Recall our conversation of thought forms. You knew there was a reason we devoted a whole idea to talking about thought forms! As we now know, change begins with thought, then **energy follows thought** and becomes thought forms. These thought forms are sent out into the environment where they attract sympathetic vibrations, that is, those who resonate with the thought being produced. Each thought that is a *definite thought* produces both a floating thought form and a radiating vibration. Remember that thought forms differ in both density

and quality, with *color* having to do with the emotional quality of the thought; *form* having to do with the intent of the thought; and *distinctness of outline* having to do with the degree of concentration of the thought.[41]

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AN INSIGHT REMINDER: **Energy follows thought**.

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Thus, we as energy beings are continuously creating thought forms and a radiating vibration connected to those thought forms. *We literally live in a sea of thought forms!* This is somewhat analogous to the sea of information bombarding us continuously in our interconnected world. The good news is that only those thought forms that resonate with each other are attracted to each other, and that point of attraction has very much to do with the threshold of consciousness within which we operate.

Over many years, David Hawkins, who is a psychiatrist, physician, researcher and spiritual teacher, developed a model based on levels of consciousness which helps us understand our personal journey of expansion. Serving as a map of the energy Field of consciousness, these are calibrated levels correlated with a specific process of consciousness—emotions, perceptions, attitudes, worldviews and spiritual beliefs.[42] The progression is

as follows: 20 (Shame); 30 (Guilt); 50 (Apathy); 75 (Grief); 100 (Fear); 125 (Desire); 150 (Anger); 175 (Pride); 200 (Courage); 250 (Neutrality); 310 (Willingness); 350 (Acceptance); 400 (Reason); 500 (Love); 540 (Joy); 600 (Peace); 700-1,000 (Enlightenment). It is the 200 level, associated with courage and integrity, that serves as *a balance point* between weak and strong attractors and negative and positive influence, and it is at the 500 level that *the happiness of others* becomes an essential motivating force.

The level at which we each vibrate has an upper and lower threshold, dependent on the specific focus of the NOW, which is reflective of emotions, perceptions, attitudes, worldviews and spiritual beliefs interacting with the world. Thus, consistent with the highs and lows that move in and out of the experience of living, *the thought which we send out and that which we attract can vary from instant to instant*.

Similar to our analogy of lightning bugs, engage your creative imagination to picture a Field full of poignant, tiny flashes of light, which are thoughts. As a thinking energy being, you, too, are producing these tiny flashes of light that have the ability to join with other flashes resonating at the same level of consciousness. Energy follows thought, with thought forms weaving reality and

energizing action. An example is a flash mob. This is the process of **associative attracting**.

In the language of information technology, we have a personal crawler that is out there attracting and attracted to thought forms in resonance with our personal vibration. Through conscious choices, the unconscious is directly tapping the Field and connecting to partial thought that resonates with the direction of those choices. This personal crawler carries vibrational attraction, both reaching out and pulling in. Thus, *associative patterning* continues as information comes in through the senses in the course of living and experiencing, while simultaneously *associative attracting* is occurring through a radiating vibration.

When we have achieved the point of fusion where our self has expanded sufficiently in consciousness to tap into the intuitional plane at will, and our personality has taken on its new connecting role, we now have access to higher vibrating thought forms. The higher the level of our thought, the higher the level of thought forms conveyed to others and brought in through our senses. As we recognize higher order patterns, we discover higher truths.

While all this sounds very grand, the development of the mental faculties underway as we continue to move through the Intelligent Social Change Journey *does* come into play! We are here to live and experience. We have this amazing physical

body, a powerful and sometimes surprising set of emotions, and a miraculous mind/brain that at this point in our development is just beginning to discover itself!

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INSIGHT: **We have a miraculous mind/brain that at this point in our development is just beginning to discover itself!**

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We ask again and again in conversations with ourselves, our families, our friends, our colleagues, and with the world in general: *How can we make a positive impact on the world? How can we move through the challenges that face humanity?* "I'm just one person", we say. Of course, if we were, in fact, alone and separate, this would be absolutely true. However, this is not the case. As we now understand, we are part of a larger Field, with our own personal attractor so that we can discover others of like mind and heart, and cooperate and collaborate together to ensure we head toward intelligent activity.

Indeed, there is a great deal of responsibility that comes with all the learning occurring today. *As with knowledge, with consciousness, comes responsibility*. The higher level of ideas that we now, at will, have access to are meant to be used, to be acted upon. For example, one of the gifts of this

physical world is innovation. We take information, the basic building block of the Universe, connect that information to a need or opportunity, engage our creativity as we bisociate two separate conceptual patterns and connect an emerging idea to that identified need or opportunity, developing that idea into an effective product or process. Such is innovation, which represents the creation of new ideas and the transformation of those ideas into useful applications for others.

While innovation can certainly equate to "success", however that may be defined by the innovator, it *always* equates to service. Innovation is in service to others. Innovation produces processes and products that others will use to make or do something better, to make their lives better in some way, and perhaps providing the opportunity for *them* to improve other's lives in some way. Thus, innovation requires letting go of our ideas, sharing them, applying them, passing on the form in which they are applied, taking responsibility for them, and, as appropriate, expanding on them through iterative feedback loops. To accomplish all of this within the world in which we live requires development of the mental faculties counterbalanced with the spiritual. As we move through our personal Intelligent Social Change Journey, *this* is what is occurring.

[Your Thoughts]

Idea 6: The emotions play a strong role in attracting.

We've talked about thoughts and their vibrations. Well, what about emotions? What role do they play in this process of attracting? *That* is a very good question.

Our emotions are a building block of consciousness, and there is not a single thought that hasn't been assessed by our mind/brain for its level of emotional importance. The way this works is that all incoming signals and information are immediately passed to the amygdala, where they are assessed for potential harm to the individual. The amygdala places a tag on the signal that gives it a level of emotional importance. If the incoming information is considered dangerous to the individual, the amygdala immediately starts the body's response, such as pulling a hand away from a hot stove. In parallel, but slower than the amygdala's quick response, the incoming information is processed and cognitively interpreted. As you can see, our emotions are right there with our thoughts, energetically participating in the process of attracting. Let's look at this process through a few different lenses. We begin with the power of positive thinking.

The generation born close to the beginning of the 1900's lived through two world wars with unthinkable atrocities. Little wonder that in 1952 the world welcomed *The Power of Positive Thinking* published by American minister Norman Vincent Peale.[43] Of course, as occurs when new thinking based on experience is widely publicized, this book came under immediate attack by critics.

There were two primary reasons for these attacks: (1) what Peale wrote offered many anecdotes that were unsubstantiated, and (2) it was likened to hypnosis, with the underlying theme of convincing people of his personal beliefs. This is not surprising since Peale, as a minister, had great passion for improving the lives of others! From the viewpoint of neuroscience findings emerging as we entered the 21st century, and what would have been difficult to scientifically prove in the 1950's, there is, indeed, substantial power in positive thinking. As physicist and neuroscience researcher David Bennet says, "What we believe leads to what we think leads to our knowledge base, which leads to our actions, which determines success."[44] Further, what we think and believe impacts our physical bodies. The bottom line is, as biologist Bruce Lipton sums up, "The belief that we are frail, chemical machines controlled by genes is giving way to an understanding that we are powerful creators of our lives and the world in which we live."[45]

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INSIGHT: **When reflecting on experiences, the power of positive thinking amplifies learning and changes mindsets from seeing problems to creating opportunities.**

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More recent related movements, which bring positive thinking into the business world, are Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and Positive Organizational Behavior (POB). AI was named in 1990 by David Cooperrider and his colleagues who were studying at the Weatherhead Graduate School of Management at Case Western Reserve University. In its original form, David considered AI a mode of action research, which embraces the uniqueness of the appreciative mode.[46] It is much more.

Traditional organizational interventions identify problems and hunt for solutions; the AI approach locates and tries to understand that which is working, learning from it and amplifying it, using it as a complement to other interventions, or, perhaps, offering a way other interventions can be approached. AI is based on the simple premise that organizations (teams, communities, countries) grow in the direction of what they are repeatedly asked questions about and therefore focus their attention upon.[46] The four principles David and his colleague Suresh Srivastva lay down for AI are that action research should begin with appreciation, should be

applicable, should be provocative, and should be collaborative.

Since its inception in 1990, AI has become a meme, that is, it has taken on a life of its own, being used as a strategic change approach and in support of knowledge sharing. The principles of AI can also be translated into assumptions, the rules that a group follows when making decisions about behavior or performance.[47] For example, Sue Hammond and Joe Hall translate the principles of AI into the following assumptions:[48]

1. In every society, organization, or group [and within every individual] something works.

2. **What we focus on becomes our reality.**

3. **Reality is created in the moment** and there are multiple realities.

4. **The act of asking questions of an organization or group [or individual] influences the group [or individual] in some way.**

5. People have more confidence and comfort to journey into the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).

6. If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is *best* about the past.

7. It is important to value differences.

8. **The language we use creates our reality.**

This is a good set of assumptions, and their related actions, to use as we engage in change whether in our personal or professional lives.

We find that this set of assumptions, published in 1996, is based on a behavioral model, and was created *prior* to development of mind/brain measurement capabilities. Consider assumptions 2, 3, 4 and 8 referring to focusing, asking questions and the language we use. We now know from an understanding of mind/brain plasticity that thoughts change the structure of the brain, and the brain structure influences the creation of new thoughts.[49] This emphasizes the power of questions not only to trigger thought, but to actually help shape our brains. As the focus in organizations and communities has moved back to people and the knowledge they create, share and use, the empowering aspects of the AI approach can help build self-confidence in—and receptivity to—new ideas, and accelerate behavioral change. Similar to the energy of gratitude, the energy of appreciation is near the 350 (Acceptance) level of consciousness.

Similarly, from a psychological viewpoint, Positive Organizational Behavior (POB) is defined as "the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace."[50] POB forwards that by

focusing on positive self-development, organizations can inspire employees and boost organizational performance.[51] Thus, the individual's positive psychological condition is highly valued in POB, with positive psychological capital as a core construct.[52] This construct is concerned with the developmental state of an individual in terms of self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resiliency.

A popular and inspirational, short-length video weaving its way through organizations world-wide is entitled *Celebrate What's Right with the World*. Dewitt Jones, the host and a former *National Geographic* photographer, shares the direction that came with every assignment. You've guessed it. That direction was: "Go out and celebrate what's right with the world." Thus, began his life-long journey of looking for possibilities, with the change curve that can be accompanied by fear of the unknown becoming a *possibility curve* propelled by curiosity and wonder. He looked and he found, and through his photographs, Dewitt shared these possibilities with the world. Key concepts in this video are linked to both the AI and POB approaches, simple words accompanied by inspirational photographs and film clips. These concepts include: "Believe it and you'll see it," "Recognize abundance," "Look for possibilities," "Ride the Changes," and "Be your best for the world."[53]

The benefits of positive thought to you are immeasurable. The power of thought is reiterated throughout this text and supported by neuroscience findings. As is so succinctly expressed in the January 6, 2017, daily quote from Abraham-Hicks Publications, the bottom line is:

"The more good-feeling thoughts you focus upon, the more you allow the cells of your body to thrive. You will notice a marked improvement in clarity, agility, stamina, and vigor, for you are literally breathing your way to Well-Being, until chronic feelings of appreciation, love, eagerness, and joy will confirm that you have released all resistance and are now allowing Well-Being."

[Your Thoughts]

Idea 7: As an attractor, there is a knack to thought!

There's a knack to attracting that which you wish to attract! I guess we've learned some of that in the school of life. For example, in order to attract a job in a specific skill area, you first have to learn the skill, and in order to attract a *good* job you need to become highly skilled (and perhaps have a pleasant working nature as well!)

While we've already talked about attracting in terms of energy and frequency, we're first going to look at this attracting through the lens of symbiotic thinking, and then we're going to explore the simple approach of semantic realignment. We introduced symbiotic thinking in several of the Conscious Look Books. Still, it is important to understand this in order to address this idea! So, bear with me.

Symmetry and Symbiotic Thinking

Symmetry is proportional or balanced harmony, and is tightly linked with the concept of beauty. It is the exact correspondence of form on opposite sides of a centerline or point. We are all familiar with the repeating patterns on a butterfly's wings. Now, when we are trying to understand the wholeness of a topic, we are usually led to the idea of systems thinking. A system is a group of elements or objects, the relationships among them, their attributes, and some boundary that allows us to

distinguish whether an element is inside or outside the system. Peter Senge's approach to Systems Thinking uses feedback loops to show relationships among those elements. This extension of cause-and-effect thinking shows us that effects provide a feedback loop into the next cause, helping us to understand that what we call an "effect" is actually *part* of the next "cause."

Looking through the lens of symmetry, we move from *systems* thinking to *symbiotic* thinking when we realize that the very concept of "cause" cannot *exist* without the concept of "effect." This deeper relationship is not from causality, but from existence.[54]

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INSIGHT: **The very concept of "cause" *cannot exist* without the concept of "effect**."

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Would the concept of "day" exist if not also for the concept of "night?" Would we have a need for the term "summer" if not also for the term "winter?" In the physical Universe, we find that since there is such a thing as "matter" that there is also "antimatter." The very existence of a thing or idea *requires* the existence of something else. This same pattern plays out in a discussion of time and space, noting that space cannot exist without objects, and objects must be enclosed by space. Does lightning

just travel downward? With symbiotic thinking, we would understand that if there is a reaching down then there is also a reaching up, and indeed modern photography has captured the phenomenon of upward streamers.

As we develop our symbiotic thinking, we see that "supply and demand" is not just a single business concept, but two concepts where each exists because the other exists. We now view the old and new testaments of the Bible not as a contradiction but as a completion, since grace (new) cannot exist without law (old). And we begin to understand the nature of Quantum physics where two states must exist at the same time; for example, consider the famous thought experiment of Schrodinger's cat, which is both alive and dead. Things that don't make sense using systems thinking begin to make sense using symbiotic thinking.

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INSIGHT: **Things that don't make sense using systems thinking begin to make sense using symbiotic thinking**.

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In our efforts towards co-creating the future, with symbiotic thinking there is reason to expect that our individual ideas cannot exist without also a larger consciousness which seeks to incorporate our ideas. The need to create cannot exist without the

need to receive that which is created; and we begin to see that *there really is no creating without also co-creating*.

What this means is that when we are thinking about something, that thought also includes that which it is not. The class example is money. If I'm wanting money, then it means that I simultaneously perceive a lack of money. If I desire a relationship, then I'm saying that I don't have a relationship now. This is kind of fun to think about! (And in order for me to say that, there must be things that are *not* fun to think about!) So, the question becomes, if both what we desire and that which we do not desire are part of the thought we put forward, which are we going to get? Let's explore that a bit.

Semantic Realignment

A number of years ago, I worked with Barbara Bullard, a community college professor who taught communications, in writing a book called *Remembrance: Pathways to Expanded Learning*. We introduced semantic realignment, a process for embedding positive thoughts, in this book. There are specific strategies that can help produce the most positive and effective outcomes. Since verbs and nouns receive the most energy in programming your brain, the first key to semantic realignment is to **use verbs which indicate action followed by positive qualifiers**. Positive affirmations with positive verbs

can be powerful. For example, I *am* intelligent. I *can* do this. The term "I am" and variations on this expression allow the brain to recognize the noun as the essence of who you are. The words *imply permanence.*

To begin to realign your language, begin to use the following words instead of any negative messages you are currently in the habit of using: *I am* (plus a positive); *I can/I do*; *I want/I choose*; *I will/desire/want*; *I hope*; *I have faith*.

The second key to semantic realignment is to only use positive nouns in your verbiage. Do not confuse the energy of word programming by including negatives with the positives. Competing commands interfere with the efficiency (and effectiveness) of your personal programming. If you say, "I can't do this," this kind of self-talk can very well seal the fate for the person expressing those thoughts! With this kind of a statement, you are dictating your reality and not able to see beyond some situation-dependent and temporary "can'ts."

Further, an individual can burden and slow down the possibilities by voicing and thinking messages such as "I have to," or "I should," or "I've got to." These commands communicate to the brain that the world is holding a gun to your head, forcing you to learn rather than the individual owning the

learning (which speeds up the process). One of our recent neuroscience findings is the power of volition. For example, voluntary physical activity alone can generate new brain cells; if it's forced there is no neurogenesis, that is, no new brain cells. What does that say about forced study for an important test? Learning is highly dependent on volition.[55]

Semantic realignment, then, means acknowledging when we want something and owning that desire. Using any negative self-talk can make the process so much harder. Notice that when a person wants a new iPhone or even a new car, they don't sit there and waste time telling themselves that they can't get it. They put energy into figuring out ways they can purchase it and when that will occur. Conversely, when you use negative self-talk your brain believes it. There is not a magician in the brain who says, "Well, we know he doesn't really believe this, so let's do what we can to make it happen and surprise him." It just doesn't work that way. Your brain believes the messages you give it, so make them positive and proactive ones.

As Henry Ford (yep, the guy who started the Ford car company) used to say, "If you think you can or you think you can't, you're right." He understood that your beliefs act as a filter on the world, and your

biology adapts to those beliefs.[56] And he didn't even have the benefit of understanding neuroscience!

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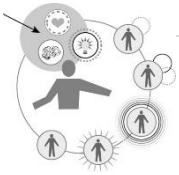
EXERCISE: *Do This Now!*[57]

(1) Quiet your mind for a moment
(2) Reflect on how history would change if everyone thought in negative patterns. It was once considered humanly impossible to run the mile in four minutes or less. After Roger Bannister decided he could run the mile in four minutes and made it happen, the following month 52 other men did it as well, because they knew it was possible! For those of you old enough, remember Mark Spitz, the great swimmer of the 1976 Summer Olympics who won six gold medals. So many swimmers around the world wanted to be the next Mark Spitz that the competition increased from each Olympics to the next until in 2010 the incomparable Michael Phelps won eight gold medals. Records are made to be broken. Our brains are made to be challenged and to achieve greater and greater goals.
(3) Give yourself a fighting chance by telling your brain you can do what you choose to do.
(4) Do this now!

* * * * *

A popular way to specifically incorporate semantic realignment for personal change is to craft specific affirmations designed around chosen concrete goals. Affirmations are simple written and spoken phrases that program in the desired self-fulfilling prophecy we wish to create for ourselves. Following the keys of semantic realignment, these affirmations should be filled with strong, positive verbs and modifiers. As Stephen Covey says in his book, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, "A good affirmation has five basic ingredients: it's personal, it's positive, it's present tense, it's visual and it's emotionally positive."[58]

For maximum impact, another important guideline for phrasing affirmations is to be sure to have an achievable goal, then phrase the affirmation as if the goal has already been achieved. Because cellular changes in the body turn over 10 percent every 21 days and 25 percent every 6 weeks, most habits can be rewired in the brain in the timeframe of three to six weeks. Therefore, affirmations are most effective when broken down into six-week chunks. Happy chunking!



Idea 8: We guide our lives through associative living.

As this book has unfolded, we've been changing our frame of reference while expanding our understanding. We now build on the ideas of associative patterning and associative attracting in terms of our thoughts, to a focus on associative living.

This is something we all learn, we all do. We begin when we're quite young, choosing those other children with whom we wish to be associated, although we don't really use those words. Even when young, there are certain types of people each of us seems to be attracted to, and this typing and attraction is what forms our social groups. If our looks and behaviors fall within the accepted norms of that social group, then we become a part of it; if our looks and behaviors are otherwise, then that attraction will be for naught.

This same phenomenon carries over into adulthood. Only, as our self has emerged—along with the development of preferences and passions—we are in a better position to choose with whom we associate. Perhaps we've always known that the people we associate with are important in terms of our learning and growth, but understanding from neuroscience has supported that knowing. We are social creatures, and over the course of evolution

physical mechanisms have developed in our brains to enable us to learn through social interactions. People are in continuous, two-way interaction with those around them, and the brain is continuously changing in response, with a great deal of this communication occurring in the unconscious.

With this new understanding, we realize that *our everyday conversations lay the groundwork for the decisions we will make in the future*. Therefore, it just makes sense to choose our interactions wisely. These interactions are so important, that many organizations encourage Relationship Network Management. An individual's relationship network is a matrix of people that consists of the sum of an individual's relationships, those individuals with whom we interact, have interacted in the past, and with whom we have a connection or significant association. In short, all those with whom you have had repeated and comfortable conversations.

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INSIGHT: **Our everyday conversations lay the groundwork for the decisions we will make in the future.**

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Whether virtual or face-to-face, relationships are ultimately about people and the way they interact with each other over long periods of time. The fundamental principle of success in relationships

parallels Sun Tzu's fundamental principle of success in warfare, that is, know thyself, know the other, and know the situation. Principles of Relationship Network Management start with the individual (what the individual brings to a relationship in terms of values, ability to communicate, expertise and experience, ideas, and willingness to share and learn). Then we move into understanding the situation (virtual or face-to-face, open or guarded communication, content of exchange, purpose of interactions, etc.), and the other (trusted or unknown, values, communication skills, frame of reference, expertise and experience, and willingness to share and learn).

The other day I wound up in a discussion with my sister about RNM under the umbrella of associative living, and she had an interesting insight. She said that we could refer to all this as *associative mattering*, that who and what we associate with really matters! She certainly has a point there.

There are several basic concepts that successful Relationship Network Management is built upon. These include interdependency, trust, openness, flow and equitability, all of which overlap. For example, interdependency includes a state of mutual reliance, confidence, and trust. Note that interdependence does not translate into freedom for individuals to do as they choose. Interdependence means a world of greater constraint or greater conflict, or both, "greater constraint in so far as individuals accept the

demands of interdependence; greater conflict in so far as they do not."[59]

Trust is based on integrity and consistency over time, saying what you mean, and following through on what you say, and openness is directly related to trust and a willingness to share. As can be seen, these qualities facilitate the free flow of data, information and knowledge among individuals, across teams and organizations, and around the world. Equitability in terms of fairness and reasonableness means that all those involved in the sharing gain something of value out of the relationship. These qualities are consistent with our definition of intelligent behavior, that is, *a perfect state of interaction where intent, purpose, direction, values and expected outcomes are clearly understood and communicated among all parties, reflecting wisdom and achieving a higher truth*.

* * * * *

TOOL: *Relationship Network Management*

There are five steps to managing your relationship network.

STEP (1): *Recognize the value of your network*. When we recognize the value of our relationship network, we can learn to consciously manage it, and provide the level of grounding needed to operate in the world of ideas.

STEP (2): *Identify the domains of knowledge* (areas of passion) *that are important to you* and what you want to achieve in life.

STEP (3): *Identify the people with whom you regularly interact*, both in your personal and professional life. Note how often you interact with them, the quality of the interaction, and whether they can depend on you and you on them to respond to questions with honest (and valued) opinions. *Ask*: What is at the root of this relationship? How do we complement each other? What do I learn from them? What do they learn from me? Is this relationship knowledge expanding? Consider the principals of Relationship Network Management and assure that each relationship exists within the bounds of those principals.

STEP (4): Carefully compare the list developed in Step (2) with the Network and understanding developed in Step (3). Then, *consciously choose to develop, expand, and actively sustain those positive relationships* in terms of thought, feelings and actions. Where gaps are identified, that is, where you have no exposure to the domains of knowledge (passion) which are important to you, prepare a plan that will bring that knowledge into your awareness and experience. For example, taking a college class related to that knowledge area will open the door to networking with people with similar interests.

It is critical to choose your network wisely. At some point in the future you will make a decision based on a conversation you had today or last week. Although you may or may not remember the conversation, the resonant content of that conversation is linked into your unconscious to associate with future thought. Thus, your everyday conversations and reflections on those conversations serve as grounding functions for future decisions and actions.

STEP (5) By choice, stay open to sharing and learning through your relationship network.

* * * * *

While managing our relationships is an important part of associative living, it is a much larger concept. Associative living also includes managing the context of our lives and the situations in which we immerse ourselves. This is tied to our activity and encompasses all the choices we make in terms of that activity: where and how we live our day-to-day lives, what type of career we develop, the social activities in which we engage, the places to which we travel, the exposure to new experiences, and so forth.

And, of course, as we have learned, our thoughts drive our activities. Everything begins with our thoughts.

What does this mean to me?

This idea of associative seems to have a great deal to do with the way we think, what we think about, and, well, how we live. So, let's just pull a couple of thinking points out from this text to keep in mind.

- You and I have the wonderful opportunity of being part of this wonderfully diverse playground of Earth.
- As an associative patterner, the human mind is uniquely prepared to address and respond to an environment that is continuously shifting and changing, and to context-rich situations and opportunities.
- The entire cortex is a memory system, storing sequences of patterns, recalling patterns auto-associatively, and storing patterns in a hierarchy.
- Because memory is recreated each time it is pulled up, it is rarely exactly recreated and often unreliable.
- Thoughts and images have a profound creative and motivating power within human consciousness, with the mind controlling energy and building form.

- Through vibration, there is an attraction of thought to thought, a resonance between the thoughts of self and the thoughts in the Field. We literally live in a sea of thought!
- When reflecting on experiences, the power of positive thinking amplifies learning and changes mindsets from seeing problems to creating opportunities.

We have a miraculous mind/brain that at this point in our development is just beginning to discover itself.

Take a few minutes to think about what you think about.

Are those the things you want in your life?

This volume of **Conscious Look Books** builds conversationally on the ideas presented in *The Profundity and Bifurcation of Change Part I: Laying the Foundation*, and *Part IV: Co-Creating the Future*, Chapter 22, "Learning Points Along the Way." Co-authors of the original text include David Bennet, Arthur Shelley, Theresa Bullard and John Lewis. Full references are available in the original text, which is published by MQIPress, Frost, WV (2017), and available as an eBook on www.amazon.com

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The Bifurcation

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Engaging Forces

The ERC's of Intuition

Grounding

The Humanness of Humility

Intention and Attention

Knowing

Living Virtues for Today

ME as Co-Creator

Seeking Wisdom

Staying on the Path

Transcendent Beauty

Truth in Context

Very different than a computer, the human mind is uniquely prepared to address and respond to an environment that is continuously shifting and changing, and to context-rich situations and opportunities. Our mind is an associative patterner, engaged in a continuous learning process. Further, we as energy beings are continuously creating thought forms and a radiating vibration connected to those thought forms. *We literally live in a sea of thought forms*! Thus, *associative patterning* continues while simultaneously *associative attracting* is occurring through a radiating vibration.