

# The Aspen Model

**The Aspen Model** is an outgrowth of the ideas presented at two public forums on education and a round-table discussion by twenty-five leaders of the Aspen, Colorado community held in the fall and spring of 1993-1994. The ideas presented by two Native American elders, a psychologist, a doctor, a lawyer, an international educator, ten public school teachers, a city council member, five community members, a school board member, four parents, a public school superintendent, two private school directors, a college student and a kindergarten child are represented in this model that forms a basis from which new systems that will meet the needs of a changing society may arise.

## **America is a country in crisis.**

Only a profound shift in how we treat each other, birth through adulthood, can lift us out of the malaise that has permeated all levels of our society and open the door for **inspiration and trust** to replace the fear and despair that now has us in its grasp.

**The Aspen Model** brings the millennia-old ideas of the Native Americans together with the vision of Aspen community members, educators, parents and children a lays a foundation upon which we can all build

## **A New Future**

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# The Aspen Model

## A Community with a Heart

We as members of this Community

### Understand

- \*The **inherent goodness** of each child/adult.
- \*Each child/adult is a **genius** in his/her own way and at some point before the end of his/her life this genius will flower and the world will be a better place because of it.
- \*Every person is an **eager and natural learner and teacher**.
- \*Every person has different interests, **different needs** - intellectual, physical and emotional - at different stages in their lives and that these are **ever-changing**.
- \*The adults in our community are “**enablers of learning**” as well as teachers, parents, employers - their role is to allow the natural flowering of each person’s natural gifts of wisdom, knowledge and talent.
- \***Change** is the one constant that everyone must embrace and prepare for.
- \*Extreme care must be taken from birth to ensure that each individual is **provided with conditions** which will encourage the development of **balanced, open, thoughtful people** who can contribute to his/her community in an appropriate manner.

### Pledge to each of our Children

- \*To provide **abundant fresh air**.
- \*To provide **natural light**
- \*To provide ample opportunities for **natural exercise**.
- \*To **respect and nurture** each individual as a unique gift to the world.
- \*To provide enough **time** in the day to relate in a meaningful manner with peers and teachers, parents and others.
- \*To provide **flexibility and choice** to take into consideration the needs of each person on a day-to-day basis.
- \*To provide **meaningful education** that relates to life in a significant way.
- \*To have an **appropriate structure** that takes into account that everyone is **different**, learns differently and develops at different rates
- \*To provide opportunities to **interact with the natural world**.
- \*To provide **exciting access** to core curriculum subjects.

### Pledge to each of our Parents

- \*The employers of parents will recognize **their important role as parents** and will support them with **flexibility** to accommodate their needs.

## **Pledge to each of our Seniors and Handicapped**

\*To honor each senior as having entered the **age of wisdom**.

\*To acknowledge the **challenge** that each day presents to our handicapped.

## **Pledges to each of its Employees:**

\*To provide fresh **air and natural light**.

To provide enough **time** to:

1. Do their job in a heartfelt and meaningful way.
2. Plan
3. Eat lunch, take breaks, be relaxed.
4. Relate to the students on a personal level  
when needed.
5. Relate to each other.

\*To **respect** each person as an individual who has a unique gift to bring to his/her students through the material he/she presents and through his/her unique personality.

## **To Accomplish This we Will:**

\*Provide a **smorgasbord of information and experiences** from which a child may **choose** and then **respect** his choices as appropriate for his/her development.

\*Encourage children to **take risks and make mistakes**, understanding that one learns more from wrong answers than right answers, thereby **relieving** the **stress** associated with having to be right and eliminating the fear of being wrong.

\*Orient means of educating children around the **inner satisfaction of learning** rather than the outer rewards of grades. We will educate for mastery of material by each individual at his/his own pace.

\*Integrate peer interaction with learning tasks e.g. co-operative learning.

\***Provide opportunities to learn from life by encouraging hands -on active participation in the community and the natural world through extensive field trips and other interactive experiences.**

\*Provide buildings that have clean, fresh air circulating constantly.

**With this Understanding, Pledge and Policy  
This community and school district will  
give to the world young people who:**

**Are Life-Long Learners  
Global Citizens**

# The Aspen Model

## Basic Assumptions

Given the appropriate environment:

Children love to learn

Children prefer to behave, fit in, feel connected

Responsible, thoughtful people will be the natural result of an nurturing environment

Expectation, judgment, blame and guilt are powerful means of crippling the human spirit

Intelligence is a gift found within each child and guides the use of knowledge gained through books

The purpose of education is to open the mind and nurture a person's natural desire and ability to learn in a variety of circumstances

A job is a means through which individuals may bring their gifts of intelligence and knowledge to the world for the betterment of all. Money is a secondary compensation after meaning and fulfillment

Our current economic system, based on growth and consumption is destroying the earth, the family , the individual and is neither viable nor appropriate

Parenting is a 105 hour per week job that requires conscious attention at all times

Leaving an infant dramatically decreases the child's ability to bond, feel love, lovable and connected

We are integrally connected to all living things in a supportive world that gives us everything we ask for, including scarcity

Violence is created behavior

Regular drug and alcohol use is a means of achieving freedom from a system in which the human potential is negated through lack of trust

# Synopsis of Presentations:

## Let's Talk

Public Forum Series  
Aspen, Colorado Fall 1993

### Forum #1

## Native American Approach to Learning

### Alden Naranjo, Ute Series Keynote Speaker

You may hear what I say, but you may not understand, or you may not hear it. That is ok, perhaps you weren't ready to understand it. **We may say something good, and it's good even if you don't understand it. One day perhaps you will hear and understand things that you did not understand today.**

One day we will come together and understand each other . The sixties began the changes. A lot of walls came down . We were taught prejudice in school and always wondered why we couldn't all be the same. The elders say we are the same, all equal, no one is better than another. The day will come when there will be a new beginning, a new life, a new understanding when all four colors of man will come together.

We must teach our children something that will benefit them and their children for seven generations. We all have a choice to teach our children something good, in the past we didn't have a choice. Laws have been put in front of us as stumbling blocks. We must overcome these stumbling blocks.

**We must teach our children the complete circle, something they can cherish and hold onto. Teach them to speak from the heart not only from the mouth.**

It is now time to make the step, now is the time to give the children a hand, now is the time to say something good, then you will know you came forward and did something good.

### Wallace Black Elk, Lakota

Columbus brought the first boat people, illegal aliens, to Turtle Island, the island of peace. They brought with them disease, alcohol, weapons and death.

The education represented by John Harvard teaches laws, rules, regulations and the abuse of the rock, fire, water and green. It promotes a philosophy based on gold, using the fire to melt gold, silver, copper. This education leaves out the Holy Father and Mother-Tunkashila and Grandmother Earth. This education teaches about stuff and things-nouns. It does not teach that there are little verbs inside, that everything is alive. The nine parts of speech come in little sacks with no connection. Secretly we hold the power to communicate with all of Creation.

This education teaches people to stay off the grass, to stay on the concrete. This concrete separates us from our Mother and other living things. We are so close, but so far away.

We put ourselves to work when we invented the wheel. Man creates nothing. God created the nucleus and from there came all of life and it goes on and on forever. We build beautiful houses that look wonderful from the outside, but in the back yard is a junk yard.

The English language is not rooted. When we say “See Spot run. Spot says arf, arf.” What does arf, arf mean? The puppy has a spirit and its own language. Mainstream education and language does not recognize this.

We are a runaway people. For thousands and thousands of years we ran away from Tunkashila and Grandmother Earth and ended up under the gold dome.

When we learn to count we need to start with 0 - with the nucleus of the atom which is everything. We need to understand that numbers talk.

We have lost our mind’s eye. Our ability to hear, taste and smell are very restricted at this time. All of these abilities are centered in the heart. The mind is in the heart. If we use our heart/mind we can communicate with all living things through telepathic waves.

Wallace’s teachers, mentors, were the 4-legged, birds, trees, grasses, fish. His parents tucked him away so that the government people missed him when they came to take the children away to boarding school. He was never formally educated. He came to understand the true chemical(telepathic) language of all aspects of Creation and they taught him what he knows. There are only a handful of people left like him. He has come to the concrete jungle to tell the people they are mistaken.

Water, fire , rock and green gave birth to wisdom, knowledge, power and gift. **In God we must trust.**

Tunkashila said “Look at my hand for it is sacred, my hand is the winged, the 4-legged the creepers, the crawlers, fish people, all the way down to the 2-legged.

**We must all put our heads together, we are all going to speak the same mind again-all forms of life will communicate.** The time will come when we will reunite, sober up and no longer abuse the water, fire, rock and green.

We must leave something for our little people so they can come to a place they call a happy home. Tunkashila and the Holy Mother will not punish us, they will welcome us home. But there is the chance we will commit mass suicide.

**To go on from here we must bring all aspects of our culture together-legal, religious, medical, and science in a circle and listen to each other talk. We must remove the lines that separate us and must reorganize, reaffirm, renew and rededicate ourselves so that we may properly educate our children. We must put the Holy Mother Earth back under the gold dome and bring in the water, berries, corn and meat - the source of life.**

Enough is enough.

## **Dr. Emily Bornstein, Psychologist**

She is a product of the best education the Western European culture has to offer. Prep school in New England, Carlton College, MA at the Univ. of Chicago, PHD in Psychology from the Univ. of Denver. She has practiced clinical psychology for 25 years with children and adults. She left her field to become a real psychologist. Psyche=soul. She has been studying with and assisting Wallace for 5 years and has found this endeavor far more challenging intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually than the many years of her classical education.

Two things she has learned is to be precise with language and to live life with intention, consciously.

When problem children were brought to her, they were primarily gifted(high IQ) children. She helped them by getting on their wave length, finding out what interested them and pursuing it with them and their behavior problems disappeared. Why are our schools failing these children?

We know much about children and what is best for them that we are not using. e.g. boys are not ready to sit for 6 hours at age six, nothing has ever been shown that hitting children is effective or beneficial in any way, yet we continue to do it.

Our childrearing practices have lead to anxiety-driven individuals stemming from the practice of putting babies in their own rooms alone. Anxiety interferes with learning. Such a practice is inconceivable to the Native American culture.

Native American children act different from ours and parents do not act as we do. Children seldom cry. When they fall down , they are picked up right away, loved and comforted. There are no orphans, everyone is related through a vast network of blood and clan relatives. Every child is raised by everyone There is a huge security net. Grandparents take charge of the children’s education. Wallace learned geometry from his grandmother who did bead work.

**In education, if we want to raise children who are good at taking tests, then give them lots of tests. If we want to raise children with an understanding of how the world works, who understand what a frog is about without cutting him open and looking at his insides then we must look at the way we teach. How we approach learning makes a big difference.**

We are not paying attention to the wisdom of our own Western European teachers. Socrates talked of education, of following up on the natural interests. Emily found **if you take the time to understand the child, find out his interests and follow up on them you will have an excited learner.**

We are not raising people who are good at paying attention, listening and contemplating. **We must learn to wait, watch and listen.**

Emily hopes that in her talk she has helped to open our hearts and minds to consider other ways to help our little people learn about our beautiful world

## Let’s Talk

### Forum # 2

#### Education: Birth Through Adulthood

**Dr. Harold Whitcomb, MD**

**The Connection Syndrome: Hope for the Future**

Why man has evolved the way he has. Why we are in difficulty. Why we are looking to the schools to do what we don’t know how to do. Parents who don’t know how to be parents want the schools to be parents.

People used to have children as a means of survival, to keep the farm going. They did not know how to be parents and raised a generation of children who were not connected and who don’t know how to be parents.

Original man was organized in clans and lived on grains, then as more and more people came they began to vie for resources and the greed factor kicked in. This fear of scarcity and attendant greed and hoarding lead to a breakdown of the community and family. Early tribes stole from one another, attacked and killed each other. The European heritage has exacerbated this behavior to the present day where the community and family has broken down to the point where many don’t know what to do with the babies or the children.

With the unforgiving childrearing practices of the European is very hard for a person to feel the peace and contentment needed to be a whole human being. In primitive cultures the children belong to everyone and have a deep sense of connectedness. In our culture parents don’t feel connected, children don’t feel connected and the home is often a place of sexual, physical and emotional abuse. One out of four families sexually abuse girls in the home. We are a very violent and abusive country. It is very common for a

mother to have no idea how to bond with her baby. We are raising people with no value for themselves or others which leads to the enormous crime rates we have.

We must look at different ways to help people see that they have value and that life has meaning.

**Rather than say to people you must become a better parent we must realize that we have a problem and seek new ways to work together as a team to raise the children in a way that they understand that they have value and are connected to a network of people who care for them.**

We are looking to the schools to accomplish this for us. Perhaps it is the schools that will provide the framework for this next step. It will never happen in the home.

## **Tom Crum**

### **Discovery Vs. Perfection: The Path to Peak Performance**

I know of no other people in this town that work as hard and as courageously as the school teachers. In my mind they are in one of the most important professions in the world. All three of my children have been in the school system here and they have had a very positive experience. I applaud the Aspen schools, administrators and parents for the continued hard work at bringing the best possible opportunities for learning to our children. Every parent and teacher in this town would like to see the students on the path to unveiling their full potential and operating at a peak performance level. Why aren't we doing it? The difficulty that I see in accomplishing such a task in today's world is a systemic one. We are operating in a paradigm that doesn't work very well. And this paradigm is not just in our educational system. It's in our businesses, government and personal lives. The paradigm is that of perfection, the measuring of our self esteem based on performance or a model of someone or something. The paradigm I believe we should be striving for is based on discovery with the emphasis on the fundamental elements of creativity, inquiry and participation. (please see attached). **We must surround our children with people who embrace a new paradigm of acceptance, understanding and affirmation of the individual if we want to encourage peak performance. A paradigm of judgment, control, and fear of failure leads to a life of struggle. It is not a natural state.**

Relationship, resourcefulness and responsibility are the three R's that we must emphasize in our teachers and our children, our homes and businesses. It is within this superstructure that the children will be willing and able to take in information, the traditional 3 r's.

We must understand that we should not be educating our children for the work force.

The rate of change is so great in today's world that it is too difficult to anticipate correctly the specific job skill needs in the future when our children become adults. This is something that we were able to do in past generations and, hence, preparing the child for the "work force" was a driving force in education. Information is changing daily and any education dedicated solely to information will be obsolete in the near future. We don't know what the world will look like in the year 2000 but we must prepare our children to succeed in it. They must be resourceful, responsible and understand their relationship to the world. They must know **how** to learn, **how** to deal with change and **how** to relate to one another.

**The natural state for a person is to inquire, participate and create with a fascination of outcome, a willingness to do whatever it takes, spontaneously, without judgment and control which leads to work becoming play through acceptance, understanding and affirmation. It is in this state that peak performance is encouraged.**

Schools, businesses and families must shift to encouraging this natural state. In order to do this we must retool, rethink, how we treat ourselves and our children. To change the system we must change our thinking.

When we hire teachers we must continue to look for people who can model the attributes of understanding, affirmation and acceptance. True teaching ability has little to do with degrees. The criteria for real teaching is not acquired in schools, it comes from within the individual. **We can have**



great structures, great curricula but if the environment is controlling and judgmental we will continue to produce judgmental, limited, controlling people.

*We must understand that change is the one constant in the universe and we must prepare everyone to embrace change , the unknown, and give them the tools to walk fearlessly forward without the need to limit and control.*

## **Jon Seigle**

### **Curriculum of Choices**

In 1990 four school board members with a combined total of 40 years of school board experience and 10 teachers met all summer to look at the forest without the trees and came up with another option for educating children. The concept which emerged they called the "Curriculum of Choices."

**Several curricula would be offered within one building. These curricula would arise out of the interest of the teachers and the students. All aspects of a child's education would be offered through an area of interest, by a teacher who shares that interest.** Examples of possible curricula are the traditional, out door ed and the arts.

Standards would be set that each child must know upon exiting a building to ensure that the child has acquired the necessary information for proceeding through life and the American school system.

This structure will take into account different learning styles and different teaching styles and would use the resources in the community-the arts and the outdoors. No one curriculum would be forced on anyone. Everyone could choose what suited them and their children best.

This concept moves education from the limits of perfection to the power of discovery. It can be accomplished with 0 budget, but the teachers must rethink how they teach. Since it is based on choice a curriculum or teacher that is not exciting or relevant will disappear.

The Charter School Act has created a means to implement such a program. A group of like-minded parents and teachers must simply get together and apply to the school board, a consensus of the community is not needed.

It is an exciting concept that would do well in this community, but breaking through the inertia to change is the challenge.

Prepared by Connie Baxter Marlow  
Parents for Choice in Education

## DISCOVERY VS PERFECTION

### Limits of Perfection

Self Esteem is Based on

**Performance**(is it right?)

or

**Model**(like s.o. else)

Child asks

Am I right (good) ?

or

Am I wrong (bad) ?

This produces

**Fear of Failure**

Which leads to

**Unwillingness to risk**

and a need for

**Excessive Control**

and

**Judgment**

**Life becomes**

**Work and Struggle**

**Peak Performance is limited.**

An excerpt from Tom Crum's book  
"The Magic of Conflict"

## THE PATH TO PEAK PERFORMANCE

### Power of Discovery

Self Esteem is Based on

**Inquiry**

**Participation**

**Creativity**

Child asks

What am I Learning?

How, where, why, when?

This produces

**Fascination with outcome**

Which leads to

**Increased awareness/open-mindedness**

and

**Willingness to risk**

and

**Spontaneity**

to an ever-changing world

Creates

Resourceful/Responsible Choices

No judgment

**Work becomes play**

**Increased connectedness gives birth to**

**Peak Performance.**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 10, 1994**

### **A CALL TO ARMS!**

Two moms from Aspen, Colorado have issued “A Call to Arms!” in honor of Valentine’s Day, February 14, 1994 in an hour-long television presentation entitled “Getting to the Heart of Education: A Choice for Our Children.”

“It is time we put a heart into our education process.” States Connie Marlow, mother of three. “The education of a child begins the moment he/she is born. We are all teachers and we teach through who we are, how we respond to and interact with each other and our children. We must accept this awesome responsibility and become conscious of everything we do. We must create an environment, birth through adulthood, that allows free expression of the human heart.”

In this hour-long dialogue Connie Marlow and Sandy Jones, also a mother of three, presented a framework within which “a community can create the conditions which enable its children to reach their highest potential,” a charge from the State of Colorado in HB 93-1313, its latest education reform bill. They explored a third option to the two possibilities facing our schools today: Outcome-based education, being promoted by the Department of Labor and Back-to-Basics, a reactionary movement spearheaded by the religious right, a well-organized group of Christians who already control 2,200 school boards across the country.

“We draw on the good points of both options and explore a synthesis that brings something that will work, first for the hearts, minds and spirits of our children, and second for the Department of Labor, the religious right, the liberals, the mainstream, the left field, the right field and the center field” states Sandy Jones. “If it’s good for a child’s heart, it will touch the heart of each person regardless of race, color or belief. All of those artificial lines of separation will disappear when we come together on matters of the heart.”

Jones and Marlow formed an organization called “Parents for Choice in Education” in the fall of 1993 in response to their concern over the implementation of outcome-based education in the Aspen public schools. Through letters-to-the-editor in their local papers, and appearances on Grassroots TV, their local public access TV station, they presented information to “broaden the perspective of the residents of the Roaring Fork Valley on the subject of education so that the communities may give mandates to their school boards that reflect choice and innovation rather than apathy and confusion.” This information blitz resulted in raising awareness of the Aspen public to the level that the Aspen School District chose to abandon the steam-roller approach to implementing outcome-based education. “the signs are that the Aspen School District is proceeding thoughtfully toward an appropriate educational format which will reflect the needs and desires of the community, incorporating the direction from the Department of Labor and the charge from the State of Colorado in its latest education reform bill.” States Marlow who

works closely with the schools. “Sandy’s and my job is to ensure that the community sees that at the heart of education lays the heart of each unique and beautiful child.”

In their talk Marlow and Jones gave a mission statement that is mind-stretching and paradigm-challenging. “We must examine every basic assumption that has been driving our culture for thousands of years if we want to pull ourselves and our children through these challenging times and lay the foundation for a future in which the human beign can show the world what it really came her for. It’s time to open our hears and our arms.” Declares Jones.

This show was filmed in the studios of Grassroots TV, a community access station, by Bob Vhrin, station manager.

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Tape available.

# Aspen Daily News

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## George Stranahan shares lessons on education in new book

Writer:

Andrew Travers

Byline:

Aspen Daily News Staff Writer

When he was in third grade, George Stranahan stood on his desk when asked a question by his teacher and bellowed, “Me no know, and me no care.”

He was sent to the principal’s office for that insurrection. But his challenge to the status quo in education has continued in the decades since.

Stranahan shares that anecdote in his new book, “A Predicament of Innocents: Might the Schools Help?” The book, published by Stranahan’s own People’s Press, draws upon his time as a teacher, which began in the U.S. Army at Fort Monmouth, N.J., in 1955 and continued as a professor of physics. He later became a leader in the alternative schools movement of the 1970s, when he helped found and was principal of the Aspen Community School in Woody Creek.

Stranahan, 82, distills his classroom experiences with exhaustive research on best practices, along with input from scholars and teachers, and his vision for a school system that would better serve kids.

The Roaring Fork Valley knows Stranahan as a man of many passions, ranging from science to brewing, and philanthropy to ranching, but education has been his lifelong pursuit, fueled in part by raising six children.

The book includes 120 photos by Stranahan, portraits mostly of students at the Aspen Community School spanning 30 years.

“I had the photos, I had the essays, and I didn’t want to pass away without sharing my thoughts about education,” Stranahan explained.

Stranahan organized the essays and photos over the last three years into a cogent narrative. This isn’t a wonky education policy book — it’s an irreverent polemic and a fact-filled plea for us to do better.

It’s interspersed with short quotations from a wide array of sources, ranging from the Gospel of Matthew and the Federalist Papers to Mary McCarthy and Chang-Tzu, but it is also informed by analysis from educational studies and journals.

The black-and-white photographs in this volume, shot in standard class-picture format, showcase Stranahan’s ability to extract personality and emotions with a camera. His photos have been shown in galleries in Boston, New York and Colorado (and currently in an exhibit at the Wylie Community Art Center in Basalt).

The portraits personalize his arguments about ineffective schooling.

“They’re looking right at you,” he said of his photo subjects. “They’re saying, ‘This is me. This is who you’re doing this to. How could you?’”

It is Stranahan’s second book. His first, “Phlogs: Journey to the Heart of the Human Predicament,” was also published by People’s Press and won the 2010 Colorado Book Award in the pictorial category.

He's celebrating the publication of "A Predicament of Innocents" with a signing at the Woody Creek Community Center on Thursday, from 5 to 7 p.m.

The book explores the art of teaching and how American educational policy can stifle children. For example, Stranahan picks apart and debunks the idea that standardized tests can judge schools and students.

"It's not that simple," he said. "It needs to be a judgment, not a number."

In the book, he notes that England has an agency called Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, which goes from school to school and performs personalized evaluations. In America, instead, we have standardized tests like the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP).

"We have no idea what a standardized test says about an individual," he said.

As he was preparing the book, Stranahan got a current copy of the CSAP test. He said he was "aghast" to find it would be illegal, under copyright law, to publish it and show people how we're evaluating student and school achievement.

Under the current national law, parents can opt out of having their kids take standardized tests for the state. But, if 5 percent of students opt out, the school's ratings are adversely affected and it can lose its accreditation. Stranahan is calling on parents to all opt out of the test and break down that system.

"I'm trying to stir parents up to say, 'We don't care about tests or accreditation,'" he said, "'We care about our kids and we don't want them to take the test.'"

He spoke with education experts, principals, teachers and students as he wrote the book, and he still regularly attends RE-1 school district meetings. In his research he looked at school district mission statements that talked about nurturing kids holistically, but found their policies to be simply teaching to the test.

The current education system, he writes, "makes growing up a matter of receiving huge amounts of instruction in academics, followed by extensive testing on the subject matter. Just like us in our time, children today forget it soon after the final exam. The education system has evolved, unguided, in the most unimaginative way possible: to make the kids grow up to be just like us."

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Photo Credit with Byline:  
Aspen Daily News File Photo

Photo Caption:

George Stranahan, above, has published his second book, "A Predicament of Innocents." It focuses on American education, and includes 120 photo portraits, by Stranahan, of local schoolchildren.

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See George on [www.YouTube.com/TheTrustFrequency](http://www.YouTube.com/TheTrustFrequency) "Opt out of Standardized Tests" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-8Oecw8kCE>

## A New Future

**In order to prepare for the new future of peace, harmony and unity, that may be beyond our current understanding, we must act with intention and use information already available to us, as well as commit to listening to and learning from the Earth, her creatures and other aspects, the universal energies, visible and invisible, and to encouraging peak performance through connectedness, choice and discovery, abandoning models of perfection and judgment.**

A synopsis of the ideas presented during: *Let's Talk. A Public Forum Series on the Subject of Education*, Aspen, Colorado. Fall/Spring 1993/4.  
Speakers: Alden Naranjo, Wallace Black Elk, Dr. Emily Bornstein, Dr. Harold Whitcomb, Tom Crum, Jon Seigle, Connie Baxter Marlow.  
Drafted by CBM 5/94

The dominant Western cultures currently base actions and decisions on a model of economics which has the bottom line as its principal determining factor. This is the profit-based model of a growth-oriented economy in a world of "scarce" resources using supply and demand as the "invisible hand" to regulate and control the outcome, determining "profit", "success" and survival in the short term. This Keynesian Model might be called "Bottom-line Economics". Proposed below is a model called "Top-Line Economics".

This model takes the highest aspirations of humanity, integrates the principles alluded to above and below, and places them as the dominant features in the interactions between individuals who are in the process of flourishing in a world of abundance.

### **Top-Line Economics**

When the principles of trust, generosity, respect, inspiration, love, cooperation and gratitude are actually the dominant factors of human interaction in the workplace, at home and in schools the resulting abundance will allow all aspects of the world to flourish in a manner heretofore unimaginable.

Taken from an open forum entitled: *Pan-Indigeness and its Relevance for the Future: Envisioning a New World* led by Connie Baxter Marlow and Arnie Neptune, Penobscot Elder. University of Maine, Orono. Drafted by CBM 11/01

The above can be accomplished once we commit to treating each member of the human family with the following understanding:

### **The Expanded Family**

Global/National/Workplace/Schools/Home/Self

A unit of divine, autonomous, sovereign beings, all seeking their unique destinies within the context of caring, consideration and respect for others achieved through conversation, listening, patience, kindness, empathy, compassion, playfulness and truthfulness, allowing the Universal Laws of perfect balance, abundance, harmony and win/win to manifest through letting go of fear, separation and doubt, moving into total trust of a universe driven by unconditional love. Drafted by CBM 2/98.

### **A New Energy**

All of this is possible because there is a new energy available on Earth which supports the manifestation of the infinite balance, abundance and unconditional love that are at the foundation of Universal Law. Individuals are beginning to experience this in their lives which, step-by step will influence them to make new choices on how they will live day-by-day:

#### **Spontaneously**

**Trust** will replace fear.

**Ease** will replace struggle.

**Serenity** will replace tension.

**Generosity** will replace hoarding.

**Abundance** will replace scarcity.

**Unity** will replace separation.

**New Systems** will develop.  
**New Relationships** will replace out-moded ways of being.  
**An understanding of the  
interconnectedness and sacredness of all things will begin to emerge.**

***It is in this way that true peace and profound freedom will come to prevail on Earth.***

Taken from "How Peace will Come to Prevail on Earth" Drafted by CBM for "The Reverent Journey for Peace and Healing in the Americas." 2/95

**"No problem was ever solved in the same consciousness in which it was created."**

Albert Einstein

**"We must become the change we wish to see in the world." Ghandi**

"Perhaps we have built a house of cards on a false foundation.

Examining our assumptions is key." CBM

8/02

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**Why Aren't We Everything We Dreamed We Would Be?**



**Perhaps we have built a house of cards on a false foundation. What could be the shift that would put our ship back on course?**

What if the following precepts became the foundation for how we are in relationship with each other. I have named it "The Expanded Family" and see it as the evolutionary step beyond the nuclear family concept:

**The Expanded Family**

*A unit of independent, autonomous individuals, all seeking their unique destinies within the context of caring, consideration and respect for others achieved through conversation, listening, patience, kindness, empathy, compassion, playfulness and truthfulness; allowing the Universal Laws of perfect balance, abundance, harmony and win/win to manifest through letting go of fear, separation and doubt, moving into total trust of a universe driven by unconditional love.*

The practical application of these concepts can ultimately create a community that intrinsically understands and trusts:

- \*The inherent goodness of each child/adult. \*That each child/adult is a genius in his/her own way and at some point before the end of his/her life this genius will flower and the world will be a better place because of it.
- \*That every person is an eager and natural learner and teacher. \*That every person has different interests, different needs - intellectual, physical and emotional - at different stages in their lives and that these are ever-changing.
- \*That adults are "enablers of learning" as well as teachers, parents, employers - their role is to allow the natural flowering of each person's natural gifts of wisdom, knowledge and talent.
- \*That change is the one constant that everyone must embrace and prepare for.
- \*That extreme care must be taken from birth to ensure that each individual is provided with conditions which will encourage the development of balanced, open, thoughtful people who will naturally contribute to his/her community in an appropriate manner,

by creating systems that:

- \*Provide a smorgasbord of information and experiences from which a child/adult may choose and then respect his/her choices as appropriate for his/her development.
- \*Encourage people to take risks and make mistakes, understanding that one learns more from wrong answers than right answers, thereby relieving the stress associated with having to be right and eliminating the fear of being wrong.
- \*Orient means of educating children and motivating employees around the inner satisfaction of learning rather than the outer rewards of grades and material gain.
- \*Encouraging excellence through connectedness, choice and discovery, abandoning models of perfection and judgment.

Living these ideas is the challenge, taking each word literally and acting accordingly. In this way, perhaps, we each be part of the process that will allow peace, beauty, balance and abundance for all to come to pass on Earth.

*"No problem was ever solved in the same consciousness in which it was created."*

Albert Einstein

*"This is a great nation and a strong people. Any who seek to comfort rather than instruct, promise satisfaction rather than reveal frustration deny that greatness and drain that strength. For today as it was in the beginning, it is the truth that makes us free."*

RFK

CBM 2/00

## **How Peace will Come to Prevail on Earth**

**It will be through the inspiration of individuals on a large-scale basis that world change will be affected.**

- 1. Separation, fear, hatred and violence are old patterns learned for survival in a by-gone era. They are like an old suit that no longer fits. Individuals are beginning to sense that these attitudes do not match their innermost feelings.**
- 2. There is a volcano about to erupt in the world today. What will be thrown into the atmosphere from the bursting open of the human heart is more joy, peace, unity and love than this planet has ever experienced in its existence. This has been written in the destiny of the planet Earth, and has been carried through the ages in the prophecies of the native peoples and in the essence of all religions.**
- 3. The continental mass from Alaska to Chile is, in fact, the new world. People from every nation of the globe have moved to this land with the intent to break with tradition and start a new, better life. At the foundation of democracy lie the seeds of true peace and profound freedom. These seeds have yet to bear the fruit encoded in them.**
- 4. The indigenous peoples of the world have been holding important keys to true peace, freedom and harmony in the essence of who they are and in their core spiritual knowledge.**
- 5. The coming together of the ancient understanding of the natural laws of the Universe and the secrets of the Earth, which have been held by the indigenous peoples, with what the modern cultures have learned through exploring the scientific paradigm, will create a synthesis from which will emerge a balanced way of walking on Earth by all people that has never been experienced before.**
- 6. This new experience will come from the choice of individuals to abandon fear and open their hearts to the full potential of the human spirit.**
- 7. There is a new energy available on Earth which supports the manifestation of the infinite balance, abundance and unconditional love that are at the foundation of Universal Law. Individuals are beginning to experience these in their lives, which, step-by-step will influence them to make new choices on how they will live day-by-day:**

**Spontaneously**

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**New Relationships will replace out-moded ways of being.**

**An understanding of the interconnectedness and sacredness of all things will begin to emerge.**

**It is in this way that true peace and freedom will come to prevail on Earth.**

**CBM 2/95 & 12/02  
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