



HOW TO CREATE THE GREATEST CIVILIZATION THAT EVER EXISTED

A Go-Giver's Playbook
for Systems Change

GARETH HERMANN

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WHAT YOU'LL GET OUT OF THIS EBOOK

This short book is a playbook for changemakers that have answered the call to serve a higher purpose and make the world a better place. My changemaker interviews, combined with boots on the ground experience in the startup scene in Boulder puts me at the edge of the emerging paradigm. In this book, we'll:

- Use the historical case study of how capitalism emerged and overtook feudalism to create a strategy for systems change
- Review the best practices you can implement to show up as a leader of the New Reality
- Learn how you can create your own New Reality Zone
- Discover #1 that will stop us from creating the next paradigm, and what to do about it

LET'S DIVE IN!



Creating The Greatest Civilization That Ever Existed

Civilizations rise and fall. History repeats itself. We have already seen some great civilizations here on this earth. Imagine the scholars walking the gardens of libraries of Alexandria, the plays and performances put on in Greek Parthenon, the priests sealing the tombs with prayers in the Pyramids of Giza. These ancient civilizations have created buildings and sacred sites that are so incredible we are still trying to figure out how they did it.

The new paradigm is already emerging: Conscious Capitalism chapters are popping up throughout the United States, Impact Hubs (co-working hubs) are expanding all over the globe, and Kiva microfinance loans are being distributed throughout Asia and Africa. While previous civilizations created their magnificence on the backs of slave labor, I see us building a new Golden Age of prosperity, creativity, and collaboration, where humans play an integral role in creating vibrant ecosystems that benefit all life.

My team and I interviewed over 50 change makers (from the likes of Tom Chi to Otto Scharmer to Brad Feld to George Kembel) to get the pulse on what is emerging. A new generation of heart-centered hustlers that are being the change and shifting their internal paradigms first is making headway. They are successfully taking action on their vision of a better future, while staying connected to the how the system works today. They are grouping together in startup teams, friend groups and organizations. They believe in the power of collaboration, cooperation and community and have the capacity to think about the larger “we”. They are in effect creating **New Reality Zones** where the new paradigm exists.

What Are These “New Reality Zones”?

To make this movement actionable and accessible to all, I am introducing what are called “New Reality Zones”. Instead of trying to pigeonhole the emerging paradigm with an “ism” (like Capitalism or Communism), I believe creating a “New Reality” creates a to give space for us everyone to co-create what “it” is together.

A **New Reality Zone** is a fractal and scalable quantum energy field where the new paradigm is possible. Each person that believes in the next paradigm, each meeting room, each company, each neighborhood can be a **New Reality Zone**. Imagine that each of these people and spaces are creating an energy bubble of possibility around them. The more powerful the entity becomes, the bigger the bubble grows. As the bubbles grow, they merge into each other and will eventually eclipse the current paradigm.

THE EXPONENTIAL THEORY OF CHANGE

1

GET MASSIVE ALIGNMENT

I believe that we all have a deep calling that if we heed, will change the world. It is our work to discover this gift and start sharing it.



2

SHIFT YOUR INTERNAL PARADIGMS

For better or for worse, we have been programmed by how we were raised and the culture that we were raised in. In order to create a new reality, we need to shift our internal paradigms first and create from a new level of consciousness.



3

LEVERAGE THE POWER OF TEAM

We have been sold a lie- that the hero is the individual that rises above. The truth is humans thrive and excel in teams.



4

CREATE A NEW REALITY ZONE

Change starts in a conversation of possibility. What is the new reality you want to create?



5

TRANSCEND YOUR SELF-SABOTAGE

As soon as you start taking action on your vision, your self-sabotage will surface. It's not actually a problem;



CHAPTER 1

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



The Problems We Are Too Afraid To Face

Picture the current state of the world in your minds eye. Do you see the babies being born, the homes that are being built, the plants that are growing on farms, and the children are playing on playgrounds? Or do you also see the destruction that is occurring? The bombs going off in the crowd, the sexual abuse of a daughter, the rain forest trees crashing to the ground, and the animals being slaughtered?

In many ways, the world is being ripped apart at the seams.


As a species, we've never come close to the current scale of our impact on the planet and each other. Here are a couple chilling statistics (opposite). We are bulldozing 3 forests the size of San Francisco every day and are rapidly killing off every other species on the planet so that we can raise our standard our living. What's crazy is that most people are still not happy and fulfilled!

We have complex systems level problems: our government has been left behind in the tech revolution; the economy is gaming our behavior and externalizing the impact onto the environment, leading towards widespread collapse; we are socially struggling to get out of the fear based mentality that leads us towards isolation and aggression.

How we set up our societal systems was a necessary evolutionary step to get us to where we are today.

And as those systems fall apart at the seams in front of our very eyes, a new paradigm is spilling out along with it.

It is time for a shift in consciousness that allows us to create new systems that regenerate the planet, and support humans living lives of fulfillment and creative expression.



The world has already lost 80% of its forests and we're continually losing them at a rate of 375 km² per day.

Source: <http://bit.ly/world-counts>



Humans represent just 0.01% of all life, but have destroyed 83% of wild mammals.

Source: <http://bit.ly/guardian-human-race>



The 2017 Harris Poll Survey of American Happiness reported that only 33% of Americans surveyed said they were happy.

Source: <http://bit.ly/human-happiness>

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You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

R. BUCKMINSTER FULLER

[R. Buckminster Fuller holds up a
Tensegrity sphere. 18th April, 1979.]



Image Source: http://bit.ly/R_Buckminster_Fuller

Will You Heed The Call?

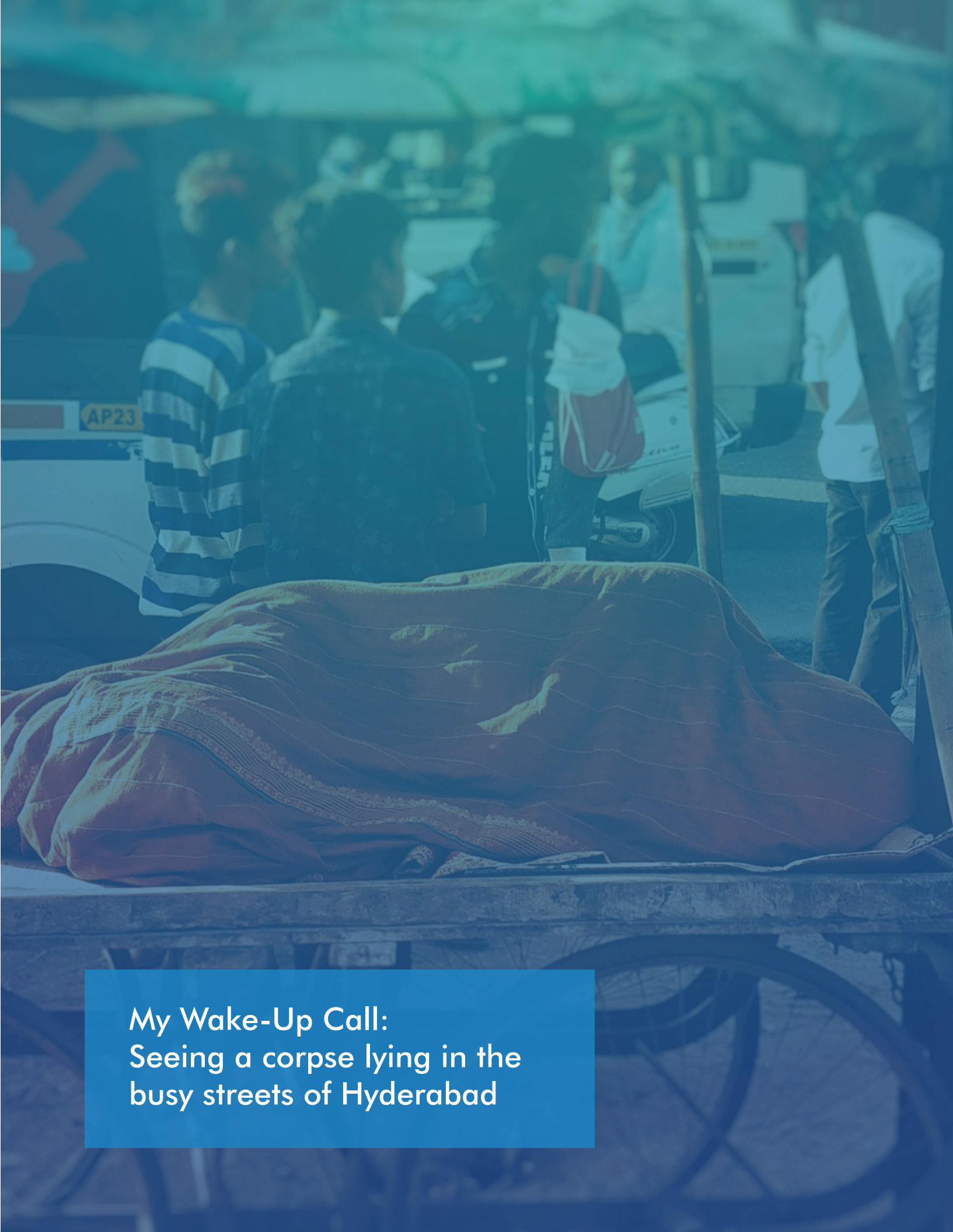
How did all this destruction and pain come about? What does the future hold for us? How can we best chart the path forward?

These were NOT the kinds of questions I was asking myself as I was traveling through India in 2014. I stepped off the bus one hot, hot evening in Hyderabad and was having a blast drinking a couple semi-warm beers with backpacker friends walking through the noisy streets. I thought I was the coolest—I had long hair, a beard and backpack, and a vendetta against mainstream society. I was laughing and joking around until we walked around the corner and I almost tripped over a corpse lying in the gutter. Seeing a dead person in the busy street, surrounded by hundreds of people going about their lives as if nothing happened rattled something inside of me.

It was in this moment that I realized that my whole life had been centered around MY needs and desires. For the first time I contemplated—what is my purpose? What am I here to do?

After much soul searching, I landed in Boulder, Colorado and started following my passion—I burned my resume and committed myself to entrepreneurship as the quickest way to create change at scale. I quickly found that my millennial idealism led to a bitter reality. After 6 months of coaching and consulting for local do-good businesses, I found myself living in a 100 square foot tool shed with only a laptop and a bicycle to my name. I was working twelve hour days, six days a week, and was living on \$1,200 to \$1,500 dollars a month. I rented Tony Robbins books from the library, eating rice, beans, lettuce and hot sauce, and saving up to be able to afford things like new socks (in the meantime I was sewing the holes in my own). I would break down in tears every couple of weeks from the stress.

I knew that I would give up if I didn't do something drastic. So I enrolled my brother and another entrepreneur into what we ended calling an "exponential" accountability team. We got aligned on what was truly important to us, set goals around our priorities, tracked the key habits we needed to set ourselves up for success, and then coached each other through the self-sabotage that arose in the process. With the help of my Exponential team, I eventually emerged from the mental, physical and emotional gauntlet victorious and was able to sustain myself financially and started to build a name for myself.



My Wake-Up Call:
Seeing a corpse lying in the
busy streets of Hyderabad

The entrepreneur roller coaster continued. I successfully ran two startups into the ground and literally had nothing to show for it, but it gave me the experience I needed to take an idea and build it in reality. In the process, I had built my entrepreneurial community and felt less alone. Now, I own two business, get to work on social enterprise investments and help purpose driven businesses scale their impact. I couldn't be more thrilled that I get to live my life's purpose and help shift the consciousness of the planet—and I get paid to do it. And I feel like I am just getting started!

Our generation has an unprecedented opportunity for new growth and creation. Our generation has an unprecedented opportunity for new growth and creation. Heart centered go-givers all over the world are stepping up to heed the call. In order to create the greatest civilization that has ever existed, each person must discover and engage their Ikigai. Ikigai is a Japanese concept that is roughly translated to English as “a reason for being” or “the reason for which you wake up in the morning.”

If you are reading this, chances are that you are part of this new generation of leaders. You are exploring your own Ikigai. Together, we are building tomorrow's companies, organizations and movements that will profoundly reshape the world — a world filled with hope, vitality and wellbeing for all. **What we build now will have huge consequences for generations to come and for the planet.**

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My purpose is to create the greatest civilization that has ever existed.

GARETH HERMANN

COO of Magic &
Co-founder of Exponential



IKIGAI

A JAPANESE CONCEPT MEANING “A REASON FOR BEING.”

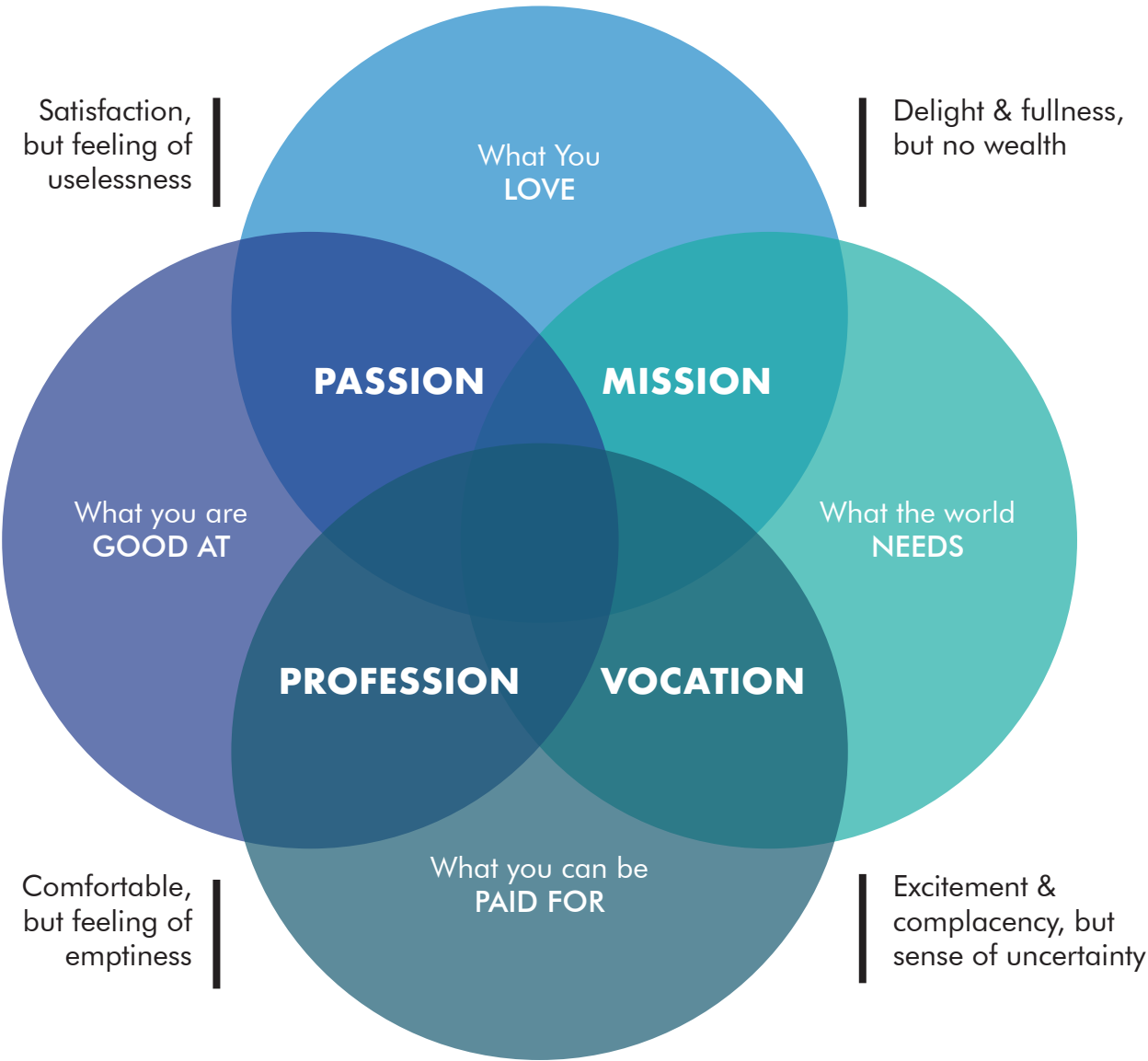


Image adapted from
Dreamstime Toronto Star graphic

1

CALL TO ACTION – GET MASSIVE ALIGNMENT

Reflect on your Ikigai. What is the biggest problem you feel called to dedicate yourself to?

[illegible]

CHAPTER 2

THE ANCIENT CASE STUDY FOR CREATING THE NEW REALITY: HOW CAPITALISM ECLIPSED FEUDALISM

How Capitalism Eclipsed Feudalism

In order to create a better future, we can look to the past for examples and best practices for how to bring about a new paradigm. History repeats itself—no sense in reinventing the wheel.

That’s why I am excited to share the story of how Capitalism emerged from Feudalism- it will give insights on how we can accelerate the new reality.

Imagine being a peasant in the 1300’s. You don’t own the land you work on, have to give your crops to your king, your daughter is wracked by bloody coughs, looks like she is dying and you don’t have enough money to buy herbs for her at the village market. The next day, the neighboring kingdom invades and burns all of your crops. You are now being asked to show up and fight for your king and have to leave your sick family behind with no food or protection. Your life is about survival. If you think it is hard to change the paradigm now, imagine how easy we have it compared to feudal times.

What happened next was fascinating. As international trade developed, a new class of merchants started to gain power by buying goods inexpensively abroad and selling them for profit at home in Europe. Some of these merchants banded together, gained more autonomy from the Holy Roman Empire, and lobbied for the designation of a “Free Imperial City”. Some cities in northern Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands formed alliances and supported each other in protecting trade routes, key cities and further consolidating their power. They created their own armies, judicial systems and even an early form of a stock exchange¹.

This new network of cities became known as the Hanseatic League. The rise of the merchants tipped the balance of power away from the Feudal kings and liberated the poor by creating demand for paid labor. As a result, capitalism emerged as a much more equitable paradigm where everyone had the opportunity to participate in the economy, rise in social status and make a difference. It is a monumental shift in world history that gave people social mobility and liberated them from being stuck farming a small plot of land for someone else.

The Keys to Creating The New Reality

So what can we learn from this story and what does it teach us about how to bring about the next paradigm?

In this story, we see a group of innovative people disregarding established social structures to create a new system. In recent history, booming industries such as tech, e-commerce entrepreneurs, and cryptocurrencies have created a new class of wealth. These are the new “merchants,” it is an opportunity to leverage the new wealth to create a more equitable world for all. What the new merchants need to do is simple, but not easy!

Just like the Free Imperial Cities, we get to start creating **New Reality Zones**. In these Zones, we get to start operating in the next paradigm. We get to build with collaboration in win-win dynamics. We get to share resources and think about how to make the pie bigger for everyone, rather than controlling information and resources.

We also get to figure out how to make our communities more resilient and transition our materials economy so that we are providing value to our ecosystem as well as to each other.

For example, right now we are stuffing cattle in toxic feedlots so that we can drive the price of beef down massively for humans at the expense of soil health and the ecosystem. Joel Salatin is a farmer in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia (featured in the documentary Food Inc.) that is tackling this problem head on. I got to tour his farm, and his management practices of rotational grazing are actually adding topsoil, improving fertility and producing organic and high quality meats all at the same time. He has great contracts with Chipotle and is making a positive impact on his community and the ecosystem. As you can see, these **New Reality Zones** can be as small as a home, or as big as a neighborhood, intentional community or even a city.

But before we can dive into **New Reality Zones** and how to create them, we first have to journey inwards to ensure that we are ready to handle the challenges that come your way as we try to make change.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanseatic_League

CHAPTER 3

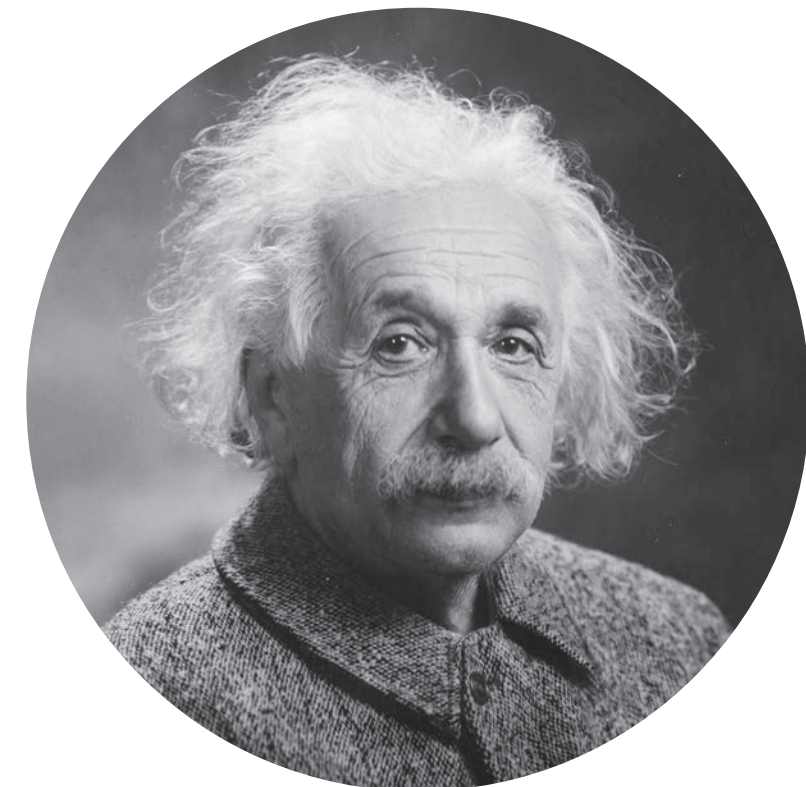
THE 3 BEST PRACTICES FOR LEADERS CREATING A NEW REALITY ZONE

After interviewing over 50 changemakers, I began to see some patterns and themes. I saw that bringing about a New Reality is fractal. You have to start with shifting your own paradigms before shifting social paradigms. We need to redefine success, shift our thinking from the filter of “what’s in it for me” to “what’s in it for we”, and learn how to play well with others in teams. The first step in systems change is transforming yourself.

“

The significant problems we face can not be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.

ALBERT EINSTEIN



Source:
http://bit.ly/Wiki_Einstein_1947

How to Create New Narrative of Success

After exploring your definition of success, I will share some best practices to give you an X factor in making them your reality.

CALL TO ACTION – SHIFT YOUR INTERNAL PARADIGMS

[illegible]

BEST PRACTICE #2

How to Tap Into Your Unconscious Secret Gifts

I believe that we are sitting on a massively underutilized technology right under our noses—the human vessel. Our bodies possess the highest grade sensory system on the planet. We just need to learn to tap into it. We literally have the capacity to sense into the emerging future and gain insights into complex data sets instantaneously. After working on the 4 Pillars of Self-Actualization described below, I began to tap into spiritual powers that I didn't know I had. I started getting visions in my morning meditations where I would get a "download" of an entire business plan in 15 minutes (which would have taken weeks to write out logically). We are all familiar with our standard measure of intelligence and IQ. I call the cultivation of your intuitive and sensory capabilities your Spiritual Quotient.

A friend of mine who has made a career consulting with some of America's biggest brands (Coca-Cola, Major League Baseball, Kaiser Permanente), suggests that high SQ isn't about sitting on the cushion or a mountain top or practicing asanas, but rather practicing emergence - deeply listening for what's needed and wanted, even possible, in any given moment. Generally, instead of a lot of effort this requires empathy, intuition and strategic patience. She says, "For most traditional entrepreneurs the "e" stands for effort and ego - how hard are YOU going to work to build something. This inevitably leads to burn out. High SQ entrepreneurs drop the ego and the effort, instead learning to work with what's emerging. They listen deeply, look for the signs, where the energy is flowing. It's not that creating something doesn't still require a ton of hard work, but you'll be working with the flow rather than fighting it. Like any good surfer, momentum comes as you catch the wave. But first you have to know how to put the surfboard in the right place.

How does one access the gifts of SQ? Early in my entrepreneurial journey, I started to look at my life holistically to optimize for entrepreneurial performance and leadership. I knew that if I wanted to make a big difference in the world, I was going to have to shift the fundamental identity that I related to myself as. In my current mindset, I was afraid of failure and financial ruin. I was staying up late, sleeping in, working all the time, and my health was in decline. I didn't eat until I was starving and then I just ate whatever cheap food I could scrounge. I knew that I needed to upgrade every area of my life in order to succeed.

We have compartmentalized the different areas of our lives into things like "Business" and "Health" and "Relationships" that are separate buckets. From my experience, how you do one thing is how you do everything. Improving one area of life will have ripple effects into all other areas. For example, by becoming more vulnerable in intimacy, I experienced rejection. Learning how to deal with that allowed me to be a better negotiator and salesman at the business table. After 4 years of living my life as a personal laboratory, I have consolidated my learnings into The 4 Pillars of Self-Actualization to help you optimize your vessel and put you in touch with your own intuitive gifts and genius. The 4 Pillars are IQ (intellectual quotient), EQ (emotional quotient), PQ (physical quotient), and SQ (spiritual quotient). I give some examples below, followed by a worksheet for you to take action on at the end of the chapter.



IQ INTELLECTUAL QUOTIENT

We think we all know IQ. At first I did brain training games to improve my memory and problem solving. I became a student of business and entrepreneurship and read dozens of books a year to build the skillset of creating something from nothing and leading a team. However, I quickly realized that the most important aspect of the mind is unconscious, which drives most of our behavior. Diving into IQ for me looks like examining my beliefs and reprogramming my unconscious mind. More on this in the last chapter.



EQ EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT

When I used to wake up in the morning, I would wake up in a state of existential anxiety and fear (due to almost dying as a baby- lot's of trauma hard wired into my central nervous system). It took work every morning to get to a baseline level so that I could have a normal day. As a result, I cultivated a morning routine that conditioned me to experience different emotions and re-hardware my neurobiology. I would do yoga to activate my central nervous system. Going for a quick jog got my blood flowing and endocrine system activated. Gratitude meditations would help me calm my emotions and get my serotonin and dopamine flowing. After getting more mastery over my internal emotional world, I began asking for emotional feedback on how I impacted other people every week day for 6 months so that I could increase my capacity for empathy. I challenged myself in my relationships and asked 20 ladies out when I experienced attraction in public places—including the grocery store and parking lot. Building up your emotional intelligence requires learning how to identify how you feel, process it, and relate to others about your experience. Raising your EQ increases your self-mastery tremendously and decreases how much others can influence you. It also allows you to have a greater understanding how humans work and will give you an edge in rapport and influence.



PQ PHYSICAL QUOTIENT

I personally believe that your PQ is your foundation. If you are trying to lead the team, but you are pumped full of toxins you are not going to get very far. I started with sleep first — it took me two weeks until I was consistently going to bed at 10pm and waking up at 6am. Then I started working out again to get my testosterone pumping. I went a month where I didn't eat any sugar or drink alcohol and eventually got gut bacteria samples to optimize my diet for my body type. The name of the game here is detox, then build vitality with rest, diet and exercise.



SQ SPIRITUAL QUOTIENT

The point of mastering IQ, EQ, and PQ is so that you can get increased access to your Spiritual Quotient. By detoxifying your body, freeing yourself of limiting beliefs, and building a loving and supportive social network around yourself, you are creating an opportunity for yourself to move up Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and self-actualize. At this stage you have all of your basic and social needs met. You can now turn your focus towards your Ikigai and your purpose. Doing anything that makes you come alive is what your SQ is all about. Prayer, yoga, meditation, conscious movement and all contemplative practices support you as they raise your level of self awareness and make you more attuned to your vessel. The amount of insight and creativity you are able to generate at this stage is unparalleled and a

2

CALL TO ACTION – SHIFT YOUR INTERNAL PARADIGMS

For each quadrant (IQ, EQ, PQ, SQ), ask yourself: what do I need to start doing and what do I need to stop doing?

IQ:

EQ:



PQ:

SQ:

BEST PRACTICE #3

How to Leverage the Power of Team to Go Farther, Faster

Making lasting change in life is hard. Like I mentioned previously, I initially struggled to shift the foundational habits and beliefs of fear and scarcity. I knew exactly what I needed to do to take my life to a new level, but dropped the ball on actually doing the work outs, cutting out sugar, and leaning into sales. My experience looked like pitting my prefrontal lobes against the massive momentum of the speeding freight train that were my unconscious bad habits. Needless to say, I failed miserably a few times, and realized willpower wasn't the answer.

We have all been told a lie that is embedded deep in the American ethos. The lie threatens our success and our ability to achieve our goals. If you're like me, you desire to play the biggest game you can play. Be the best version of yourself that you can be. Push yourself to constantly improve. Start your day with exercise, a spiritual practice, and healthy food that fuels success. Throw your heart into your work so that you can share your gifts with the world and have a positive impact on your community and the world.

What holds us back is the lie of the rugged individual, the frontier man, the man that can take on the world alone. The Marlboro Man has been deeply programmed into our unconscious. When we believe the lie, we set ourselves up for inspiration, followed by a couple actions, and then disappointment when we return to our old ways. We then feel frustration with ourselves. Is there something wrong with me? No! By going for it alone, we set ourselves up for failure because we are hardwired to be social beings.

I noticed that I was much less likely to let a friend down and bail on a workout with them, but I would bail on myself all the time. I took this concept and enrolled a fellow entrepreneur that I connected with at my men's group and my brother into the most hardcore accountability system I have seen. We set yearly, quarterly, monthly and weekly goals, tracked our habits, and took 3 daily actions towards our goals. If you missed a habit, you had to dump a 5 gallon bucket of ice water over your head. If you missed a daily action you had to get on a coaching call with the team and "Get Real" about how you were self-sabotaging.

The reason I set this up was that I wanted to create a system where I would put myself on a track where I could not fail. My deep desire was to take my greatest visions and take action on them with zero resistance. We called this system "Exponential" after the concept of compound interest, except in this case instead of watching money exponentially grow in your bank account, you are seeing the exponential results of your compounding habits and actions creating a life greater than you ever envisioned.

When we work in teams, we can accomplish any goal. When we have the support and accountability we need, we can more easily climb the mountain, overcome the hurdle, and get back up when we've been knocked down. I leveraged the power of team and this structure to systematically upgrade my life in health, wealth, relationships and spirituality.

It has been almost 4 years now since I have been living in this way, and I am starting to experience exponential results. I went from living in a tool shed to living in a 6,500 square foot mansion. I went from being alone and afraid of getting hurt in my intimate relationships to being surrounded by a group of change makers that are here to collectively make the world a better place. I went from struggling to bench 125 lbs for a few reps to doing 5 sets of 5 at 160 lbs, without breaking a sweat. I went from a broke solopreneur to leading a 20 person company on track to earn 7 figures in our second year of business. I've already eclipsed my original dreams and I'm thrilled that I am on a path where my future is continuously better than what I can dream up.



WHAT COULD BE POSSIBLE FOR YOU IF YOU WENT ALL-IN IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

From my experience, we tend to limit ourselves, and it is imperative to have a team around you that sees your greatness. Imagine a whole tribe of A-Players supporting each other in living their best lives and showing up for each other 100%. This is for A-Players that don't get bent out of shape about feedback and that are willing to get real and take a look at where they limit themselves. That have the capacity to be vulnerable in a group and give and receive emotional support. They are willing to get outside of their comfort zone and do things they have never done before in order to achieve their goals.

I believe that creating the greatest civilization ever will be a simple byproduct of people stepping into their personal power and co-creating from that place. The easiest way to do that is to join a team where you are surrounded by a community supporting you in showing up the best version of yourself. Exponential is the community we all have been looking for.

3

CALL TO ACTION – LEVERAGE THE POWER OF TEAM



JOIN AN EXPONENTIAL TEAM!



CHAPTER 4

HOW TO CREATE A NEW REALITY ZONE

The inner work is a continuous process, you never really get “there.” But your commitment will help you to achieve a state from which you can co-create with others. So what does that look like?

We create the new reality by shifting culture. It starts with you, your family, your accountability team (if you have one), your friends, your co-workers and your community. As you can see, you can take action immediately and increase your impact. The best way to do that is to create your own **New Reality Zone**.

How to Create a New Reality Zone

Imagine you could consciously create your core relationships from scratch?

What would your life be like if those closest to you supported you exactly the way you would like them to? Your house, your family, your core friend group, and the people you work with are all opportunities to consciously create relationships that support your life’s mission.

Let’s take my home as an example. When we moved in together in our new house in Boulder, we took ourselves through the TechStars team formation process (TechStars is a prestigious business accelerator founded here in Boulder). We designed our house from total possibility, established a shared vision, what our deepest WHY was, how we wanted to show up for each other, and what our agreements and commitments were.



NEW REALITY ZONE

Another example is my family. During my quarter life crisis, (where I contemplated my own death and the impermanence of life), I realized that my parents were going to die. I had been taking them for granted my whole life, and I finally realized how much of their life energy they have given to me. They literally did everything in their power to give me the best life possible. After overcoming the guilt of taking them for granted, I took action. I thought about what they most wanted—a relationship with me and to be part of my life. At this stage I was notorious for doing my own thing and rarely talking to my parents every couple of months. So I reached out and set up a weekly video call with them where we shared about our lives for an hour each week. After a couple months, my brother joined and now the whole family checks in and supports each other. Sometimes we just listen to each other, sometimes we give positive reflections and celebrations, and sometimes we give each other relationship or business advice. We also have had some edgy conversations about spirituality, our deepest held beliefs, money, sexuality... you name it, we have gone there. As a result we have a powerful foundation of love and support in our family. We still trigger each other at times, but there are enough deposits in the emotional bank account that we can navigate the challenging moments and stay in connection.

My new office with Magic is an example of how to create a New Reality Zone. I took some duct tape, and drew a big red line across the entrance. I then used the red duct tape and wrote out “New Reality Zone” on the floor. Now anyone new that enters the space, I enroll them that in the 1,000 sq ft that is our office for Magic, “The Matrix” does not work here, and that in this bubble, possibility, creativity, expansion and connection occur. The effect has been an increase of energy and connection in the space. It is so fun to see businesses being formed, deals being closed, money being invested, and relationships deepening.

What Does a New Reality Zone Look Like at a Community Scale?

Back in 2017, I worked with Impact Hub Boulder to facilitate Communities for Change- a cross-sector collaboration technique developed by Otto Scharmer (an MIT professor working on transforming business, society and self). We enrolled local business leaders, key local government officials, activists and folks from the non-profit space to all come together to learn how to work together and solve challenges that were impacting the community that the individual sectors were not able to solve. We took everyone through the Theory U process, taught them rapid prototyping, and had them go out in the community to conduct empathy interviews, come up with projects and create solutions. I loved it—people just went for it. One of the projects I was particularly attracted to was Ryan Martins’. Ryan, (co-founder of Rally Software), had a vision for creating an innovation district in the city. The concept was that the City of Boulder would designate the district in the city as an innovation district and that we could experiment with new best practices for how to live, work and play together. We will see how challenging it is to implement, but this is the kind of thinking we need to embody to scale **New Reality Zones**.

Brad Feld, (entrepreneur, author, blogger, and venture capitalist at Foundry Group here in Boulder), is another Boulder local whose provides some good ideas for how to foster and accelerate the growth of a community which he outlines in his book “Startup Communities: Building an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Your City”. Brad gave me some advice: The final step is to start stitching the “**New Reality Zones**” into a network. Thinking back to the Capitalism emerging out of Feudalism case study, I envision Boulder as a New Reality Zone, and then start connecting more cities together in a new network that continually grows in power.

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Get people together. Give them some structure around how to discuss things. Don’t drive to consensus but get agreement on what to do. Pick things to do together and do them. Iterate.

BRAD FELD



4

CALL TO ACTION — CREATE A NEW REALITY ZONE

Set up your own New Reality Zone at a scale that you feel comfortable with.



Family

- Set up a weekly video chat call.

Office

- Get some duct tape, write out “New Reality Zone” on the floor, and hold a team meeting to co-create what is now possible in The New Reality.

Community

- Host a meeting where you call together multiple community stakeholders that normally would not interact and discuss a community problem that you would like to tackle together.

Your Ideas:



CHAPTER 5

WHAT ALWAYS WRECKS INSPIRATIONAL PROJECTS, AND HOW TO OVERCOME IT

Have you ever gotten super inspired creating something from a place of passion, formed a team of like minded individuals, got the ball rolling, and then had everything fall apart?

What Always Wrecks Inspirational Projects

When I first moved to Boulder, I got involved in the community working on preventing oil and gas development near the city in order to protect our air and water. We had a couple meetings and as a result about 7 of us deeply committed to putting an end to fracking near our homes, schools and water sources.

We quickly learned how to set up our team with a strategy, roles and responsibilities, and other management best practices. Within a couple of months we had dozens of volunteers working with us on the issue, and within a year we were running a local ballot initiative to change the legal designation of the City of Boulder so that we could have more control over oil and gas development. We were gaining traction. At this point we had about 200 volunteers, and were about 2,000 signatures away from getting the amount we needed to get the initiative on the ballot. We were having a meeting to create a strategy to get the last 2,000 signatures, which was going great until two of our leaders and founding members starting disagreeing about strategy.

Suddenly, chairs were shoved back, voices were raised, and they started screaming at each other. Wives and husbands entered the fray, and we had to restrain everyone and end the meeting. The fall out that occurred afterwards was devastating. Accusations were made about betrayal and abandonment. The signatures were taken and held hostage by one of the members. The whole movement ground to a halt. The signatures were never even submitted.

I have seen this story play out in business between co-founders, in the non-profit space on the boards of directors level, and we get to see this kind of behavior all the time in television between our politicians. These dysfunctions are a symptom of the root cause which I don't think is talked about enough in mainstream society.

The Unconscious Self-Saboteur & How to Overcome It

Think back to your Ikigai. What big problem are you here to tackle? I can guarantee you that as soon as you muster up the courage to take **MASSIVE** action towards this purpose, your inner self saboteur will arise to thwart you. This phenomenon especially comes true when you start to work with other people. So how come when we get a group of do-gooders together, we self-sabotage our own success?

From my experience, it has all boiled down to my unconscious mind. Our unconscious mind drives 95% of our behavior, and when we use our most advanced parts of our brain to move forward, it is the unconscious that pulls us back. I personally have experienced and observed two different kinds of this unconscious sabotage.

One kind of self-sabotage surfaces through past traumas. At one point in my life, I thought this was bullshit and that people were just being weak talking about their childhoods. Where I stand now, I see that people have either done the work to drop their egos and begin their journey towards self-healing and self-actualization, or they have not. You'll know when people are acting from their wounded inner child when the conversation downgrades to that of a 3 year old throwing a temper tantrum. When something "triggers" your wounded inner child, you essentially revert back to your hindbrain and turn into a reptile that is only concerned with survival. Even if "survival" in this case is being "right" about the strategic plan. Getting into this state is easy to identify if your heart starts pounding like the time I almost punched my business partner in the face, but it can also be subtle. I have found myself halfway through a pint of ice cream before looking down at the spoon in my hand and realizing I didn't even know how I got there.

Themes of betrayal, abandonment, feeling unloved, low self-worth, self-confidence, fears, impostor syndrome, rejection, and ostracization are common. No one really wants to go there though, and it is much easier to project onto those around you than self-reflect and feel a feeling you have unconsciously spent your life trying to avoid.

Fortunately, we are not victim to our unconscious minds and have the capacity to reprogram ourselves. Over the course of a year I got my "trigger recovery" (the time it takes to get back to being a fully conscious adult thinking and behaving rationally) down from two days, to two hours, and finally less than ten minutes.

The first step in this process is to raise your level of awareness so that you can observe when you are self-sabotaging yourself or your team. In order to raise my own level of awareness around me being reactive, I made a commitment to my Exponential team that I would be in reaction 0% of the time by the end of the year. I kept a "Fight or Flight" response journal and for 1 year, every time I got triggered, I would journal on a series of questions that allowed me to process what happened, take ownership of my experience, and then trace the trigger down to the root cause. I usually ended up crying and feeling some painful childhood emotions if I did it right. What you are trying to do here is feel any feelings that come up without identifying with them, trying to make them go away or fix them, or anything other than simply experience them.

If my journal technique didn't work, I immediately called one of my accountability partners and had them coach me into a breakthrough.

The other kind of self-sabotage that I have experienced the most is an issue with self-image. Our unconscious mind has an internal representation of who we believe we are, and employs the ego to ensure that our sense of reality is consistent with that internal representation. Your unconscious internal self-image and ego work kind of like a thermostat. If you believe your "this" kind of person (fill in the blank), you will unconsciously do everything in your power to create a reality that reflects that. For example, if you believe you are the kind of person values commitments and punctuality, it will pain you immensely to be late for a meeting and you will stress yourself out and work very hard to be on time. The power of these internal beliefs can be both benefit and harm you. For example, if your business starts to operate in the red but you have a deep seated belief that you are destined for greatness you might start to find ways out of the situation or wrap it up into a learning experience and start a new venture. However, if you deeply believe that you are a failure you might use this as evidence that you should give up and throw in the towel.

“

What we say to ourselves in the privacy of our own minds, matters. It drives our behavior, which drives our destiny, which shapes our world.

MARIE FORLEO



DOWNLOAD THE "FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE JOURNAL"

There is a great book by Maxwell Maltz called Psychocybernetics that outlines a visualization technique for shifting your inner perception and beliefs about yourself. Maltz was a plastic surgeon and he was puzzled by the fact some people would experience a boost in self-confidence and their careers would blossom after having getting a nose job while others still felt like they were ugly and worthless. He developed a technique to help his patients shift their internal identity so that it would match their new physical identity. The technique is called the “Theater of the Mind” exercise.

- Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Imagine that your whole body is encased in concrete. All of your limbs are so heavy that when you try and lift them, you can't. After visualizing this for a couple minutes you will enter into a deep state of relaxation.
- Create a movie in your mind where you are the main character. View yourself in 3rd person and watch yourself doing whatever challenges you with ease and grace. Try to make it as real as possible — visualize all the colors and details. Add in sounds and smells. Most importantly — emotionally engage yourself: call up whatever emotions you wish to be experiencing and add them to the mix.
- Maxwell recommends doing this for 30 minutes.

I made a commitment to my Exponential team and did the Theater of the Mind exercise for about 10 minutes each night before going to bed for a year. The results were incredible. When I was asked to do my first interview, I knocked it out of the park. The host told me I nailed it, and then was shocked to hear that it was my first interview. I told him that it was a breeze because I had already done it dozens of times in my mind's eye.

The best time to use this technique is when you are in a transitional period with your business or with your team. If you pour conscious energy and intention into a project, it will start to grow. Often times, the growth will call you into a higher level of leadership than you are accustomed to. By utilizing this visualization technique, you can start to build your internal identity as the person you are growing into and avoid all the self-sabotage. The key here is repetition. According to Dr. Bruce Lipton, (a stem cell biologist), we learn things through osmosis till around age 7. After that, the only access we have to our unconscious minds is through repetition. So don't expect to do this a couple of times and see results.

5

Guide yourself on a 10 minute journey to start reprogramming your unconscious mind, using the “theater of the mind” exercise! Journal about your experience:

[illegible]

Will You Heed The Call?

In summary:

- Step 1: Get Massive Alignment
- Step 2: Shift Your Internal Paradigms
- Step 3: Leverage the Power of Team
- Step 4: Create a New Reality Zone
- Step 5: Transcend Your Self-Sabotage

With the combination of our increasing levels of consciousness and technology, I believe we have an unprecedented opportunity to create impact on our planet at scale. I was on a call with Tom Chi and asked him what he thought we could do to create systems change. He said that we should spend 0% of our time trying to persuade non-believers and that our biggest bottleneck was passionate people working together to make a difference. One of the startups that he mentors is especially inspiring to me- with a small team and a fleet of drones, they have managed to plant millions of trees since they started up.

I see us building a tribe of changemakers that are taking a hard look at themselves, tapping into their highest calling and getting their egos out of the way to collaborate on building the next paradigm.

What is your Ikigai? Who do you need to surround yourself with to scale your impact? If you are looking to join a tribe of change makers dedicated to doing their inner work, showing up for their teams, and tackling big problems I would love to have you join me in building the Exponential community.



JOIN THE EXPONENTIAL COMMUNITY

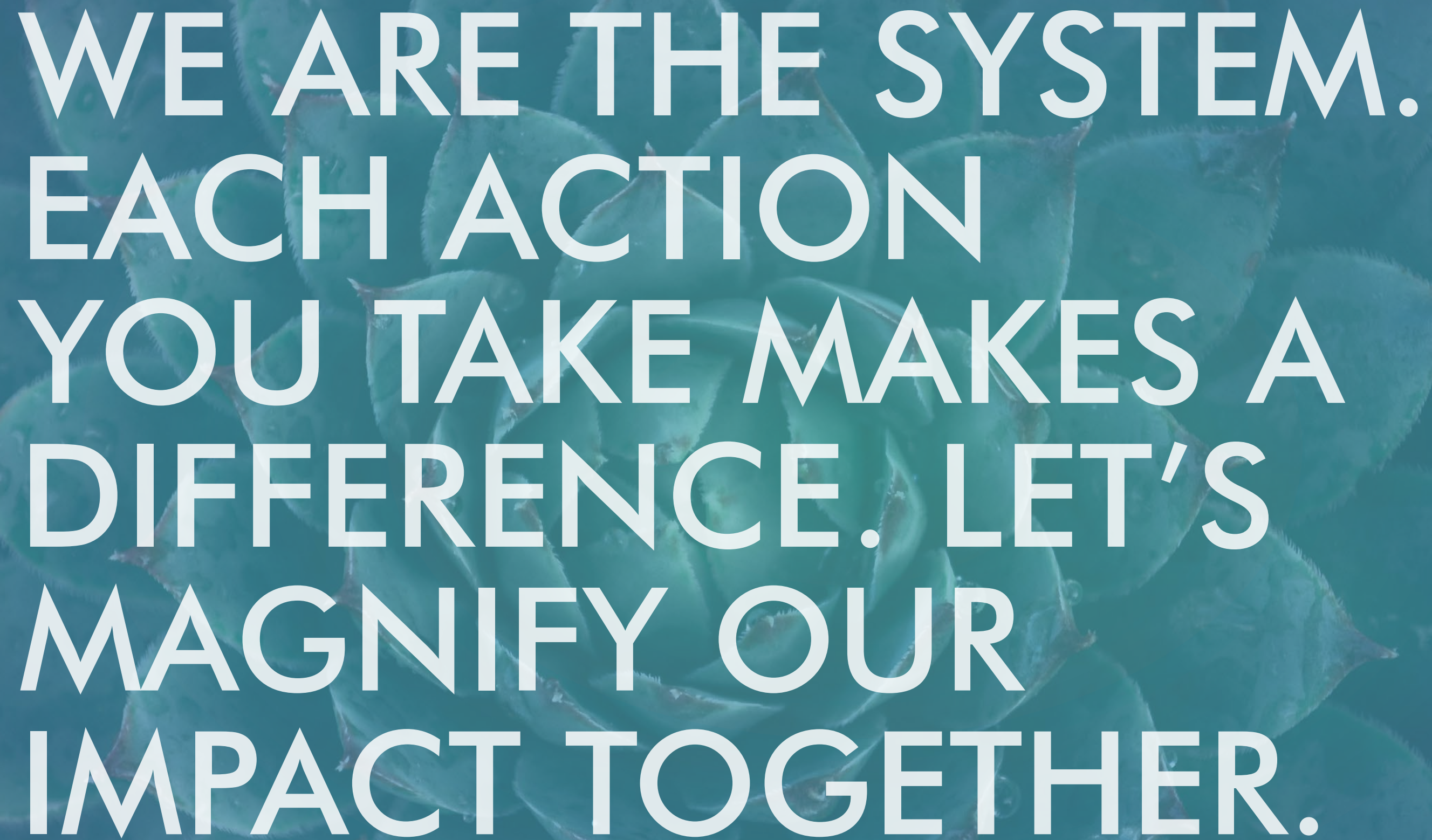
with love,

GARETH HERMANN

Contribute Your Insights!

This is my first book, and is intended to be a conversation starter. I would like to crowdsource feedback to rapid-prototype the content and rapidly improve it so we can get the best practices for systems change out to the masses before it's too late.

CONTRIBUTE YOUR INSIGHTS TO RAPID PROTOTYPE THIS BOOK

The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of succulent-like plants with small, pointed, fleshy leaves. The image is heavily tinted with a teal or cyan color, creating a monochromatic effect. The leaves are layered, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background, giving a sense of depth.

WE ARE THE SYSTEM.
EACH ACTION
YOU TAKE MAKES A
DIFFERENCE. LET'S
MAGNIFY OUR
IMPACT TOGETHER.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE COLLABORATORY

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Co-Founder, Soak Boulder

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