

The Universe: A Love Story



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We are storytellers, philosophers, poets, psychologists and scientists of the new universe story. We trace the new universe story, integrating for the first time diverse elements from all the leading sources of authoritative wisdom available today on the cutting edge of thought. The result is the greatest love story ever told.

Recently someone came to us seeking advice. He was in a very scared, paralyzed state. We said to him, "If we lived inside of your consciousness we could be sacred and paralyzed too..." To up-level our consciousness is to evolve our worldview.

Part One: An Introduction¹

The iconic philosopher of *Sources of the Self*, Charles Taylor, writes that human beings live in inescapable frameworks of meaning. The frameworks we live in consciously and unconsciously define the inner quality of our lives. They determine every decision we make, and how we experience and view the world.

You, for example, live in a web of relationships. You have relationships with people, society, and the world at large. Your framework is comprised of the information you glean from the nature and quality of each of those relationships. Essentially, your experience of those relationships forms your framework, or your worldview. If the information you have received from your relationships tells you that the world is indifferent to your physical or emotional well being, for example, you may relate to and experience the world in a painful or unhealthy way. If you learn from your relationships that brutal competition is the only way to survive, you may feel compelled to consistently make choices that intensify your adrenaline rush. If the information you receive from your relationships tells you that you live in an eternally unchanging world, one in which positive evolution and transformation is impossible, you may experience life as dull and static. The result is a loss of aliveness in your life, which often comes with a low-grade anxiety and depression that only rarely goes away. This in turn paves the road for every form of addiction. If your relationships teach you that your role is to be obedient, or to prove your worthiness by avoiding temptation and doing right, you may never experience the joy and freedom that come from creativity and natural, unrestrained expression. The lack of fullness in your life sets you up for every manner of pain in both your personal and professional life. You are constantly seeking the potency joy that you intuitively know is your birthright, yet you cannot quite locate it in your life.

Playing a Larger Game

¹ In this essay, we did not unpack all of the elements of the integral model. The assumption of this essay is that the universe, a love story narrative needs to be articulated within the framework of integral meta theory. Simply put, that means that evolutionary love needs to tetra arise in all four quadrants, needs to express itself in all the different lines of development, needs to grow up to the different structure-stages of consciousness as reflected in classical models of developmental theory, needs to wake up to higher states of consciousness as expressed in the classical great traditions and is reflected through the prism of each person's irreducibly unique typology. In this essay, our intention was not to provide a detailed map of how evolutionary love, and particularly the universe, a love story narrative would express itself in all of these dimensions, but rather, to articulate the core narrative of the universe, a love story. Once the narrative is put in place, then the critical narrative arcs formed by the contours of integral theory need to be fleshed out in detail.

Let us try and articulate your inner yearning. We know it because it is our yearning as well. It is the longing that every unique being shares in common. "I want to be more. I want my life to be infused with vitality, purpose and meaning. I want to be delighted to get out of bed in the morning. I want my life to be a love letter to reality, to all the people in my life, and to myself. Right now I am stuck in commitments I need to fulfill, but these commitments do not enliven me. I have bursts of energy at peak moments in my life. At those times I get a glimpse at what might be possible. But most of my life is dull, heavy and painful. The old wounds I thought I had worked out long ago resurface all the time. I am angry, petty or jealous more often than I care to admit. I am ashamed at how regularly I am caught up in the clutches of these emotions. I find myself acting like the shadow version of the light I want so desperately to be. But even when I am not caught in their grasp, the truth is that I feel limited and lackluster most of the time. And that does not feel right to me. My life feels ordinary, and I know that my life should be epic and extraordinary. I am filled by an inconsolable longing, which I can admit to virtually no one. I feel small, but I want to be large. I want my life to be responsible, but also alive and ecstatic. Many people in my life consider me successful, but inside I feel like an imposter. I don't want to feel that way. I WANT TO LIVE OUTRAGEOUSLY. I WANT TO PLAY A LARGER GAME!"

Our persistent dissatisfaction in its pathological form creates disease. But in its potent form it is the source of yearning and thus, the source of power. This yearning is not merely grandiosity, as psychologists may have you believe, but rather it is the truest indicator of your essential nature. We do not long for that which is not ourselves. A fish does not yearn for dry land.

We feel systematically misrecognized. Much of what we do is to attain that particular feeling of aliveness and significance that comes from being recognized, valued and loved. When we have that feeling, the painful questions like "Why am I here?" and "Is my life worthwhile?" disappear temporarily. Not because they are not important, but because the answer is so obvious that the question disappears. The feeling is one of radical aliveness: the feeling of pulsating Eros. Not merely sexual Eros, but the Eros of existence itself alive in you and as you. When we feel that fullness living in us, the goodness, truth and beauty of our own existence become self-evident. We want a gorgeous new car not for the efficient means of transportation, but because of the gorgeous feeling of Eros it gives us. We want a fantastic relationship, a great home, and an awesome job not merely for the sake of the individual items, but for the stunning feeling of aliveness they give us. We want to give into reality in service of something larger than ourselves because that is when we feel most alive and most aligned. Our truest desire is for desire itself. Buddha is popularly understood to have given desire a bad name. But in the original canon of Buddha's teaching he is reported to have said, "Have few desires, but have great ones". We want to have great desires.

Superpowers

We have a sense that we have superpowers. We go to the movies to see *Superman* and we identify with something in him. We feel that there is something larger than life that lives in us. Yet, we are wont to lose ourselves in external obligation to dull the pain of the unfulfilled dream of a larger life. We are driven to sacrifice ourselves on makeshift altars to false gods. The drive to sacrifice ourselves is universal in every culture, in every time. It is because in the act of sacrifice we transcend our small selves for a moment. Or if we cannot find an altar at which we are willing to prostrate we might choose the other path of deadening ourselves to the pain of the smallness of our lives. We lose ourselves in our lives in the all of their detail and commitment and spend our

lives fulfilling on to do lists. What we really want to do is find ourselves, to find that drive, that power that we have felt in peak moments in life. We ask ourselves, “What would it mean to live that way every day? To live from whatever that source is?”

Yet, the information we have available to us about the nature of reality tells us that this all a fantasy. Superheroes exist in movies, not in real life. We are told by psychology that our sense of grandeur is but a delusion of grandiosity. We are told by all the authoritative voices of family, culture and education that we must grow up. So we become grown ups and stop growing. We are programmed to pursue the superficial vision of what culture calls success and leave our dreams behind. And we are left empty and ordinary, when we admit it to ourselves, yearning for the epic and the extraordinary.

For the first time in the history of civilization, however, new information is available. That information is so potent and powerful that if you could fully understand its implications, your entire experience of being alive would transform. A New Universe Story is emerging, based on startling new information in synergy with once-lost, sacred information. Some people, fearful even of positive change, will remain asleep or comfortably numb in response to this new information. They will continue living in the old paradigm based on outdated, incomplete, or even distorted information. But many more will wake up and accept the invitation of an entirely new life. They will be the leading-edge people who inspire a revolution in consciousness that will fundamentally transform the world. Their experience of life will be radically alive and joyful! Their lives will pulse with potency and vibrate with significance. They will know themselves to be ecstatically loved, profoundly needed, and uniquely chosen by life. They will arrive at this new relationship to life through a story—a Universe Story.

But what does this mean, a “Universe Story?” The universe is not merely a fact but a story. The universe is evolving. And we are personally implicated in its evolution.

We are, each of us, uniquely loved, uniquely needed, and uniquely chosen. This is not a fanciful conjecture, but rather the most accurate understanding we have of reality today. This understanding is based on the best information available to us from the leading edges of numerous fields of knowledge.

Leading edge scientists and theorists of evolutionary emergence have shown us that the universe is going somewhere. There is a plot and a direction to this story.

In this story we are not puppets, moved by a mythological God. Each of us is a leading actor, playing a unique role, and love is the driving force, the inherent plot of the universe.

The universe is a love story. Not an ordinary love story. An Outrageous Love Story.

The revelation of evolution is not merely the discovery of an objective fact. Rather it is the realization that the universe is passionately alive, throbbing and pulsating with energy and growth. The universe is a love story, but it is no ordinary love story. It is an Outrageous Love story. Outrageous Love is evolutionary love, the love that drives the entire process of evolution. Evolutionary Love is filled with both Eros and Telos. *Eros* means radical aliveness and *telos* means direction. They are both qualities of love. Love is fully alive and always desires deeper contact with the beloved.

Eros, in evolutionary love, is the outrageous beauty and dazzling elegance of the universe. Eros is the potency, power, ceaseless creativity and the inherent intelligence of the universe. Emergence science calls this inherent intelligence the self-organizing universe or the self-actualizing cosmos. Eros is the movement towards higher and higher levels of complexity, connectivity and consciousness. A rock is more complex and elegant than a molecule. A cellular organism is more complex and alive than a rock. A dog is more complex and alive than an amoeba. A human being is more complex and alive than a dog. Human beings build hospitals. Dogs are more loving than amoebas.

Human beings build hospitals and dedicate themselves to universal healing in a way that dogs cannot. In this sense, human beings are more loving than dogs.

Eros is the *telos*, the movement of evolution, towards higher and higher levels of mutuality, recognition, union and embrace. Eros is the movement towards ever expanding circles of care and concern. Eros is the movement towards ever deepening experiences of love. We live in what we beautifully refer to as a *telerotic* universe.

Not only is love the driving force and animating energy of reality, love itself is evolving. As the universe moves from unconscious to conscious evolution, love evolves to include deeper and wider levels of embrace. In the evolution of culture, for example, we have moved from narrow love of self and one's survival clan to a larger love that includes one's entire tribe or nation. Love then evolved even further, at the leading edge of consciousness, to include a universal love that includes every human being on the face of the planet. And love keeps evolving to include animals, all sentient beings and ultimately, the planet. Seen this way, the trajectory of evolution could fairly be called the "evolution of love." As we will see, we are all personally implicated in evolution. We are all, quite literally, central actors in this great love story.

This is not merely a poetic metaphor. The leading edge evolutionary science tells us that the interior physics of reality is governed by love. The popular view of an ultimately random world in which selfish competition for survival drives a blind evolutionary process turns out to be incorrect. Leading edge insights from evolutionary and emergence science, quantum physics, molecular biology, developmental psychology, attachment theory, and enlightenment science all point in the same direction.

We unfold this revolutionary vision by weaving an intelligent and exhilarating narrative through physics, molecular biology, developmental psychology, attachment theory and much more—including real world examples and anecdotes. Although this book will draw from the academic works of scientists, the narrative itself will not be, in any sense, an academic work or a work written for experts in these disciplines. Rather the main narrative is what we believe to be the most compelling, post-dogmatic narrative of purpose, Eros and meaning available at this moment in history. We deploy the leading edges of the physical and social sciences to support, weave and amplify the narrative. The story itself, however, is intimate and personal.

The Universe: A Historical Narrative

Historian Paul Johnson expressed, in his grand work on the twentieth century, that the popular worldview of Neo-Darwinism has largely defined, in devastating ways, the interior consciousness of the last hundred years. The problematic cultural assumptions of Neo-Darwinism reduce the world to a series of meaningless interactions in a brutally competitive landscape in which the fundamental goal is survival. Post-modernism, although dead as an academic and cultural movement, has left behind an equally devastating legacy. There are no grand narratives in post-modernism—no storylines or patterns that reveal a meaningful or loving cosmos. In its admirable, post-modern zeal to liberate the world from fundamentalist and tyrannical narratives, post-modernism denuded the world of any grand narrative at all. Then, detrimentally, dogmatic science became the church of scientism and made the absurd claim that the universe is merely a product of "oops". Any attempt to see inherent meaning or purpose in the world, alongside the claim that we were born to live a purpose- or value-driven life, were summarily dismissed as unscientific. While the average person rarely, if ever, consciously evokes these three influences, the legacies of Neo-Darwinism, post-

modernism and reductionist scientific materialism have formed the interior landscape that drives much, if not most, of the Western world.

For many people, and for public culture at large, the *real world*—the one underneath the pretty phrases of the human potential movement and the religious and new age invocations—is nasty and brutish. It is filled with ego-driven competition for status, survival, and self-preservation. The good life has become one comprised of a superficial view of success overlaid with enough good deeds to salve what is left of our yearning for something more. The *real world* has unfortunately become a worldview of success that leaves one empty, desperate, and wondering inside, “Is this really all there is?”

These tired worldviews, however, provide neither an accurate view of Darwin himself, nor of the evolutionary science and emergence theories that have followed him. Moreover, they do not reflect the deepest integrated insights at the most provocative edges of neuroscience, infant psychology, developmental psychology, cross cultural interior science, comparative anthropology, nor many others. To evolve our consciousness is to live in a new worldview that knows, in the very depth of its being, that the Universe is a love story, an Outrageous Love story.

Awakening to Outrageous Love, Responding to Outrageous Pain

The universe feels; and the universe feels love. The inner driving force and animating quality of evolution is love—Outrageous Love. Outrageous Love is much deeper than what we ordinarily think of as “love”. Ordinary love is an emotion. We usually feel it for people closely tied to our lives; for partners, family members, and people who offer us comfort, security, and a sense of belonging. Ordinary love is normally limited and linked to our survival as egoic individuals. If we were to compare the people who appear on our ordinary love lists to those who appear on our egocentric security lists, we would find that they are predominately one and the same.

Outrageous Love is not the pallid strategy for ego security that so often masquerades as love. Outrageous Love is the true, animating Eros of the evolutionary impulse of the universe itself. In other words, love is not hard to find. Love is impossible to avoid. It is the same love that moves you to make contact and connect with another, the love that surrounds us and always resides within us; indeed, it *is* us.

To be fully alive is to be awakened to Outrageous Love, which is to be awakened to one’s natural state and the inner fabric of reality. When you awaken to a lived experience of this knowing, you begin to access Outrageous Love as the core aliveness and motivating power of your life. This evolutionary vision promises that a human being can incarnate this primal love force by awakening as an Outrageous Lover, or a human being who aligns with the essential impulse—the love force of the cosmos itself. When we awaken as Outrageous Love, we begin to love in all situations. We do not merely fall in love. We are lived as love; not ordinary love, but Outrageous Love. It is only Outrageous Love that can respond to the personal and collective crisis of our time; it is only love that can respond to outrageous pain. Bill Clinton correctly implied at the 2006 Davos Summit that the only potent response to the challenges of our time, both personal and collective, is an evolution of our consciousness. The most potent and profound evolution of consciousness is to awaken to the scientific truth that the universe is a love story: an Outrageous Love Story.

The Love Story: a Call to Action

The universe is a love story, and each of us is an essential actor. In fact, we are all co-directors and co-creators of the next stage of the universe story. Evolution is waking up, as us. We are, ourselves, evolution. We have moved from unconscious to conscious evolution, and the evolutionary impulse is awakening as the Unique Self of every human being. We now have the possibility of recognizing ourselves—and every human being—as what we most deeply are: irreducibly unique expressions of the love-intelligence and love-beauty that is the animating Eros of All-That-Is.

Outrageous Pain

This universe story is not a New Age, pollyannaish romanticizing of reality or an exercise in positive thinking. The Outrageous Love story much begins with looking squarely into the face of outrageous pain.

We live in a world of outrageous pain. The only response to outrageous pain is Outrageous Love.

We have shared this sentence with thousands of people around the world, from diverse cultural backgrounds and socio-economic strata. It always moves something deep in the space it is shared with, as it awakens the room to a new possibility. It is the possibility for you to awaken as an Outrageous Lover. To be an Outrageous Lover does not have anything to do with inappropriate sexuality or promiscuity. Outrageous Love, remember, is the inner quality of reality. When that quality awakens in you and as you, when you begin to be lived as love, you awaken as an Outrageous Lover. Even though you, the reader, are not yet clear what it means, the energy of the sentence awakens the sacred thrill of possibility.

These simple words are the single most powerful two sentences that we can deploy to evolve our consciousness and transform our lives and our planet at this moment in history. In the old great books on Spirit there was always a single verse or sutra, a sacred sentence that began the book. What followed was a profound explanation and meditation on that core sentence. In a similar manner, *The Universe; A Love Story* is an explanation of these transformative, sacred sentences.

Outrageous pain: Everywhere we look, we see it. For instance, 21 million slaves exist in the world today, more than there were at the height of the slave trade in the United States. Thousands of children die every day from starvation, more than six million children every year. Billions of people are brutalized by war, disease, and poverty. The list of public outrageous pain goes on and on.

Along with public outrageous pain, the humanity is rife with private outrageous pain. This is the stuff of our personal lives that hurts so badly: loneliness, alienation, betrayal, personal violence or failure, the suffering of a life unlived or unloved. Everywhere one looks there is outrageous pain.

Ordinary love shuts down in the face of outrageous pain. Only Outrageous Love can hold and respond to outrageous pain.

What is ordinary love?

By ordinary love, we mean the emotional feeling of personal bonding that is usually called love. Despite its promises, love as we ordinarily experience it has often failed us. On the one hand, love is our most potent shared value in the world. When we feel love—especially romantic love—we have a dramatically heightened feeling of being alive. We experience personal power, relatedness and creativity. More than that, we feel

that our life has meaning. But many of us have found ourselves hurt, frustrated or bitter when love has gone bad. Even when we feel that we have found love we often find love wanting, and many of us have a hard time distinguishing our own feelings of love from egocentric feelings of comfort or security. So even though we want love, our fundamental experience is often of un-love, or lack of love, on a scale that moves from mild dissatisfaction to intense suffering.

The crux of the problem is this: What is usually taken to be love—that is, ordinary love—is a very limited form of loving. We understand ordinary love to be a human experience, an emotion, usually directed toward a very short list of particular individuals—romantic partners, family members, perhaps a friend or two, and maybe a pet. Our most heightened experience of fully alive love is in the usually fleeting euphoria of falling in love. Even when love seems to endure past the fully potent, alive initial stages, the list of people we allow ourselves to love remains very short. Most of these people are part of our security system. They are the people who help us feel safe, who give us a feeling of self-esteem and belonging. When they stop helping us feel good, we usually stop loving them, even though we may nevertheless stay together in some sort of partnership.

What is Outrageous Love?

Outrageous Love, on the other hand, is the inner quality of reality itself. It was in reference to Outrageous Love that Bengali mystic Tagore said, “Love is not mere sentiment, it is the ultimate truth at the heart of creation.” The ancient shamans would say to a person before a journey of awakening, “May you find your heart in this journey and may you discover that your heart is the one heart”. Tagore and the shamans were referring to the same truth spoken of in cutting-edge quantum mechanics, molecular biology, evolutionary emergence, chaos and complexity theory—that there is just one heart and one love. Contemporary scientists in these fields remind us that reality itself moves to make greater and greater levels of contact between ostensibly separate parts. There is no ultimate separation. Newtonian physics that spoke of discrete parts, fundamentally disconnected from each other, have turned out to be a limited view of reality.

Quantum mechanics in physics, attachment theory in psychology, complexity theory, systems theory and classic enlightenment traditions have each in their own way told us the same truth: all of reality is entangled in love. All parts are part of a larger field. They are drawn to each other, as cosmologist Thomas Berry reminded us, by the force of allurements. By Eros, this interior force of attraction in the cosmos that makes the entire universe hang together. Ancient teaching and leading-edge modern science are meeting for the first time in history. In the words of the ancient mystic Solomon who reigned in Jerusalem, “Its insides are lined with love”. It was to this Outrageous Love that evolutionary paleontologist Teilhard De Chardin referred to when he wrote, “Love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfill them, for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in themselves. All we need is to imagine our ability to love developing until it embraces the totality of men and the earth.”

Now, for the first time, we are integrating this ancient wisdom into the fabric of cutting-edge scientific theory and philosophy.

This same Eros, this Outrageous Love, is the ceaselessly creative impulse of becoming. It brings together not only living beings, it is the energy that allures quarks to form atoms and atoms to form molecules. It is the attractive force that moves everything. It is this same force that is at play when human beings at the leading edge awaken as

Outrageous Love and commit the outrageous acts of love that are natural expressions of their Unique Selves.

Through this evolutionary impulse, which is the force of love itself, reality moves to higher and higher levels of interconnectivity, mutuality, union and embrace. Mystical writer Dante spoke of it as “the love that moves the sun and the stars”. Process philosopher Alfred North Whitehead described evolution as the “gentle movement towards God by the gentle persuasion of love.” By gentle, he meant subtle, a movement not evident to someone whose subtle perceptions are asleep. Tagore, the shamans, Dante, and Whitehead were all pointing to the truth of what we are calling Outrageous Love.

Outrageous Love glimmers in what the leading edge of post quantum physics calls the quantum field. It is the field of love intelligence. Another name for Outrageous Love is what the mystics called Source. The same love that moves you to make contact and connect with others is the love that moves the sun and the stars.

When we live from Source, we are capable of love in any and all situations. We are able to keep our heart open in all circumstances. We are able to live fully alive and radically empowered in every dimension of our lives. In other words, we become capable of Outrageous Love. Outrageous Love is the source for all other forms of love. All love, however distorted its expression may be, arises from Outrageous Love, and can potentially lead us back to Source.

Evolutionary Love

Outrageous Love is what meta-theorist Charles Pierce referred to as evolutionary love. Outrageous Love is the very impulse of evolution. Outrageous Love is the only force that is more powerful than entropy.

Outrageous Love is both the currency of connection between human beings and the essential Eros, the life force that drives the evolutionary process as a whole. Outrageous Love is the Eros of all relationship even as it is the very Eros of evolution itself. In this sense, personal love and impersonal love are one. One love. Evolutionary love. Outrageous Love.

The Universe Feels Love

The universe feels. And the universe feels love.

In every single moment, aware of it or not, you are drenched in the cosmic love that animates the cosmos, and which is alive in and as All-That-Is.

Love is not just a feeling between people; it is actually a force operating throughout the entire universe. It has been recognized by philosophers of the East and West alike, since time immemorial. For the ancient Greeks, for example, it was Eros, a drive toward ever-greater unity throughout the cosmos. The leading evolutionary emergence theory points towards Outrageous Love as the inner quality and motive force of reality. It is called by many names: Eros, the adjacent possible, ceaseless inherent creativity, the self-organizing universe or the self-actualizing cosmos.

There is one thing upon which virtually all the great traditions of science and spirit fully agree. In science, it is called the Big Bang. Others call it cosmogenesis. The transcendent, unmanifest Thatness, or No-Thing-Ness, decided to move from nothing to something, from infinite nothingness to universes of infinite diversity, from the splendid eternal perfection of aloneness to dynamic evolutionary imperfection of relationship. The evolutionary mystics realized that this mysterious movement of manifestation within infinity is motivated by Outrageous Love. The great traditions, supported today by the

implications of quantum physics, taught that this process of manifestation takes place anew in every moment. The evolutionary mystics were able to access something of the intention of mystery, which motivates manifestation. They did so through the investigative methods of what the Sufis call the eye of the heart. It is through the eye of the heart that we are able to catch the reverberatory waves of interior information, available in the subtler fields of knowing that undergird and animate All-That-Is. This happens much like the Hubble telescope, deploying the eye of the mind and the amplified eye of the senses, catches the reverberating radiation of the Big Bang. The mystic sees that All-That-Is is motivated to manifestation by Outrageous Love.

When manifestation takes place—at the moment of the Big Bang—Outrageous Love discloses itself as the animating Eros of evolution, from the cellular level all the way through to the highest levels of human evolution.

The movement of Outrageous Love at the human level is the Eros that motivates us to move beyond separation to higher and higher levels of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. It is the very same moment of love that motivates the very process of evolution itself from the subatomic to the cellular level, all the way up to the highest reaches of human consciousness. One love. Evolutionary love. Outrageous Love. This is the storyline of the Universe.

Outrageous Love is the Storyline

Let's start with the Big Bang. Here, subatomic units, which physicists have called quarks, are the only forms in existence. Some force then moves these separate quarks to transcend their merely separate existence and reach for a level of union with other quarks. They are attracted to each other, allured by each other. This implicit allurements is the face of mystery itself. It did not have to be this way. The mutually attracted and allured atoms recognize each other and embrace. Separate subatomic units are moved to form a single unit. A boundary drops around them. Whole atoms are formed. What moves them? It is the Eros of evolution, which is the Eros of Outrageous Love.

Then it happens again. Various groups of separate atoms are moved by a mysterious force to come together. Separate atoms recognize each other in union and embrace. This is Eros as allurements. Molecules are formed. What drives this process? There is a self-property inherent in matter itself that moves toward higher and higher levels of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. It is this mysterious, internal Eros that drives separate subatomic particles to form a new union, an atom, and which drives the separate atoms to form a new union, a molecule.

Then it happens again. Separate molecules, called complex molecules, are in proximity to each other. Against all statistical probability, these separate complex molecules come together, reaching for higher and deeper levels of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. A separate boundary falls around them. The first cell is formed. Life is born.

Shimon Bar Yochai describing the Eros of existence, writes in the ancient Zohar, "It all depends on love." The Christian mystic Thomas Aquinas perceives the same truth, and Rumi sings of the same. All of these great mystics see through the contemplative, ecstatic, or discursive methods of the eye of the heart. But the modern person is able to nakedly see the motivating force of love at play in the very cellular roots of reality.

The Eros of evolution is Outrageous Love. Seen from the outside, it is what Erich Jantsch refers to as "self-organization through self-transcendence."

The individual “self” of an atom transcends itself. The trance of separation is broken, and the individual atom organizes itself as part of a larger molecule. A new identity as a molecule is formed even as the old identity as an atom is not lost. Rather, the core mechanism of self-organization through self-transcendence is “transcend and include.” The atom transcends itself to a higher level of complexity, even as its core identity is not lost, but rather expanded and evolved. It is this internal drive within matter that, according to Jantsch and many other leading-edge theorists, moves evolution to ever-higher unions, through ever-higher levels of complexity. From quarks to atoms to cells to molecules, onward and upward evolution goes.

Teilhard de Chardin, Abraham Kook, and many other evolutionary mystics point out that complexity is but the outside view. The interior—not addressed by Jantsch or any of the chaos theorists—reveals that the higher the level of outer physical complexity, the more evolved the inner depth of consciousness. What emerges is that the process of evolution is the movement to ever-higher levels of complexity and consciousness.

Then it happens again. Numerous perfectly tailored cells are all brought together into a single functioning unit with one boundary. Multicellular organisms are formed. The Eros of evolution dances up the evolutionary spiral to higher and higher levels of complexity, and deeper consciousness emerges from the evolutionary soup. It is a continual process of self-organization through self-transcendence, in which self transcends itself to recognize and join other in higher embrace. The evolutionary ladder continues to spiral to ever-higher and deeper levels of complexity and consciousness. Each higher level is always defined by ever-higher levels of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace between the evolving cells and organisms. Plants, amphibians, mammals, then higher mammals, until we arrive at the full bloom of human consciousness. This is the great story of one love, evolutionary love.

As human beings emerge in the evolutionary unfolding—their emergence motivated by the same love that moves the sun and the stars, the upward driving Eros of all reality—there is another momentous leap of development. At the higher levels of human development, manifest consciousness awakens to itself. Human consciousness becomes aware of itself. The evolutionary trajectory is to ever-higher levels of union and embrace driven by Eros. Now, at the human level, love continues its evolutionary unfolding to higher and higher levels of human consciousness. But in human beings, love sheds its disguises and reveals itself in all of its naked wonder.

It was the pioneers of developmental psychology, through cross-cultural empirical studies, who caught this movement of evolution. Human beings at the first level of development are egocentric. At this level, our sense of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace—at the level of our fundamental identity—is limited to ourselves, and the close circle we depend upon for survival.

Then it happens again. Love expands and deepens, and we move up the evolutionary ladder of human development. We transcend egocentric consciousness, and move into ethnocentric consciousness. Again, we see operating the same process of self-organization through self-transcendence that we saw as the core mechanism of evolution from the very cellular level all the way through to the highest levels of human development. The individual transcends self into a higher-level organization. The tribe emerges, which both honors and transcends the individual. The move from egocentric to ethnocentric is a move to expanding circles of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace.

This produces the sense of connection that was traditionally the inner fabric of tribes, clans, villages, cities, and even nations.

At the ethnocentric level, love extends its recognition and union with larger contexts of identity. Your feeling of love extends to the whole tribe or group in which you include your self as a core part of your “I” identity.

Then it happens again. Eros continues its expansion. You develop from an ethnocentric level to the level that Lawrence Kohlberg defines as “world centric,” increasing dramatically your circle of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. At this level of consciousness you feel love—a sense of identity and empathy—with all human beings alive on the face of the planet. You are still at the level of separate self—but you are able to feel your connection to all the separate-self personalities living around the globe. You can feel empathy and essential connection with a Rwandan mother, a French truck driver, and a Peruvian farmer.

Then it happens again. The movement of evolutionary love continues its upward dance of deepening. Human beings at the leading edge of consciousness move from worldcentric to what has been termed Kosmocentric consciousness. At the Kosmocentric level of consciousness, you initially experience a felt sense of identity with all sentient beings, with animals, and with the earth itself. Your circle of recognition, union, and embrace has extended still beyond even your narrow sense of egoic identity with all other separate selves. You identify now with all beings—with the natural world itself. And your consciousness continues to deepen until you transcend your limited identity with your separate-self, egoic personality, and you realize your true nature. You recognize your true Self as being an intrinsic part of the larger whole, and eventually as being the wholeness itself. You realize what the Sufis called your ultimate Supreme Identity with the godhead, with All-That-Is.

At this point, the eye of the mind has reached its limits. Now, a new faculty of perception enters our conversation. The eye of the heart, deployed throughout recorded time by the great realizers in all the traditions, in a great double-blind experiment of spirit, always revealed the same inner picture. The eye of the heart sees clearly that the inner fabric of consciousness is none other than Outrageous Love. It would therefore be entirely accurate to say that the Eros of evolution is none other than the force of love.

Then your consciousness deepens one last level. You realize that you are not only true Self, not only one with the Wholeness. You recognize yourself as Unique Self. You experience the unique perspective of divinity that lives in you, as you, and through you. You awaken to your evolutionary context and you realize that as Kabbalist Isaac Luria taught and as Jesuit Priest Teilhard De Chardin reminded us, evolution is waking up as you. Evolution is becoming conscious of itself in you. Evolution is seeking to advance through you. You feel a powerful sense of responsibility—more powerful than anything you have ever felt before—to live your story, to live the unique god-story that lives only and exclusively as you. Paradoxically, in that self-recognition, union, and embrace with your Unique Self, you feel naturally connected and empathetically identified in love, recognition, union, and embrace with All-That-Is. Love is the natural function of Unique Self. For in Unique Self you are so at home in yourself that all grasping falls away, and the Outrageous Love that is your True Nature emerges as you.

Ethnocentric transcends and includes egocentric. Worldcentric transcends and includes ethnocentric. Kosmocentric transcends and includes

worldcentric. Each of these developmental levels expresses the same core movement of evolution we have seen from the beginning: every evolutionary level results in widening circles of recognition, union, and embrace. The principle of self-organization through self-transcendence, which defined the earliest stages of evolution from the level of quarks and cells, is also at play in the evolution of human development. It is all the play and dance of love, climaxing in Unique Self.

When you awaken to your Unique Self as the irreducibly unique expression of the same love intelligence that initiating and animates all that is, evolution wakes up in you and as you. Evolution moves from unconscious to conscious evolution through you, moving from unconscious to conscious uniqueness; from unconscious to conscious Outrageous Love.

From Amoebas to Dogs

Let's look more closely at Outrageous Love as the motive force of evolution. From an outside perspective, evolution is a movement towards ever-increasing complexity. With higher levels of complexity come higher levels of what we could call depth. For example, a dog is significantly more complex than an amoeba. Physically, a dog's internal organs are more interconnected; they involve more molecular and cellular connections than those of an amoeba. Myriad lines of connection and cooperation come together to form the higher capacity for functioning and awareness that constitute some of the distinction between a dog and an amoeba.

All of this is still just the exterior view of evolution. From an interior view, evolution has moved to higher and higher levels of consciousness. A dog has more developed consciousness, and is therefore capable of more empathy and relationship than an amoeba. A dog has more capacity to love. The movement of evolution from an amoeba to a dog might therefore be fairly described in three ways. First, it is the evolution from physical simplicity to physical complexity. Second, it is an evolution of the capacity for consciousness. The inside of consciousness is love, which naturally evolves towards higher and higher levels of mutuality, recognition, union and embrace. The physical, cognitive and emotional wiring of a dog is a virtual symphony of cellular mutuality. The dance of mutuality, union and embrace going on in the living structure of a dog allows the dog to form relationship, loyalty, communication, and much more. Compared to an amoeba, a dog engenders considerably more love, delight and loyalty, all qualities of love and Eros.

Similarly, the movement from a dog to a human being is the evolution to higher levels of complexity, consciousness and love. A human being, for example, has the consciousness to build hospitals for other human beings that are incapable of caring for themselves. Dogs would never build a dog hospital. Of course, human beings are also capable of distorting that love into violence and abuse. However, most of us agree that the higher we move on the evolutionary scale, the more love evolves.

Indeed, evolution is no less than love in action. Again, we are not referring to ordinary love, the type of love that is a strategy of the ego. This is Outrageous Love. This is the Eros that is the core driver of the entire evolutionary process. Love wakes up, becomes conscious and as evolution unfolds, is revealed as a more and more obvious driver of reality. The love that drives all of evolution, animates all of evolution, and further awakens and emerges at every stage of evolution is Outrageous Love. Evolutionary theorists might call it emergence, the adjacent possible, or the inherent, ceaseless creativity of the cosmos. In systems theory it is called the self-organizing universe or the self-actualizing cosmos. Process philosopher Alfred North Whitehead called it the

“creative advance into novelty”. Hindus call it Shakti and Christian mystics say, “God is Love.” But they are not referring to ordinary love. They are referring to Outrageous Love.

What does Outrageous Love have to do with me?

What does evolutionary Eros as Outrageous Love have to do with me? The answer is everything.

When you wake up, Outrageous Love appears in your ordinary relationships. But ordinary becomes extraordinary. You begin to live an epic and extraordinary life. Great love between human beings is an expression of Outrageous Love. The radically personal commitment, passion, and wonder of true love between lover and beloved are the manifestation of Outrageous Love in the human realm. This is true in relationships of romance, friendship, partnership, family and larger community. To awaken in relationship is to feel the inner power of Outrageous Love that is living you. You discern the inner source of your love. You realize that your love is not ordinary. It is not merely a comfort strategy of your egoic, separate self. Rather your love is an expression of Outrageous Love. Your love is an essentially needed part of the love story of the universe seeking higher and higher levels of contact and intimacy. Your love produces new creativity and new depth and new gifts in the universe. This is what it means to move from ordinary to Outrageous Love. When you awaken as Outrageous Love you are *not* cutting off from reality by entering your own private narcissistic, co-dependent mutual security structure. Rather you are aligning with and uniquely manifesting Outrageous Love, which drives reality itself.

The difference between ordinary and Outrageous Love is palpable. When you hold someone’s hand with ordinary love it can be lovely, easeful, comforting, even soothing, as the anxiety of existence lets up for a moment. When you hold someone’s hand with Outrageous Love, the world stops. Questions about the meaning of life disappear. You become meaning itself. You are flooded not with mere comfort, but with intense pleasure. When you hold someone’s hand with Outrageous Love, you are home. Kiss someone with ordinary love and it may be sweet or even arousing. But kiss someone with Outrageous Love and time stands still. Giving and receiving blur into one. You find yourself in an ecstatically urgent dance of sensitivity and delight. When you wake up as your Unique Self, several key insights become part of your interior landscape. You realize that you are a unique expression of essence. You internalize the profound insights of both systems theory and enlightenment science and you know that you are inseparable from All-That-Is. You develop the capacity to reach beyond the limitation of ordinary love into the potency and expanse of Outrageous Love.

Outrageous Acts of Love

The radical evolutionary recognition that changes everything is the stunningly simple yet profound realization that the universe feels. Even more radical is to realize that the universe feels *as you and through you*. When you intuit the love intelligence of the universe, you receive an invitation. It is an invitation that literally throbs with ecstatic urgency. It is the invitation to awaken as Outrageous Love. It is the invitation to transform from an ego-based, narcissistic being grasping for straws of ordinary love into an Outrageous Lover.

What does it mean to enact Outrageous Love? What does an Outrageous Lover actually do? Let us be clear about one thing: to be an Outrageous Lover doesn’t mean embarking on outrageous sexual acts. Outrageous Love is not about sex, though it does not deny or exclude sexuality or any part of our humanity. Clearly a person who is awakened to Outrageous Love will experience sexuality in a powerfully enlivened way

that is simply not available as a sustained experience from the consciousness of ordinary love. But at its core Outrageous Love is not merely about sex. At the core of it, an Outrageous Lover is someone who lets the evolutionary love of the universe flow through her.

What does an Outrageous Lover do?

An Outrageous Lover commits outrageous acts of love. The acts of an Outrageous Lover are the unique acts that Outrageous Love commits AS you. You do not merely fall in love. You are lived as love. This brings us to a fundamental question.

If you were to live as an Outrageous Lover, which acts of Outrageous Love should you perform?

So much must be done in this world. So much pain needs to be healed. How can you know what is yours to do? The answer: Commit the outrageous acts of love that are a function of your Unique Self.

Jalal al-Din Rumi, the 13th century Persian poet and Sufi mystic was a teacher of Outrageous Love. His words speak to these outrageous acts of love that are yours and yours alone to commit:

"There is one thing in this world that you must never forget to do. If you forget everything else and not this, there's nothing to worry about, but if you remember everything else and forget this, then you will have done nothing in your life. It is as if a king has sent you to some country to do a task and you perform a hundred other services, but not the one he sent you to do. So human beings come to this world to do particular work. That work is the purpose and each is specific to the person. If you don't do it, it's as though a priceless Indian sword were used to slice rotten meat. It's a golden bowl being used to cook turnips, when one filing from the bowl could buy a hundred suitable pots. It's a knife of the finest tempering nailed into a wall to hang things on. You say, "But look, I'm using the dagger. It's not lying idle." Do you hear how ludicrous that sounds? For a penny, an iron nail could be bought to serve the purpose. To be a hanging peg and not a dagger is to waste valuable keenness and foolishly ignore your dignity and your purpose."

What Rumi understands is that you have unique, outrageous acts of love to commit that can be done only by you. These are the outrageous acts of love that are a function of your Unique Self.

Outrageous Love and Unique Self

When you realize that the universe is a love story and that you are a leading actor, the question of identity is resolved once and for all. Who are you? You are a Unique Self. You are a unique expression of the evolutionary impulse. Evolutionary love incarnates as you, in your personhood. Chaos and complexity theory teach us that the world is a tapestry, an interweaving of inseparable and interconnected elements, every part of which fits together like a jigsaw puzzle. You are a unique piece in that tapestry, a particular puzzle-piece piece in reality. You have a unique perspective, a unique, energetic flavor, and a unique relationship to the whole. You have unique gifts and unique purposes that are essentially needed by reality. In the universe's love story, there are no extras on the set. Each person has outrageous acts of love to commit. Each person stands as the co-creator at the abyss of darkness and speaks to a corner of the world where lack of love can only be addressed by him or her alone.

Evolution Happens Through You

The awakening to Outrageous Love is the realization that you are not only a spectator, but an irreducibly unique actor in the universe story. The universe awakens as you and through you. You are ultimately needed by All-That-Is. No one else can do it—whatever *it* is for you—other than you. And *it* desperately needs to be done if we are to live in a world of Outrageous Love. Once you understand the story line and realize your place in it as an actor, you start to see that you need a script.

The script arises from within you, as you become aware of yourself as a Unique Self. Your script emerges from the paradoxical realization of both your absolute sameness and absolute uniqueness. To awaken as an Outrageous Lover is to awaken as the irreducibly unique incarnation of the love/intelligence and love/beauty of all that is living in you, as you and through you. You are part of everything and a distinct expression of everything. This is what it means to be a Unique Self, living within the overall operating system of reality, aligned with the interior laws of Outrageous Love that govern the universe.

A Deeper Look at Unique Self Theory

Your Unique Self is not an expression of your ego. Nor is it the sum of your talents or your social, cultural or psychological conditioning. Unique Self is the answer to great question of “who are you?”

Who are you? You are an irreducibly unique expression of the love intelligence that is the initiating and animating Eros of all that is that lives in you, as you, and through you. Unique Self is the answer to the greatest question of your life, the question of identity. Your entire life depends upon an accurate answer to the question; *who are you?* To know that you are an irreducibly unique expression of the love intelligence and love beauty that is the initiating and animating Eros and energy of the cosmos is the transformation of identity that changes everything. To know that this Eros is living in you, as you, and through you in a way the world has never seen before and will never see again restores the aliveness, purpose, and potency of your life. It means to know that there is something that needs to be and needs to happen in the world every day that can only happen through you. Your Unique Self is precisely this irreducibly unique configuration of evolutionary love intelligence awakening as you. This is the critical insight. To be irreducibly unique is to be irreplaceable. To be unique is to be needed by all that is. To be unique is to be chosen. All of reality conspired in a myriad of wildly unpredictable, evolutionary ways to manifest you! You are a novelty, a new emergent, a unique manifestation that never was, is or will be ever again. That is an outrageous fact that demands that you live an outrageous life in which you commit outrageous acts of love.

The same love intelligence that initiates, animates, and sustains all the relationships in the universe, including those between subatomic particles, galaxies, ecosystems and human beings, birthed you. The universe is seamless, but not featureless, and you are its unique feature. That is what we mean when we say that you are a unique feature of the love intelligence that is the initiating and animating Eros of all that is. So, who are you? You are evolution having a *you* experience. Or in spiritual terms, you are God having a *you* experience. You are the universe having a *you* experience. The experience the universe is having through you is unique. The universe cannot have that experience through anyone but you.

Between Separateness and Uniqueness

What becomes powerfully apparent is that uniqueness is profoundly different from separateness. Separateness breeds alienation, while uniqueness is the currency of connection. Unique Self is your personal realization of your fully connected uniqueness.

Not only do you have an irreducibly unique cellular and atomic signature. Not only is your immune system undeniably and shockingly unique, so is your entire biological matrix. But it does not stop at the biology of your Unique Self. To awaken to your Unique Self is to know that you occupy a particular place in the space-time continuum. This means simply that you have an irreducibly unique perspective. Your unique perspective fosters your unique insight, which births your Unique Gift. Your Unique Gift allows you to address a unique need in your unique circle of intimacy and influence that can be addressed uniquely by you and you alone. Once you realize that you are an irreducibly unique expression of the love intelligence, you realize that there is a corner of the world that lacks love and can only be transformed by you. Evolution took 13.7 billion years of synchronicity to produce the unique expression in you. You are the personal face of the evolutionary impulse. You are not irrelevant.

Emergence theory powerfully reminds us that evolution moves from unconscious to conscious when you awaken as evolution in person. In our interconnected world of quantum entanglement we begin to understand in a way never previously possible that your next evolutionary act sends ripples throughout reality that literally affect everything. The great mantra of the new evolutionary worldview is, *Reality needs your service*. You are needed by All-That-Is. You have irreducibly unique gifts, which are the very engine of evolution.

Think of Unique Self like this: each person has a different kind of energy, which we could call their energetic taste. Feel into the different unique tastes of people you know in your life. Each unique taste, each Unique Self, is like no other. Your Unique Self is the puzzle piece essence of your self. It is through your uniqueness that you come home and fit perfectly into the larger puzzle. It is through your uniqueness that you give your gift, which completes the larger puzzle.

Unique Self and Outrageous Love

Unique Self and Outrageous Love are two faces of the One. You can only access Outrageous Love through your Unique Self. Your Unique Self is the conduit through which you receive Outrageous Love. When you are at the level of ego self or separate self, love is another strategy of the ego. That is what we have called 'ordinary love'. At the level of unique love, you naturally access Outrageous Love. Think of Unique Self as the plug at the end of an electrical cable. Put the plug, your Unique Self, into the wall socket and you are plugged into the energy, the Eros, the juice of reality. The underlying Eros of reality is Outrageous Love. You can only access that Eros, energy, through plugging in.

Yet there is more to it. Outrageous Love shows up through the portal or prism of uniqueness. Outrageous Love appears in you as the irreducibly unique expression of love intelligence that lives in you, as you, and through you.

Outrageous Love can only appear mediated through your uniqueness. One way to understand this is through the experience of intimacy. Outrageous Love creates radical intimacy. Ordinary love creates pseudo intimacy. Pseudo intimacy is when you feel like you do not truly know the other person. Perhaps they are hiding. The true contours of their uniqueness are not visible. Or perhaps they are wearing a mask that creates a false picture of the uniqueness. Radical intimacy emerges only when you have an authentic, true, and deep sense of having received another person's uniqueness. The

more we receive the unique texture, contours, shade and taste of another's uniqueness, the more intimate we become.

Outrageous Love is the evolutionary Eros and space that causes the transformation of identity from separate self to Unique Self. Remember, Outrageous Love is the Eros of evolution itself. That means that Outrageous Love is the energy of evolution and transformation. It is what causes quarks to evolve and transform into atoms. It is what causes atoms to evolve and transform into molecules and all the way up the evolutionary chain to human beings. It is that same Outrageous Love that causes human beings to evolve and transform from separate self to Unique Self. Outrageous Love is not only the Eros and energy of the evolutionary process. Outrageous Love is your own radically unique and personal love. An Outrageous Lover recognizes herself as an irreducibly unique expression of the Eros, the Outrageous Love, which is Source and evolutionary power of All-That-Is.

The Gap Between Our Ability to Heal and Our Ability to Feel

Why are we not all radically alive and engaged, committing the outrageous acts of love that are a natural expression of our Unique Selves? The answer is because we close our hearts. It is more than hard to open our hearts. For most people it is virtually impossible to live with an open heart. But it is only from an open heart that one can commit the irreducibly unique outrageous acts of love that are a function of your Unique Self. It is only when you realize that your open heart is the very heart of the evolutionary impulse that you can awaken to the ecstatic urgency of your life. It is only when you live with an open heart that you can live with the realization that you are personally implicated in the evolutionary process. It is only when you awaken as Outrageous Love that you begin to realize the enormity of what it means to know that reality needs your service. It is only from this place of Outrageous Love that you begin to live an extraordinary life imbued with radical joy, purpose and aliveness.

Why is it so hard to open our hearts? One reason is because our hearts have been broken so many times. This creates personal wounds and contractions, besides the essential contraction of being a limited, fragile and mortal being. But it is not merely that our hearts have been broken in our personal lives. Our hearts can be wounded exponentially, on a level never before encountered in history. We are so connected to what is happening around the world that our hearts can be wounded over and over again by what we see on Facebook, Twitter, and any number of television news channels.

We, as a potent, interconnected humanity, now have the distasteful ability to know in great depth and graphic detail about the horrific pain happening all over the world. Yet, we experience ourselves as impotent. We are unable to heal the suffering that surrounds us. Images of unbearable suffering penetrate our hearts, bodies and minds daily. For most of us, the only way to respond is to close our hearts. Not because we are bad, apathetic, or narcissistic people. We close our hearts because the gap between our ability to feel and our ability to heal is simply too great to bear.

The problem with this response surfaces when you realize that you have only one heart. When your heart closes, your life force begins to shut down. When you close your heart again and again in the face of suffering, something breaks in your inner core. In our generation, the level of suffering to which we are exposed is so vast, and the gap between the ability to feel and heal is so great, that it requires a more deliberate and full closing of the heart than ever before in history. The direct result is an unprecedented level of depression, anxiety, mental illness, addiction and breakdown.

You have only one heart; that one heart lives in you. When you close your heart, you lose consciousness. You fall asleep and lose your access to the power of the

greater One Heart and One Love. You cannot block the pathway in your heart in response to suffering and expect to retain access to it in your personal life and relationships. You cannot be alienated from feeling the world's pain while remaining fully intimate with your beloved. It simply does not work. If you close part of your heart to outrageous pain, you cut off some of your access to Outrageous Love in every part of your life. We have never seen so much suffering and been so unable to heal it. The feeling of impotence in the face of overwhelming, vital need is massively destructive to our hearts and psyches. It corrodes our soul. The gap between our ability to feel and our ability to heal simply feels too big to risk allowing ourselves to be lived as love.

Our heart closes in the gap between our ability to feel the outrageous pain of the world and our ability to heal it. Yet, the Outrageous Lover reclaims her potency by closing the gap between her ability to feel and her capacity to heal by re-opening her heart. Life is about learning how to close the gap between your ability to feel and the ability to heal, thus reclaiming your potency and pleasure.

Unique Self-Symphony

There is only one way to heal the collective trauma of our generation. When you answer the great question of "Who are you?" You wake up to your true identity. You begin to play a larger game. You realize that you are not merely a skin-encapsulated ego, but an irreducibly unique expression of the love intelligence and love beauty that is the initiating and animating Eros of All-That-Is. A stunningly singular expression of the love intelligence lives in you, as you, and through you, that never was, is, or will be ever again. You are a Unique Self. You are not merely a unique fingerprint. You are a Unique Self. You have a life to live and a gift to give which perfectly corresponds to a unique need in the world of un-love. This unique place that lacks love in the world can only be addressed and healed by you. You used to feel impotent because the pain of the world is so great. The gap between your ability to feel pain, your own pain and the pain of the world, and your ability to heal that pain was simply too great. Because you felt impotent, the pain was too heavy to bear, so you closed your heart.

But at this stage in the Outrageous Love journey, your consciousness has evolved. You now realize that you cannot heal the entire world as a separate self, as an individual. You also realize that this is okay because you are not called to heal all of reality by yourself. What you are called to do is to give your unique gifts. When you and every other person gives your unique gifts, a Unique Self Symphony is formed in which everyone is needed and no one is extra. The Unique Self Symphony is out of tune and impotent if any player or any instrument is missing. The power and potency of this symphony releases an infinite wave of creativity and entrepreneurial innovation that has the power to heal virtually all pain.

Innovation and evolutionary creativity in every sphere of life, emergent from the meta mind of Unique Selves and collectively released into reality, is what will take us to the next evolutionary step. You are not called to fix all the pain on your own. You are, however, called by your Uniqueness. You are charged to action by your Uniqueness. You are no longer alone. Once your Unique Self is aroused from the chorus of all Unique Selves, a new sound is heard, the sound of the Unique Self Symphony. You are solely and exclusively needed to play *your* Unique Self instrument in the Unique Self Symphony. The cosmos produced only one *you* as a result of a virtually unimaginable string of synchronicities. It took 13.7 billion years for the intelligent cosmos to manifest your irreducible uniqueness at every level of your physical, spiritual and emotional being. This is your Unique Self. Your Unique Self is the intelligent manifestation of an obviously intelligent and intentional cosmos.

Reality needs your Unique Self. Reality needs your unique service. You are a unique expression of love intelligence. That means, very simply, that there is love that is needed in the world that can only come from you. When you awaken as Unique Self, you are awakening into your enlightenment. You are awakening into the singular expression of the love intelligence that is your true identity. You are not meditating or praying your way to enlightenment. You are loving your way to enlightenment. ~~In loving, there is no failure. There is only success.~~

Around the globe, we awaken to the realization that we are part of a self-organizing universe. The guiding principle of self-organization is Unique Self, what we might call the Evolutionary Unique Self. Evolutionary Unique Self tells me that I have a unique perspective, which creates in me unique insight, which manifests my unique gifts, which gives me the ability to respond to the unique needs in my circle of intimacy and influence. When every Unique Self is roused to his or her unique evolutionary creativity, which addresses a unique need in their circle of intimacy and influence, an evolutionary We Space is formed, which we have called the Unique Self Symphony. This is the engine of evolution's next stage. Evolutionary Unique Self is simply your Unique Self being aware of the larger evolutionary context in which you live. Evolutionary Unique Self understands itself not only as the unique completion of the puzzle, but both capable and responsible for evolving the entire puzzle. There is love needed in the world that can only come from you in your Unique Self sphere of intimacy with others. Feel into the sensual joy and potency of this evolutionary intimacy by participating as an Evolutionary Unique Self in Evolutionary We Space. Awakening to your participation in the Unique Self Symphony is the way to heal both the personal pain of your life and to participate in the very transformation of reality itself.

Identity: You Are an Outrageous Love Letter

Now you are ready to play the most outrageous game possible. This is the greatest evolution of consciousness available today. When you set your intention on this transformation, literally everything in your life transforms.

Outrageous Love becomes conscious through you. Outrageous Love is always evolving, because the Outrageous Lover is always expanding her heart. Following the laws of love and writing Outrageous Love Letters brings us to the final stage of awakening. The last stage of your awakening is when you realize that your life is an Outrageous Love Letter. Your sacred autobiography is a love letter from God to God bearing your name. Your story is an Outrageous Love Letter from the infinite to the infinite sealed with your signature. But it goes still one level deeper.

All of reality is really an Outrageous Love Letter from God to you. And God's letter is not merely a form letter—it is a personal love letter, *to you*. Your radical, irreducible uniqueness is reality's personal Outrageous Love Letter to you. Its content, texture, and tone are utterly unique, written and intended only for you. This is the Outrageous Love Letter from infinity, to you, written in the script of your Unique Self. When you awaken and live your Unique Self, commit Outrageous Acts of Love, and act as an awakened Outrageous Lover, you are writing an Outrageous Love Letter back to God. Imagine God, the evolutionary impulse, sending an Outrageous Love Letter to you in the form of your atomic, cellular, and spiritual signature. The letter that you write back to God is from your Unique Self. When you awaken to your Unique Self, you are awakening as an irreducibly unique expression of the Zero Point Field, the God field, the field of Outrageous Love intelligence. You are awakening into your divinity.

Your life story is an Outrageous Love Letter from God to God signed with your name. Feel her evolutionary yearning over the millennia. First, she waits for the letter to

be delivered for billions of years. Then, you are born. The clock starts ticking and she waits with bated breath and hungry anticipation to receive your return letter. Imagine her going to the mailbox every day, opening the box, to see if a letter has arrived.

This realization that you are an Outrageous Love Letter is the realization that changes everything. You begin to be lived as love—Outrageous Love. You begin to live the outrageous life that you imagined in the dreams that you long ago forgot. You begin to commit Outrageous Acts of Love. Outrageous Love gives you direct and sustained access to a level of aliveness, wisdom, Eros, and joy that you had not only forgotten, but also forgotten that you had forgotten. Outrageous Love is the memory of your possible future.

The word God may trigger you or invoke a particular meaning for you. It comes, after all, with a lot of baggage. So first, it is always worth remembering that the God you do not believe in does not exist. In this narrative, we are not talking about a mythological Santa Claus God, or cosmic vending machine God where you insert a prayer and get a miracle.

The great traditions experience God as infinity. They particularly emphasize God's infinity through the words omnipotence and omniscience, which simply mean infinitely powerful and infinitely knowing. But the Outrageous Love mystic senses a different infinity in the divine, the infinity of intimacy. Spoken in personal terms, God is the infinity of intimacy. Or, as Zen Master Dogen once said, "Enlightenment is intimacy with all things."

Let's feel into this, for we cannot merely think our way into intimacy. The deepest realization you can have as a person is to know that you live in an intimate Universe. Intimacy means to be seen, recognized, and witnessed. We are all systematically misrecognized. This is the pain of alienation. Alienation is connected to the suffering that derives from being invisible. The invisible man is not intimate. Intimacy is the opposite of invisible. To be intimate is to be known. Intimate relations, in the sense of sexual relations, are described in the sacred texts as a knowing, hence the phrase carnal knowledge. To live in an intimate Universe is to be known. It is to know that you are seen, and it is to know that you are known. But witnessing does not exhaust intimacy. Intimacy also means to be addressed. True intimacy is to be personally addressed. That is why when you fall in love you feel, at least for a time, intimate with all things—falling in love is the feeling of being personally addressed by the cosmos.

If you are truly intimate with someone, you address them. You engage in dialogue. To live in an intimate Universe is, therefore, to know that the Universe addresses you. It is to hear the voice that calls your name. In one spiritual text, the following situation is described: You are not sure about whether to quit your job, and you are wrestling with the decision internally. You go to grab a cup of coffee at a neighborhood café, and a woman in a couple at the next table is talking about why it is so critical for her to quit her job. The Outrageous Love mystics would say that this is the Universe addressing you. This intimate address is called the whisper of God, and the whisper is intimate.

Shouting is virtually always a sign of the failure of intimacy. The whisper is heard only by the beloved and those that draw very close. The deepest intimacy, however, is when the voice falls silent. Sitting together, perhaps holding hands, in the silence of presence, is sometimes the deepest form of intimate contact between beloveds. To hear the voice of Outrageous Love in the sound of silence is an ultimate form of intimacy. Sometimes the love is so deep that it can only be held in the silence. Words are too contracted to hold the infinity of intimacy.

Now we come full circle back to God. Again, the God you don't believe in does not exist. We are not speaking of a God who is the puppeteer of the universe, angrily

demanding obedience or degrading human beings by claiming that only faith in him redeems sin. Rather, we experience God as the Outrageous Love that is the interior fabric and evolutionary drive of reality. God is the infinity of intimacy. The human being, erotically merged with Source, is God's unique intimacy. Follow the divine logic of intimacy. Without your Outrageous Love, there is a part of the world that will remain non-intimate. That part of the world will remain alienated and cold if you do not awaken to your true nature as an Outrageous Lover. The field of intimacy, of Outrageous Love, awakens uniquely in you, as it is the nature of intimacy to always be unique.

To awaken as an Outrageous Lover is to know that there is a dimension of reality that, in this very moment, awaits your love. The world is awaiting a beloved, and you are awaiting a lover. A very particular dimension, situation, or aspect of reality awaits your singular quality of loving. That portion of the world is pining for your love and yours alone. That is what it means to be God's unique intimacy. And, because the world is united in a seamless field, any part of the field that remains cold and unloved affects the entire field.

You have Outrageous Acts of Love to commit that can be committed by no one but you. Your Unique Self has Outrageous Acts of Love to commit that will heal a portion of the world that is currently unloved and can only be engaged in and healed by you. You are God's irreducibly unique perspective. You are God's irreducibly unique intimacy. As a unique perspective of the evolutionary impulse and as God's unique intimacy, your life urgently and lovingly addresses a unique need in the cosmos.

By awakening as the evolutionary impulse and activating your capacity for Outrageous Acts of Love, you enter into intimate communion with the Universe, and the Universe comes into intimate union with you. You awaken to the realization that your life itself is an Outrageous Love Letter. This is the core transformation of identity, which changes everything.

Recapitulation: Outrageous Pain and Outrageous Love Reloaded

We live in a world of outrageous pain. The only response to outrageous pain is Outrageous Love. Although their substances are different, these core statements are not dissimilar to the first of Buddha's Four Noble Truths: Life is suffering.

The action is simple, if not always easy. We respond to outrageous pain with Outrageous Love. When we really face the pain it is excruciating. So typically, we turn our gaze away and distract ourselves from this pain by busying ourselves in some way. Usually, we are so frightened by outrageous pain that we completely shut down. We close off our hearts because ordinary love cannot hold the pain. Again, the problem with doing this is that we only have one heart. We cannot consistently shut down our heart and still remain open-hearted. We think that we can selectively open our heart to the channels of life whose programming appeals to us. That, however, is not the way the heart is designed. When we shut down, we lose the 'signal' and nothing comes at all. The result of repeatedly closing our hearts in face of pain is the loss of aliveness, depression, addiction and an unrelenting yearning for more.

The first step on the journey to awakening as an Outrageous Lover is to not hide from the pain. As a first step, we need not solve the pain, but instead, we can allow ourselves to turn our gaze towards it. Not all the time, but for only several minutes a day. The evolutionary mystics called this "participating in the pain of love in exile." To carry out this practice, ordinary love is not strong enough to allow us to hold the pain. We need a larger love, a wider and deeper love. This is Outrageous Love. Right now, you can feel into Outrageous Love by thinking back to the largest love you have ever felt. Remember how, in the embrace of that love, there was room for everything? Now step

into that love and double it. Triple it. Quadruple it. For now, that is enough to locate the feeling tone of Outrageous Love. You can only respond to outrageous pain with Outrageous Love.

The final step in becoming an Outrageous Lover is to realize that you do not need to heal it all. Reality needs your service only to commit the outrageous acts of love that are a function of your Unique Self. In doing so, you are no longer alone. You join the Unique Self Symphony of Outrageous Lovers who together, have the power to heal and transform reality.

To awaken as Outrageous Love is to realize that Outrageous Love is not outlandish, psychotic fringe or deluded. Outrageous Love is the inner fabric of reality itself. Outrageous Love is the feeling of the evolutionary impulse seeking to awaken as you.

The most urgent need of our lives is a new story. But it cannot merely be a personal story. The personal and the collective are no longer distinct. There is no place to hide anymore. Symbolic of the disappearing lines between the global and local is the Google Earth program. On Google Earth you can see any location on the globe on your computer. Such access was not available two decades ago, even to the most advanced surveillance agency in the world. Similarly, the financial markets of the world are fully intertwined. What happens in China, Mexico, or India ceaselessly affects the daily lives of people in the United States of America, and vice versa. Climate change does not know boundaries. Rogue terrorists' threats bombard our daily reality and cut down the twin towers of the World Trade Center. Three thousand people who went to work on an ordinary day in Manhattan died, terribly. Disease travels via jet plane. So, we need not merely a new personal story. There is no longer a split between our personal local stories and our universal, global stories. We need a new universe story. We need to know that the Universe is a love story. Not an ordinary love story, but an Outrageous Love story. An Outrageous Love story which personally implicates you in evolution's great narrative.

Part Two: The Universe: A Love Story as Conscious Evolution of Systems

In this last part of the essay, let us look at some of the inherent values in *The Universe: A Love Story* and how we might begin to think about the core infrastructures of the world and how they might need to evolve to express this love story.

When we look at the whole history of the universe, one of the core, defining characteristics of the universe is that it is unprecedented. At every stage, the fact that there is something rather than nothing at all is unprecedented. Think about how long physics existed before there was biology, at least in our current model of cosmology. There have been billions of years of self-organization and self-evolution within physics, within chemistry. The data set is enormous. The whole universe has existed for billions of years, and it didn't predict something like DNA at all.

Yet, then DNA emerged. Think about how unprecedented humans and self-reflective awareness is from all of biology up to that point. Stuart Kauffman is describing this phenomenon as ontology itself, the fundamental structure of the universe, evolving. It is evolving in fundamentally unpredictable, creative, ways. Kauffman asks the great question, "Before biology emerged, did the laws of biology already exist, or did the laws themselves emerge with the reality that emerged?" There is a deep construction that shows that biology could have emerged in a number of different ways. It would have all been commensurate with physics, but we humans are fundamentally unpredictable from the physics and that the laws emerged with it.

When we understand that the universe is unprecedented at every single point, we understand that thinking about the future in terms of the past simply means that we haven't paid attention. Unless we think about the long past and we think unprecedented is the precedent of the universe, and we think about the future in *radically* creative ways. So we must question all of the axioms of what we think is fundamental ontology. What is fundamental to the nature of existence? What is possible in human nature? How can we begin to let go of the boxes that constrain the possibilities that we think into?

When we vision the future, we vision it through the lenses of what we understand and what we are used to. The TV show *The Jetsons* exemplifies this perfectly. The creators of the show imagined a future where there are cars and robots, where the women style their hair and clothes following the trends of the 1950s. It is a future that consists of a heteronormative nuclear family where the woman stays at home. The show contains axioms of which the creators were unaware they neglected to question.

When we look at the future now and we think about the future of economics or of governance, we think through the lenses of all of the systems we have had so far. However, it is not going to develop into a retrofitted version of any of the systems we have had thus far. We will go through iterative evolutions of better systems to things that are fundamentally unlike anything that has ever existed, and to higher stages of organization. When we think about designing the world, designing the future, it is imperative that we think in the most expansive terms possible.

Our Outrageous Dream

When we are thinking about the outrageous dream that every individual has, to recognize that as big as our outrageous dreams are, they are all integral parts of the biggest outrageous dream that we all share. Whether it is ending all sexual slavery or creating a healthy climate, or any other massive dream, ultimately there is one project: the evolution of the quality of life for *all* life into higher and higher phases. The one big dream is a combination of the things that matter most: decreasing suffering, increasing Unique Self Realization, actualization of potential, and inner connectivity.

Ultimately there is only one project that the universe is endeavoring in. When we ask, "Who are the stakeholders we care about?" we respond with, "All sentient beings, now and forever." We might individually focus on parts of the one project that are part of our Unique Self Dharma, but we focus on them not in isolation of the rest of it, but *intentionally symbiotic* with the rest of it. When we recognize that evolution is movement from a largely unconscious process to a conscious process through the creatures that have evolved the capacity to understand evolution and consciously mediate it, all of the principles of evolution we consciously mediate in symbiosis, as one of them.

We have the potential and the obligation to be conscious agents for symbiosis, organization, synergy, for the advance of novelty and uniqueness. Working in the nonprofit world, we see projects that are focused on trying to solve a massive problem without recognizing how it is interconnected with other critical problems, and as such, actually transferring harm to another place of impact.

Consider working on an elephant poaching project, for example. Organizations like Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Federation, for example, are doing heroic and important work. Yet, one solution to elephant poaching involved placing larger fences around the preserves so that the poachers could not enter, combined with legislation for harsher sentencing. Poaching of the elephants did stop, but the poverty of the people who were doing the poaching, the people who had no other way of feeding their starving children, was not addressed. The mindset of the people toward animals, and the macroeconomic system that created the poverty was not addressed. As such, the very

same people started poaching the white rhino and the mountain gorilla. What looked like a success was merely a displacement of the harm.

It is essential to see that the goal is no more and no less than “all of it”. Each individual’s part in “all of it” must be played in conscious symbiosis with the individuals who are holding the other parts. We must be unwilling to have our individual solutions externalize harm to any other parts of the whole system.

Whole Systems Thinking

We must think about what it means to take the system as a whole seriously, knowing that ours is a completely interconnected universe. What would we be without the rest of universe? We would not exist at all. We only exist within context. What would we be without plants? Or without atmosphere? Or without gravity?

When we truly, deeply understand that, when we understand the interconnectivity, the idea that you can advantage yourself or your group of identity at the expense of some other part of the interconnected system means that we don’t understand the system yet. We don’t understand how interconnected it all is.

Knowing that we only exist in context, there is no success for *any of us* that is not success for *all of us*. This is a key part of the new definition of success. “All of us” does not mean solely the people we identify with. It means *all* people, and not merely all the people, but all the people now and into the future. Not just all people now and into the future, but everything that feels. If a being is sentient, then it should be considered sovereign. If any life form can suffer and it can enjoy, if it has a kind of internal agency and interiority, then one of the unique capacities that we have is to be stewards of the whole system of sentient beings.

Anything less than actualizing and being stewards of it all is less than we are capable of. If we truly take that seriously, then we can also comprehend the key statement, that “the only response to outrageous pain is outrageous love” along with outrageous strategy and outrageous effectiveness; the love must be effective and the goal is to actually eliminate the outrageous pain and the outrageous suffering. This massive goal requires both heart and mind to be fully developed together.

If we look at the world right now, we see many nonprofits that have a wide inclusivity of values with relatively low-tech strategy, using picket signs and other rudimentary things. Then we see the highest tools of technological and strategic advantaged applied for very narrow, divisive values by the NSA and the military industrial complex, for example. As long as the war room has that high level of technology and as long as the inclusive values have the picket sign level of technology, we will have an extinction-based dichotomy. It is time for us to reconcile the two.

It is time to fully develop our strategic capacities, to fully develop our empathetic capacity, and to have our strategy be in service of our empathy, focused on “all of it” in symbiosis with everyone else doing our unique parts of the work. We must take a stand and become incapable of accepting the unnecessary suffering in the world.

We live in a world of outrageous pain, but we have not touched on that here. But if you have ever done any kind of frontline activist work, if you have worked in extreme poverty or if you have been inside of a factory farm or if you have seen what war really looks like, you know that *all of that* is unnecessary. All of that is avoidable.

One Day the Statement “We Live in a World of Outrageous Pain” Will Be Obsolete

The grand outrageous dream is that in the future, the statement, “We live in a world of outrageous pain,” will no longer be true, but obsolete. When we look as Somalia

for instance with 90% female genital mutilation, from the lens of this culture we can say that is a collective pathology, a collective insanity. Yet, in a world where we have human-induced species extinction and biosphere collapse, along with thousands of children starving to death every day, the fact that we participate with those systems is a sign of ubiquitous insanity throughout the whole system. Part of the nature of self is the interconnectivity of self with the rest of existence; not understanding that is insanity. It means that we don't understand what we are. If we really understood the irreplaceable uniqueness of all life, then harming any of life unnecessarily is completely ridiculous and unacceptable.

Is it possible to make the jump into a reality where this unnecessary pain does not exist? Let us turn to history. Complex organic chemistry ended up creating an emergence into early single cellular life where there was suddenly a fundamentally new reality, one that had never existed before. Single cellular life that existed for billions of years and had evolved for a billion years then triggered the emergence into multicellular life. There was no partial multicellular life. Evolution went from single cell to multicellular in a kind of quantum jump. Evolution occurs in iterations and then makes discrete jumps. The discrete jumps happen both when they can, because the capacities are there, and when they must.

We are at a point in history where we have not understood our interconnectivity with All-That-Is. Previously, our highest, most advanced technology to harm each other or defend ourselves was throwing spears, which did not represent an existential risk for all of us. Now, that same consciousness that can otherize and externalize harm has the technology of ICBMs and D9s, and the consciousness *has* to shift. We are too powerful to not understand our interconnectivity, and realize that the home we all share is merely a small spaceship being whipped through space.

Let us set aside the interconnection of all of universe for the moment. Think about the earth, our home, as a little, fragile, organic spaceship traveling through a cosmos, with no other place to migrate any time soon. Are we at a point to have the emergence of a completely new level of organization and evolution, just as essential as the jump from organic chemistry to life, just as crucial as the jump from single cell to multicellular, from distributed neural net to centralized nervous system?

Is everything getting better right now or is everything getting worse? The answer is both. There are heartening statistics regarding key biosphere degradation and emerging new technologies with solutions to counter it. When situations are simultaneously getting better and worse on exponential curves, it is a sign of emerging epoch change. The way that we have been operating is clearly no longer sustainable, yet the technologies to mediate a fundamentally new way, a quantum jump, are coming onboard.

How Do We Trigger the Emergence of Unique Self and the Unique Self Symphony?

How do we trigger the emergence of a self-organizing, effectively self-governing, self-evolving global civilization so that we are not stuck solving problems that we are causing? Structurally we are causing, incentivizing, and inducing the problems and then trying to solve them retroactively. We are trying to solve problems within systems that themselves are the cause of the problems. The essential jump that we must make is to obsolete the basis of all of the problems by not conditioning harm-causing, dysfunctional human behavior in the first place.

We can see that different cultures have *radically* different patterns of behavior, that for almost every attribute that we think of as natural, there exists a culture that has a behavior almost totally different. Human nature, as we know, is characterized by its

ability to adapt. Extensive research has proven that no human behavioral problems are an inexorable result of nature. These problems are our nature expressed through conditioning, and all of those conditions can change. So the question is, what would the conditions have to be in which Unique Self, fully actualized in conscious love, synergy, and symbiosis with all sentient beings as the natural byproduct is the ground in which every individual is conditioned?

If we look at any global problem, whether sexual slavery, climate destabilization, or species extinction, we can trace all of those problems to groups of humans doing a particular activity that causes them. We can then ask what conditions those patterns of behavior in those people. If we then look at the integral model, there are behavior determinants and behavioral influences in all four quadrants, memetic determinants of human behavior. The values system, the definition of success, the Universe Story. For example, if your identity feels separate from the rest of everything and in competition with the rest of everything, that will code certain patterns of behavior. If, however, your identity feels part of, interconnected with, interdependent with, and supported by the rest of existence, strikingly different patterns of behavior are coded.

These codes are taught and learned; they are not innate. Our definition of success and what we pursue is limited largely because of the inadequacy of our previous and existing common definitions of success. The working definitions of success lead us to behave in certain ways that optimize certain things at the expense of other things, disregarding the symbiosis of what we care about and what we do not care about. We must begin to optimize for all life, and we must optimize for all things that matter simultaneously as not in conflict with each other, but symbiotic with each other.

Reconciling Paradox

This is an integral stage of evolution largely characterized as reconciling paradox and false dichotomy in a more integral understanding. Do we want to optimize for being or becoming? Do we want to optimize for people being happy now or for people being motivated to evolve? The answer is again, both! We want people that are as happy, fulfilled, content with quality of life now, and progressively higher quality of life. Do we want to love what is or do we want to work to make it better, or both? In fact, we work to make it better *because* we love what is.

Part of what is, is the becoming impulse in it, and if you love what is and you love the becoming impulse in it, then you have to support its full expression in evolution. All of the false dichotomies of what do we optimize at the cost of something else that matters, one of the key definitions of success is that *all of it* matters and all of the things that matter are mutually supportive, not mutually exclusive.

There are behavioral determinants in the “I” quadrant of integral theory, along with culture and interpersonal relations in the “we” quadrant, as well as in our social systems and in economics, in the “its” quadrant, that we must evolve. What we currently incentivize in our macroeconomic system is a major driver of human behavior. The fact that a whale is worth about a million dollars dead on a whaling ship and is worth nothing economically to anybody if it is alive in the ocean, that profit equation is not good for whales. That profit equation is why we are forcing species into extinction at the rate that we are. We have a value system that is extraction-based, in which everything is seen as a commodity for us within the framework of a balance sheet, not as a sovereign being, or a beneficiary, or a contributor to the system. We are optimizing for the incorrect things. We must change the nature of that profit-value equation.

Additionally, when we value the scarcity of things, we artificially manufacture the scarcity of things. Something abundant is the death of it having value. We must change

that fundamentally. Profit driver is currently at the basis. For example, you may wonder why have we not switched over to solar energy generation already. It is not because the technology is not efficient enough for grid parity. It is because the coal and oil energy have been allowed to externalize 99% of their real cost to the commons because the commons isn't on a balance sheet. If we truly had to account for the cost of the mercury, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, zinc, and nitrous oxide, along with what would it cost to technologically clean them up to the point where we were not stealing from the commons (which entails stealing from everyone else, including future generations), oil would have been known as a million times more expensive than solar long ago.

The nature of the economic structure creates imperatives. Now, what if we created the economic incentive to be completely aligned with highest good for all life and there were no externality in the nature of the macroeconomic system and the nature of governance and power structures? Notice that there are behavioral determinants in the way we create infrastructure itself; infrastructure is not values-agnostic. Technology influences and re-influences us, so if we have a technology to meet human needs that requires harming the earth, then it actually conditions memetics where we must justify that harm. If to meet our needs we must extract and pollute, then we must internally and societally revert to a Darwinian dog-eat-dog cynicism and so-called realism, because there is no way not to. Whereas we actually have the opportunity to develop new technologies that are closed loop and regenerative, where the technology itself doesn't require causing harm.

It is time to develop infrastructure cognizant of how it impacts our memetics, our internals. We can view all of the things that influence human behavior and specifically, that influence patterns of harm-causing human behavior, either consciously or unintentionally, by participating in systems that externally cause harm. We can identify what conditions that kind of behavior, and what would have to shift to condition omni-considerate, integrally developed behavior in every unique human being intrinsically, as a basis for self-governance. Self-governance is imperative here, as government that is imposed on people that is misaligned with the governed even to the slightest extent, no matter how enlightened the system, will always create dissent and authoritarianism. Yet, a libertarian, self-emergent governance of a non-enlightened population that does not understand their interconnectedness with everything doesn't function either.

We will have an internal basis to act in ways that *can* externalize harm. What we realize, then, is that we must have an emergent governance of a comprehensive, educated, integrally developed, omni-considerate humanity. Nothing less than that is adequate to what we want to do. That is our task.

Modeling the Unique Self Symphony: Our Unique Obligation

When we speak of collaboration, cooperation, synergy, and creating a Unique Self symphony, if we in our projects cannot truly model those things, we have no chance of evolving into the next emergent. Each individual has the responsibility, the Unique Obligation, to model that.

The Unique Self model represents the *end* of comparison and competition because two things are fundamentally, irreducibly unique; there are no metrics to compete on. To be in competition, we must be focused on the same metrics, which means we have to reduce who we are to little parts of who we are.

But when you recognize our fundamental uniqueness, you know that no one could ever be you. You know that each of us cannot contribute to the universe what the other can, and in parallel, that the other cannot contribute to the universe what we can. We see that indeed, every other human being needs us too, needs us to self-actualize

fully for us to live and thrive in our interconnected universe. Instead of competition, the Unique Self model leads us to symbiosis, to embedding deep partnership, and to a workable system with nothing extracted, with nothing left out, where all of it matters.

Global Sufficiency: A System's Science Perspective on Addressing World Hunger

Now let us look at one particular area in which we can operationalize the intention of this narrative, *The Universe: A Love Story*. In particular, it seems almost absurd to have to point out that in a great love story, the core rights of every individual need to be affirmed, honored, and nourished. Nourishment is not merely psychological, spiritual, or existential. Nourishment begins with food. It is preposterous to talk about the universe as a love story in a world in which every human being is not fed. In the last section of our essay, we will offer a compelling program to enact *The Universe: A Love Story* to express the core narrative of the universe a love story through the ending of hunger.

We will look at the larger contexts that the issue of global hunger exists within and identify some of the inter-affecting and driving factors that are crucial to lasting success but may be less obvious to a more narrowed-in scope of focus, so as to be informationally equipped to develop strategies that are truly adequate to the scope and complexity of the task at hand.

Let us start by proposing a modification to the challenge, from “how to end world hunger”, to “how to end world hunger sustainably without externalizing harm to any other system in the process”.

This is in recognition of how inextricably interconnected our major global systems and issues are necessitating strategies that adequately account for that interconnectedness to do anything more than displace harm.

We optimize what we measure. If our metrics for success omit any part that affects the system, then our likelihood for failure in that part and resultantly, the whole, is high.

Interconnectedness:

Without enumerating a comprehensive taxonomy of all the issues that affect and are affected by global malnutrition (which needs done to succeed with this task, but is beyond the scope of this essay), let's look at a few examples of related issues and why we need to consider them:

- 50 million land mines remain globally from wars that were never cleaned up. Many of these are on arable land making it completely inaccessible. This loss of land and resultant malnutrition is on top of the fact that one of these landmines is accidentally detonated by a civilian every 19 minutes. Mozambique has enough arable land to feed all of Africa, but there is food shortage even within the country due to the roughly 500,000 landmines embedded in that soil: remnants of 30 years of civil war. Because of accidentally encroaching too near to the minefields, the country has over 50,000 amputees.
- The populations of most species of large fish are around 10% of what they were in 1900. We live on a $\frac{3}{4}$ water planet whose biodiversity developed over billions of years, and in just over a century of mechanized fishing, we have decimated 90% of the top of the food chain populations.

- The fish that do remain are becoming continually more contaminated with mercury and other industrial toxins, making them continually more dangerous for humans to consume. The primary cause of the mercury in the oceans is the burning of fossil fuels for energy production and transportation.
- Looking to other of the ocean populations for human food options, whale and dolphin meat has been on an upsurge, threatening certain species that are critically endangered, and crossing ethical lines by slaughtering creatures with neocortices nearly as complex as our own. (If our only goal is to end world hunger for humans, then this is of course a viable option. Thus the problem of overly narrow metrics.)
- Connecting the ailing ecology of the oceans to the land and the topic of food production, the leading cause of the growing dead zones around the world is the toxic runoff produced by the current methods of industrialized agriculture.
- The dead zones in the ocean are mirrored on land by the growing deserts that have replaced previously biodiverse ecosystems after relatively short periods of unsustainable farming methods that demineralize topsoil.
- The push to maximize extraction per time burns through ecological savings accounts while producing massive waste causing environmental harm on both sides of an unsustainable linear materials economy.
- Mass industrial agricultural is the leading cause of deforestation, loss of habitat land, fresh water depletion, species extinction and total biodiversity loss.
- The pollinators that are essential to the success of life on this planet are being profoundly threatened by the increasingly toxic kinds of pesticides being used, in quantities hard to truly comprehend. These same pesticides are showing up in human breast milk and other tissues, only to be taken off the markets after the first long term trials on the general population (without informed consent) show what was always predictable but not tested for before mass utilization.
- Factoring the methane from livestock, the energy used in the production and distribution of food, and the decreased photosynthesis from dead zones and deserts, food production is arguably the most significant contributor to climate change.
- Factoring the total carbon emissions involved and the agricultural runoff, food production is likely one of the most significant causes of ocean acidification.
- Fish populations, arable land, fresh water, phosphates for fertilizers and oil for energy production are all limited resources that we have been utilizing many times faster than they can replenish, to only provide an adequate quality of life to a portion of the world's people. To provide adequately for all the world's people, with a population that continues to expand, utilizing even remotely similar models to those feeding the industrialized world today, would mean utilizing finite and dwindling resources even faster, accelerating inevitable system failure.
- To address the issue of limited freshwater for irrigation we are looking to increased desalination, which creates a new kind of harm to the coastal ecosystems where most of the world's marine life lives.

- Returning to the stakeholders at the heart of this question, even if adequate macronutrients are made available, the critical micronutrients necessary for healthy growth require mineral rich soil and adequate diversity of crop types. Even if all the nutrients are provided, malnutrition is still possible if there are absorption challenges from intestinal pathogens still rampant in the developing world, necessitating sanitation and health care as crucial elements to the hunger equation.
- Beyond landmines from old wars obscuring arable land, current wars are another piece in the hunger puzzle, displacing people in mass from basically functioning societies to unsustainable refugee camps; shutting down distribution channels so the available resources can't be brought to the people; and even intentionally destroying food stocks and crops as a method of attack. Thus changing the political, religious, and economic motives for war is yet another integral factor to addressing the issue of hunger.

The list of interconnecting factors that have to be addressed for a lasting and viable solution goes on and on.

Technological solutions to increase efficiencies in food production, storage, and distribution are necessary but not sufficient to the task at hand. Increased agricultural output through industrial technologies over the last 200+ years did not bring about a steady-state population with a high average quality of life, but rather lead to an exponential growth in population with more people in extreme poverty today than there were total people of all economic classes before that and has caused more ecological harm in the process than any other industry, threatening the fundamental life-support systems of the planet.

Can we provide healthy food without addressing the burning of fossil fuels that cause mercury contamination of significant food sources? Is the profound cruelty of factory farming an adequate solution to producing more pigs per acre? Is losing more of the Amazon to grazing land for cattle an acceptable solution to feeding a population that only reached its size because of industrialized agriculture and overusing finite resource savings accounts in the first place?

The issue of global hunger, like all major global issues, is a part of an interconnected set of challenges that cannot be solved in isolation. Our real task is to lessen suffering, not just move it. That requires a wider scope of metrics, deeper analysis, and more fundamental changes to how our species navigates aboard this fragile organic spaceship.

Economics:

World hunger, climate change, species extinction, environmental pollution, and all the other major global issues, are interconnected not only because everything within a tiny biosphere is inter-affecting, but also because they are all predictable and inexorable manifestations of the same underlying structural motivators.

Global economics has several core structural flaws (that have not been addressed in any industrialized system of economics to date) that make major environmental and social harm, including world hunger, unavoidable, irrespective of the specific people involved.

We will address some of these flaws here just deeply enough to demonstrate the level at which economics has to change, and to underscore the necessity of these changes to bring about a world of sustainable sufficiency.

The value equation:

What determines the relative economic value we place on one thing compared to another? Why is gold valued at \$1,200 per ounce while air has no assessed value? Our human values both inform and are reinforced and conditioned by the value equation economically. Several of the core drivers of the valuation process create an economic incentive that is antithetical to environmental sustainability and human flourishing for all.

Extraction:

A living whale swimming in the ocean has no economically recognized value to anyone, but harpooned, is worth up to a million dollars as meat. A 2,000 year old redwood tree that produces oxygen, sequesters CO₂, cleans toxins from the atmosphere, stabilizes topsoil, prevents flooding, and creates habitat for pollinators and other species that are crucial to the functioning of our biosphere, confers economic advantage to no one. But cut down, makes \$100,000 worth of virgin lumber.

Our value equation is extractionary and commoditizing. Even the phrase “natural resource” assumes the extraction and commodification of what was once a part of a living ecosystem. This is exactly why we have decimated 90% of the large fish populations globally, 80% of the world’s old growth forests, and caused more species extinction than we have been able to account for. This is also why we enslave whole species, at forced populations many times what is natural, in conditions that future historians will catalogue along with concentration camps and slavery ships as tragic examples of human power, pre-civilization.

As long as the other species with which we inhabit this planet are worth more to us dead than alive, more enslaved and commodified than free, and only have assessed value insofar as they can be used to meet an immediate need of ours, not recognizing sovereignty or intrinsic value on the balance sheet then we will continue rationalizing violence and extracting faster than renewability, eroding the very cliff on which we stand.

Our extrinsic only, commoditizing valuation system applies to other people just as much as it does to other species. This is why the aid of wealthy nations to poor ones is limited by the rationalizable case for ROI. The manufacturing of goods, including of foodstuff, for the industrialized world, depends on cheap labor from the developing world. This system of profit margin is not only predicated upon but also requires the continuance of massive economic disparity.

This is not just self-serving interest, but shortsighted self-serving interest. Beyond a living tree’s value to the rest of life, or to itself, it is producing the oxygen that I breathe. That does something more fundamental for me than anything I can do with the tree. But my cutting this one tree (or forest) down won’t ruin the entire atmosphere, so I breathe either way. But me cutting down this one tree does confer immediate and tangible economic advantage to me that I wouldn’t have otherwise. It is a whole population thinking this way, because the structure of incentive within the system predisposes that, that has us nearing the end of a savings account we are not equipped to replenish nor yet prepared to live without.

Currency evolved to mediate complex barter where the amount of currency in the system was proportional to the total value of goods and services in the system, with the proportionality ratio for a unit of currency determining its value. The economic concept of interest not only incentivized hoarding, but did so artificially as it made the monetary system expand irrespective of growth of goods and services. Fiat currency and fractional reserve banking took the artificial expansion of the monetary supply further, driving

inflation and requiring perpetual growth to even maintain equilibrium. Perpetual economic growth was predicated upon the idea of continual material extraction from the environment, which is clearly not possible on a finite planet. Continued evolution of scientific insights and technological resource efficiencies leading to a continued increase in quality of life is possible sustainably, but requires a closed loop economic model based on an evolving homeostasis rather than continued exponential growth.

Externalization:

From extraction at the front of a linear materials economy, to waste at the end and pollution all along it, centralizing profits while externalizing costs is endemic to every part of this economic system. With the integrity of the commons not represented on anyone's profit and loss statement, the more of the cost of operations can be externalized to the environment and others, the better the profit margins.

Hence, the agricultural runoff, the mercury in the ocean, the deserts and landfills taking the place ecosystems once inhabited, the "waste" marine life accidentally killed in drift nets and long lines, and the general blind eye to the immense suffering induced in the pursuit of narrow success metrics.

If the cost of a landmine included the cost to remove it afterwards (let alone to try and remediate the irreparable harm to human life caused in its use), there would be no land mines. Real cost accounting would mean the military industrial complex would operate at an astronomical loss. Without the majority of the cost being unaccounted for, i.e., paid for by somebody else, war would be the least economically viable solution to address conflicts, which would motivate the development and utilization of other strategies. (As it is, the military industrial complex is the largest single sector of global economics. Without threats of war necessitating military manufacturing, global economics as we know it would collapse. What is the consequence of having a global economy that actually requires continuous war, where the fiscal interest of the most powerful organizations in the world is directly opposed to peace?)

If the cost of a hamburger included the cost to clean the water used in its production, to sustainably manage the soil used for growing feedstock, to remove the methane and CO₂ produced from the atmosphere, to tend to any resultant health issues in the people consuming it as a result of the antibiotics, hormones, or steroids used, to remove the pesticides from the environment, etc. (not to mention the cost of suffering to the animals or intrinsic value of life taken, which is impossible to calculate a value for), current methods of industrialized animal agriculture would be the most expensive method for producing food ever attempted.

In order for the strategies we develop for feeding people to be sustainable, they have to inventory and internalize all the costs associated. That imperative is not incentivized or even possible (for a provider to maintain competitive status) within the current valuation system.

If we inventoried and internalized all the externalities within the value and profit equation, economics would spontaneously incentivize behaviors that supported sustainability and thriving.

Scarcity:

As long as a thing's scarcity adds economic value on top of its real use value (whether it was scarce or not), there will be economic incentive to artificially manufacture and maintain scarcity even where otherwise avoidable. Technology's capacity to create

more abundance through increased efficiency will not be fully realized within an economics where abundance results in lower valuation.

Where food is an economic commodity whose scarcity informs its price and thus the profitability for the most powerful stakeholders affecting the equation and the profitability of that industry affects the homeostasis of the stock market and economics as a whole. The technologies and strategies that could produce the most sustainable abundance are directly opposed to the highest valuations for those vested in the current commodities market, i.e., sustainable global food sufficiency would be economically disadvantageous for those who have the most influence over current food production.

This is the underlying reason farmers have been paid to not grow food and why speculators drive the commodities prices high artificially, exacerbating hunger for the poor who already couldn't afford enough.

This is why to date, air, which is seen as abundant and universally available, has no assessed value, despite its foundational role to life...while gold, which is seen as relatively scarce (factoring both total amounts and the associated extraction and refinement costs) is given a high value, independent of any real use value or lack thereof. This is why we will clear cut a forest (and damage the atmosphere in the process) to mine the gold underneath it, to put it in bars in safes serving no real value to anyone.

The value focus on scarcity is based on the underlying goal of maximizing differential advantage rather than systemic advantage. This causes unavoidable violence.

Ownership:

Essential to all these elements of the value equation is the concept of separate ownership. Separate ownership, at the level of an individual, family, corporation, or nation, creates a line where extraction and externalization on one side equals prosperity to the other. It is the basis of the drive for differential advantage, hoarding, and decreased sharing, resulting in decreased efficiency and thus systemic insufficiency. Separate ownership minimizes synergistic advantage and works in the opposite direction of empathy, extended responsibility, and intentional symbiosis.

Separate ownership, driving ubiquitous competition, is the cause of artificially manufactured demand and the associated exploitive marketing practices, designed in obsolescence, trend induced perceived obsolescence, and every other form of incentivized mass waste.

As long as there is separate ownership, some people will be born into greater economic advantage than others, having nothing to do with merit, leading to socioeconomic stratification and class systems. Those with more resources have more to be creative with (and visa versa) leading to a perpetual widening of the gap and ever-greater resource disparity. This disparity is a major driver of crime and war.

This system of resource allocation creates additional unnecessary scarcity through decreased circulation and sharing. In response to the resultant crime, which is an impulse towards equality and homeostasis, we invest the largest fraction of our already scarce resources into protecting the scarce resource stores, further perpetuating the underlying imbalances.

A world without war, crime, and poverty, requires a fundamentally new structure for resource access and allocation, and individual motive, not based on separate ownership.

Memetics:

Underneath and driving the contributing causes of world hunger (and all the major social and environmental issues) are the core structures of economic incentive. Underneath and driving these structures of economics are ubiquitous and misguided core values and beliefs that need updating.

The primary axiom that gave rise to all the economic structures discussed above is that of separate and competitive interest. The memetic shift from this to an awareness and sense of interconnected interest is at the heart of what's needed for the solution to these problems and entry into a new phase of human existence.

Competition does occur within natural complex systems, but represents only a tiny fraction of the total interactions, most of which are symbiotic.

The competition of bucks to determine procreative opportunity is easier to notice (and thus create a metaphor around) than the gas exchange between plants and animals or the micro flora colonies in the soil and our gut that make both work.

There have been cultures more aware of and focused on symbiotic and interconnected interest, who lacked much of the resource disparity and ecological devastation we have become so used to we assume it as unavoidable. While the memetic structures of those cultures may have created more harmony and a higher quality of life relative to resource per capita, they didn't motivate much focus on militaries and were thus killed and subsumed by separate interest cultures in an unconscious natural selection process determined in wars that favored domination over quality of life.

The separate and competitive interest memes and thus cultures proliferated, not because they were sustainable or good, but because they were proliferative. As it is with most species at some point in their evolution, what has made us successful as a species so far is now the primary cause of our problems and what most threatens our continued existence.

Driving pathological extraction, externalization, hoarding, and the manufacturing of scarcity (and all the problems resulting from there) is the meme of separate and competitive interest. At its core, this is about individual identities that are conditioned to feel separate from and threatened by the rest of existence, rather than a part of and supported by it.

Reconditioning this meme leads to an omni-considerate circle of care that leaves no place to externalize harm; genuine respect and concern for all sentient things necessitating a reworking of commoditization and what we think of as resources; and an interest in systemic rather than differential advantage, robbing scarcity of its allure.

A global citizenry aware of the inextricable interconnectedness of all life on this planet would call for a fundamental restructuring of economics inclusive of all the points mentioned above and more, that would create an incentive system that would induce spontaneous behavior shifts at all levels of agency, towards comprehensive solutions that would work to eliminate suffering and support an increasing quality of life for all life, ongoingly.

The memetics and the economics mutually reinforce each other as they are (and will do so in the opposite direction as we work to evolve both) and drive the behaviors that cause the problems we are interested in solving. Within this value and incentive system, global hunger is intractable...without externalizing the harm to other parts of the system in ways that ensure the solution's unsustainability.

In an updated system of values and incentive, this and all the other pressing issues of our time, would find spontaneous support for their transformation from all sides.

Solutions:

Understanding clearly some of the core drivers and inter-affecting factors, what can we do?

Recognizing world hunger as a symptom of deeper issues doesn't mean that we shouldn't treat the symptom. Of course we should. It simply means that alone won't be sufficient.

In addition to all the critical work that is currently being done for this issue, including all the local sustainability initiatives and technological innovations for increased efficiency of production and distribution, below we explore a few meta-initiatives we could do to ensure that we are factoring and addressing the underlying drivers and interconnected factors, measuring and optimizing the right things, and coordinating strategies effectively towards achievable goals:

1. Conduct a thorough analysis of the planet's sustainable carrying capacity. This will not yield a single number, but a relationship between the total number of people, their material quality of life, and the techno-economic strategies for converting resources to meet needs at higher levels of efficiency. This will require a comprehensive inventory of global resources, more comprehensive compound metrics for assessing quality of life and overall societal health, and systems for real cost analysis that factor and internalize externalities so we can identify total resource load per capita numbers factoring matriculated shared infrastructural resources and externalities. Knowing clearly how many people the world can continuously support, at what quality of life, utilizing which support technologies and systems, is fundamental to really addressing this issue, and all issues of environmental sustainability. Given that current sustainable population estimates—based on inadequate data and analysis—range from ~500 million (pre-industrial revolution levels, less than 1/10th of our current population) to ~15 billion (30 times the estimate on the other end, assuming huge increases in resource efficiencies) and our path ahead is radically different depending on which side of that spread we are aiming at. This is critical knowledge for all global strategy efforts.

Supporting the aim of a sustainable population, we need to invest more focus in integrated strategies for controlling population growth. In addition to further implementation of the known effective strategies (addressing poverty, empowering women, electrical light, education through college, etc.), memetic strategies to increase the voluntary use of birth control (like was done with Radio Tanzania by Martha Swai and colleagues), as well as the development of better methods of birth control that are easier to adopt, are crucial. Specifically, technological options to turn off reproductivity before puberty, with full reversibility and without negative health effects (e.g. epigenetic modulations specific to reproductivity that don't affect the endocrine system) are nearing feasibility. This has the capacity to end accidental pregnancies.

2. Develop a comprehensive critical path plan (that is elastic and upgradable with the input of new information) for achieving sustainable food security for all people. In addition to knowing the population number we are aiming for, here are some of the key components required for an adequate critical path:

- a. Create a context map of all the inter-affecting issues and factors that have to be addressed for complete solutions. This can be represented as

a nodal network that shows the magnitude and mechanism of effect, and can model the effect of addressing specific nodes on the whole system. This can also be represented as a weighted taxonomy of what needs done.

b. Enumerate all the KPI's relevant to food sufficiency and the entire context map so we can make sure we are tracking all the relevant metrics and reaching identified benchmarks to ensure we are on course or modify the course as needed.

c. Within the context map, identify all the economic structures that incentivize causes of hunger and develop solutions for changing economic incentive to be aligned with the needed changes in those areas.

d. Create a folksonomy of all current hunger related initiatives and overlay it on the content map taxonomy of what needs done to identify what is already being adequately tended to, which areas need more focus, and which groups could coordinate to share best practices, reduce duplication inefficiencies, and increase total efficacy.

e. Create a blueprint of a model where all people's fundamental needs are met that is environmentally sustainable to ensure that the methods we are pursuing for meeting human needs are actually viable. This will involve questioning some of the deep axioms of how we are currently working to address hunger. Specifically the idea of meeting the needs of the developing world through the industrial and commercial model of the developed world: that roads and distribution channels are essential, as opposed to the kinds of local sustainability that met the needs of most of the world's people before the industrial revolution, and that markets are essential for people in the developing world to be able to grow something commercially for sale to make money to buy food, as opposed to growing the food their village needs to eat. The solutions we implement need to be appropriate to the context and environmentally sustainable.

These are meta-solutions for coordinating and strategizing the many specific initiatives across the whole field of work related to addressing world hunger, to support optimized solution development.

At an even deeper level, we need to take a focused strategic approach to restructuring the underlying systems that influence human behavior globally in ways that encourage and reward life-supporting activity.

3. Develop a fundamentally new system of global economics. Not simply retrofitted improvements to the current system, but a ground up redesign of how we meet human needs, incentivize contribution, and allocate resources. This requires deep analysis and modeling, and development of both an adequate blueprint of an effective system and an adaptable roadmap for how to get there. Economics is a made up system. The problem is that it depends on and affects the fundamental systems of geology, biology, and ecology, without properly understanding them. If the ecology and the economy are not optimized by the same actions, than we have to change the made up system to work with the fundamental ones, or we self-destruct. The development of a new system of

economics is absolutely crucial to not only world hunger, but the continued success of our species.

4. Applied science and technology aimed at accelerating global memetic evolution towards a population that can reliably self-govern on the basis of shared omniconsiderate values and an adequate knowledge base for how to act effectively towards those values, including the capacity to participate in scientifically informed rational dialectic for optimized collective decision making. Allocating the resources to deliberately purposing big data tools and scientific marketing towards this goal could produce more shift in the internal determinants of vital human behaviors (which is all of what needs changed), inducing emergent mass behavior changes, than likely is achievable any other way. Any system of law, no matter how enlightened, imposed by force on people who don't understand it, agree with it, or want it, will always lead to dissent. Self-governance has to be the basis of an effective system, which requires an educated, aware, and caring populace.

5. Develop a comprehensive critical path for humanity's total evolution into a world system that makes possible and supports the highest quality of life for all life, ongoingly, with an optimized evolutionary rate. This is a unifying imperative, including the first three strategies mentioned and all other needed and relevant evolutionary projects. This is a distributed and crowd sourced, global peace room as sophisticated as the war room.

This requires a comprehensive inventory of all global needs: human and environmental, including all problems that need remediated, ongoing maintenance needs, and the development of new capacities to meet needs ever better. This also requires comprehensive architecting of a redesigned civilization based on the continually updated best of what is technologically doable, not assuming any part of how we have done infrastructure so far would necessarily be how we would continue to do it, but looking from scratch at all the possible strategies in each area and seeing which demonstrate themselves as the most comprehensively advantageous.

The scientific and technological capacities needed to support an effective, integrated, and continually updating critical path process for humanity's conscious problem solving and evolution already exist and have demonstrated efficacy towards other uses, adequate to the scope of what's needed: mathematical forecasting systems (to assess timelines for major issues, informing responses and resource allocation to address challenges within needed timelines); complexity processors (to show the web of externalized effects [positive and negative] on other systems from any initiative so as to be able to optimize not only local but systemic advantage from all projects...and to inform the basis for a system of scientifically optimizable global resource allocation); complex metric systems (for synthesizing and commensurating disparate metrics); and data systems for harvesting, mining, and procedural vetting (so governance can truly be distributed and empirically based).

Altogether, these interoperating capacities represent a new global operating system, aligned with a new global awareness of humanity as an entity, capable of and requiring conscious and considerate direction and action, in order to solve the current problems, prevent otherwise impending ones, and support the accelerated realization of our full collective potential.

Closing Remarks:

While it may seem like we have expanded an already enormous task into a nearly incomprehensible one, trying to lastingly solve a problem within a structure that inexorably generates it is not possible. Changing the structure to generate different things may be complex and difficult, but complex and difficult are still infinitely easier than impossible.

The majority of this part of the essay was focused on underscoring the need for systemic (in addition to symptomatic) solutions, and pointing towards some of the system elements in particular that must be addressed. The kind of systemic solutions needed to solve world hunger, and more fundamentally, to incentivize and support spontaneous evolution in this and all sectors, at all levels of agency, have simply been tagged here, to hopefully inspire new types and levels of consideration.

Notes:

1. The perspective presented here draws upon the work of Buckminster Fuller, Jacques Fresco, Barbara Marx Hubbard, Fritjof Capra, Don Beck, Carl Sagan, and many others.
2. The specific numbers included in this paper are approximate, to give a sense of general magnitudes, not precise figures.