

In Extremis!

**A Practical Guide To The Power of One
...Democracy's Best & Perhaps Last Hope**

By George Cappannelli

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*"We are called to be architects
of the future, not its victims."*

Buckminster Fuller

Dedication

I dedicate these pages to those who still believe in the value and promise of Representative Democracy, who appreciate the extraordinary gifts and opportunities this system of government offers, and who wish to continue the quest to create a most perfect union.

To those who have had enough of this insanity masquerading as partisan politics, and more than enough of the duplicitous and seditious behavior of those who have blatantly violated and continue to violate our Constitution and the core values, standards and practices that have sustained our Democracy for 246 years.

To those who have ever held a protest sign, written a letter to the editor, signed a petition, voted, volunteered, donated, worked at the polls, marched, organized a rally, been arrested during a protest or done other things to defend truth, right an injustice and work to improve this still imperfect and yet noble dream called America.

And finally, to those who know that to succeed in saving Democracy we must exercise all of our rights and privileges as citizens not just in this rapidly diminishing time before the midterms, but for all time, and not just for ourselves, but for those who are standing in line behind us as well as for those who are not yet even in line.

George A. Cappannelli

Santa Fe, New Mexico. February, 2022

*“The power of a man is his present means
to obtain some future good.”*

-Thomas Hobbes

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Part One

Immediate & Long-Term Benefits of Exercising The Power of One

“The price of greatness is responsibility.”

-Winston Churchill

I Dream of a Noble America...

*in which we have the courage and perseverance, the patience and character
to heal the wounds that stain our past, still encumber our present, and
that stand in the way of an uncompromised and unlimited future; the wounds
of subjugation we still visit upon the indigenous people whose lands we stole and whose
rights we violated, the wounds of enslavement and denial we still visit upon our black and
brown brothers and sisters who were brought here against their will, the wounds
of division that continue to separate North from South, one religious sect
from another and historic immigrant minorities from more recent ones.
A noble America in which we retake the ethical and moral high ground
by rekindling and aligning with the promise of the land of
the free and the home of the brave.*

Introduction

This is not a time for procrastination, wishful thinking, half-hearted measures, avoidance of truth, or denial of our responsibilities as citizens. Instead, We the People are now being called to address the most serious threat to our Democracy in the 246 year history of this nation. And this includes the Civil War which was, until the rise of this current threat, the greatest previous one.

Yes, we are being called to cut through the fog-like despair, overwhelm, confusion and indifference as well as the unprecedented onslaught of lies and disinformation that have many of us in their grip some of the time and others of us all of the time. Feelings and falsehoods that are prompting a large number of American voters, as recently reported in a New York Times/Siena College Poll, to say that “our Democracy doesn’t work.”

While this is not an unexpected response in this time that Mythologist Michael Meade calls The Age of The Great Forgetting, this time when many of us are searching for some way to make sense of the seeming insanity that is disrupting our world and also for someone or something to blame for the mess that we are in, I believe this reported “large number of American voters” have it wrong. It is not that Democracy doesn’t work. It’s that too many of us who are citizens are not doing enough of the things we need to do to work the Democracy we have.

It’s also clear to me, and I hope to many of you as well, that unless We the People start exercising far more of our inalienable rights and responsibilities with a deeper commitment and a much greater sense of urgency – especially between now and the midterms - there is a very high probability we will end up colluding with those who have lost their way and are committed to destroying our Democracy. And if this occurs, it will not only put Democracy at even greater risk, but humanity itself, all other species, and our precious habitat as well.

For Democracy, as we have been told many times, is not a spectator sport. And the responsibility for its true health and stability does not rest exclusively in the hands of the President, Congress or our Supreme Court, nor in our state capitals, legislatures and city governments. Instead, ultimate responsibility for the true well-being of our Democracy, and for the rights and privileges it affords us and the extraordinary opportunities and promises it offers us, rests primarily in our hands. This, I believe, is what Augustine of Hippo, known to most of us as Saint Augustine was suggesting so long ago when he spoke to the people of his time and through them to all of us when he said, *“He who created us without our help, will not save us without our consent.”*

So, in this time I describe as “In Extremis,” a term I borrow from nautical language which advises the captain and crew of a ship in danger of collision, capsizing or running aground to set aside the normal Navigational Rules of the Road and do whatever is necessary to save the ship, I believe We the People must give our full consent and do all that we can to save the Ship called Democracy.

And while this task may feel challenging, complicated and, even at times, beyond our reach, I believe there is still time and that we cannot afford to be dissuaded from undertaking it by the rationales advanced by others or by our own fears, concerns or indifference.

Yes, I believe we, like those aboard a ship in danger of collision, running aground or capsizing, must use all of our skills, our imagination, attention, energy and resources, and most especially, all of inalienable rights and privileges and not just superficially or in traditional ways. As an example, there is our right to peaceful assembly and protest.

While I will have more to say about this in Chapter One, for the moment, suffice it to say that in the time remaining before the midterms, I sincerely believe that if we and many of our major advocacy and activist organizations could agree to conduct a Campaign of Resolve and Commitment in which speak up and out against the travesty being committed against our Democracy through a constant flow of emails, phone calls, podcasts, letters to the editors and petitions of encouragement to those who are defending Democracy and as a warning to those who are not, we will be far more successful. And if we also come together in the streets and conduct massive peaceful protests, teach-ins and sit ins, work slowdowns and even general strikes we will increase our chances for success even more. In short, if we demonstrate our unswerving will to save our Democracy by creating a new peaceful and proactive army of engaged citizens we will rescue the Ship Called America from danger, in much the same way the people of Ukraine, to the shock and wonder of the world, have come together to save the Ship Called Ukraine.

And the good news is that if we do this with good intent and do it now before things get worse, we will not have to later use weapons of war and experience a tragic loss of life. So let us speak our truth. Let us defend what we value most and let us utilize the most powerful weapons of all, love, compassion, integrity, truth, commitment to the greater good and, of course, our inalienable rights not just for ourselves but for those who depend on us.

And there is another piece of good news. Thanks to our founders that we do not have to invent an entirely new system of government; nor do we need to articulate a new moral and ethical justification for defending it. Thanks to their efforts our form of governance, imperfect though it clearly is sometimes, has worked reasonably well for much of our history and will work even better in the time ahead if we have the will and the courage to follow the guidance found in our Declaration of Independence and in our Constitution to first stabilize our Democracy, stop the travesty that is under way and then make the much needed repairs to its structure, to our own beliefs and most especially to our character as citizens.

Some Key Questions

Before discussing these things that we can do in greater detail, I ask you to pause for a few minutes and ask yourself a few questions. Answering them will, I believe, be the first and perhaps most important step any of us can take if we want to be successful in doing the important and necessary work that lies ahead. For without awareness of and acknowledgement of what is actually happening in this moment in our history, without perseverance and, most certainly, without true alignment of our heads and our hearts, committed and successful action will not be possible. So here are the questions:

Do you really understand and acknowledge in that place of truth in your heart what is at stake in the November mid-terms?

Do you notice that the divisions of our time and the tumult and confusions they produce are not simply the result of our usual political or philosophical differences, but instead constitute something much deeper and darker, something that appears to be immune to the reach of logic and reason, mature discussion, and the articulation of facts?

Do you notice instead that this something that defies logic and reason could be described as a kind of insanity and that the longer it continues to spread unabated, the more dangerous it becomes to our individual health and to the health of our nation?

Are you aware that Carl Jung, one of the founding fathers of the psychology and one of the leading thinkers of his or any time, in trying to better understand and explain the rise of the Nazi phenomenon prior to, during and after the Second World War in Germany and elsewhere, coined the term The Totalitarian Virus and described it as a ‘virus of the mind/disease of the soul?’ Are you aware that Jung believed it was this virus that led to the kind of mass hypnotism and resulting travesty that destroyed much of Europe and North Africa, visited major economic devastation on the world and led to the death of many millions of people?

Are you aware that long before Jung, the Algonquin, Ojibway and Cree indigenous had identified a similar phenomenon and that each had given it a slightly different name to describe a very similar phenomenon?

For the moment, I will use the Algonquin term “wetiko” to describe this phenomenon they also believed was a “disease of the soul/a virus of the mind” that has at various times in history, particularly when individuals and tribes failed to effectively address and heal their intellectual, psychological and spiritual wounds (which collectively are called “the shadow”) this “disease/virus” has arisen to infect individuals and ultimately a large number of members of the tribe.

Are you aware that both “The Totalitarian Virus” and “Wetiko” have been shown to cause normally intelligent, rational members of society to do things that are unexplainable, logic defying and run contrary to their own best interests?

And finally, when you look around at the tumultuous divisions and dangers that are currently unfolding in America and elsewhere in the world today, do you find yourself thinking that something is indeed, as the good Mr. Shakespeare once said, “Rotten in Demark?”

For example, did you ever expect to see a time when a President of the United States would initiate a coup against his own country, not because the country was violating the rights of its citizens or its constitution and mission, but instead in order for him to illegally take charge and turn our Democracy into an autocracy or more likely a kleptocracy? Did you ever expect a President to create and spread a lie not because that the election he lost was illegitimate, but because he did not want to abide by the decision the majority of citizens had made? Did you ever expect a President of the United States and his sycophants to plan an attack on the U.S Capitol in an effort to prevent certification of a valid election and then continue to do everything in their power to contribute to the end of Democracy? Did you ever imagine that such a President would have been supported in his sedition by duly elected members of the US House of Representatives and Senate, Supreme Court Justices as well as one of the major conservative networks and their shills who masquerade as journalists?

These claims, as of this writing, have not yet been proven in a court of law nor have the perpetrators of these crimes yet been appropriately punished, but there is certainly more than enough evidence in plain view that even the sight and hearing deprived among us now know to be true even if it is only in that place in their hearts that has not yet succumbed to the malevolence they preach,

But it is not the purpose of this brief guide on The Power of One to try to cover all of this ground. That task of investigation and punishment currently rests in the hands of Congress, our Justice Department, our courts and in the hands of the legitimate members of Fourth Estate who I honor and acknowledge for their courage and commitment and hope you do as well.

Nor will I attempt to try to more fully explain the findings that Jung, the indigenous and others have taken a great deal of time and effort to understand and articulate. Instead, as part of this journey you about to take, I invite you to consult with these truth-tellers for yourself and this includes the work of contemporary author Paul Levy who explores this ‘disease of the mind/virus of the soul’ in his book *Dispelling Wetiko*.

For I believe that a better understanding of truth and a clear naming of these individuals and the forces that are now clearly advancing in their effort to destroy Democracy and our way of life will be enormously helpful and very empowering in the time ahead.

Stop The Spread

For the moment, I hope it will suffice to say that I believe that it is both urgent and important for each of us to acknowledge that what is actually happening is not simply a struggle between what we have known in the past as two political parties proposing different paths to get us to the same destination. Instead, what is happening today is something far more nefarious, an all our frontal assault by a desperate minority seeking to turn back the clock – perhaps even to the time 246 years ago when the tyranny of the few over the many predominated in much of the world.

Instead let us name this proverbial 800 Pound Gorilla that has us in its grips for what it is - a form of insanity and a “disease of the soul.” And then let us undertake our role as citizens in defending against it – both within ourselves and within our nation.

Let us also admit that if we rely exclusively on the traditional rules practiced in familiar ways in this game called politics our efforts to save of this Ship Called Democracy in the time of In Extremis run the very real risk of falling short.

And let us also admit that this saving of our Democracy will not be achieved through a quick fix ginned up in a pharmaceutical laboratory and delivered in the form of a series of injections. Would that it could be so easy! Nor will it be the result of some hero riding to our rescue. Instead, we must acknowledge that our psycho/emotional/spiritual immune system has been severely compromised and it will take time and require a great deal of courage, commitment, perseverance, self-reflection, honesty, compassion and humility to do what is necessary to heal the wounds that make us susceptible to this “disease of the soul.” It will also require that we identify and examine the beliefs and the actions that make us susceptible to “Wetiko,” and then replace them with new and more elevated beliefs and actions that will allow all of us to participate in giving birth to a new story and to a much higher level of consciousness and, in this way to a much more rewarding and inspired way of life.

This does not, however, mean that while we are doing this essential and longer-term work, there is nothing we can or should do in the short term –especially with great intentionality in this time before and immediately following the midterms. For in order to save Democracy and our way of life we first must do all that we can to contain the spread of this disease of the soul before it irradiates all hope and all possibility.

And I believe there are a number of very practical and achievable things we can do to prevent those who have temporarily lost both their sanity and their course heading from taking possession of our country. And that only by doing these things now will we be able undertake the longer and more essential work of returning genuine sanity to our country and to our world.

From my perspective, the best path we can follow to accomplish both these short and long-term goals is to exercise as more of our rights, privileges and responsibilities as citizens and do so with greater consistency and integrity. Rights, privileges and responsibilities that are clearly articulated in our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution and that I believe constitute The Power of One.

If we do this, and do it with even some of the conviction those who signed our founding documents demonstrated, I believe we will take our next most important step toward bringing this very difficult and challenging time to a close. And I think the reason this next step is so necessary is that Democracy, as awkward, cumbersome and imperfect as it is, is the best and highest collective form we currently have that will allow us to live lives of greater sanity and are devoted to the greater good of all of us and not just some of us.

And, even if you do not agree with all that I have said and, at this point, may even be wondering if I'm the one who has lost his mind; even if you cannot or are unwilling to say that you will put your life on the line — as our Founders did in signing this document — I ask you to at least agree to practice more of your basic rights, most especially between now and before the midterms and in this way discover for yourself if what I say is true. That acting individually and then collectively as citizens and exercising our rights can bring greater sanity, a more genuine sense of purpose and meaning and much greater constructive progress back to our lives. And that in the process, we will save the Ship Called Democracy.

The first two of these rights identified below fall well within the traditional political tools available to us. The third on the list, as I mentioned earlier, is one that I believe we do not use often enough, and that if exercised more fully now can be a major factor in our ability to stop the spread of this 'disease of the soul.' And also will give us the chance to keep our options open and our quest to pursue this unfinished dream of a free and conscious nation committed to the greatest good for the greatest number alive.

So here are the just basic rights that make up The Power of One that I will explore in much greater depth in the chapters that follow that each of us can do before the Midterms

- Vote with our ballots as well as with our dollars and attention,
- Speak our truth and demand it from others – most assuredly our elected representatives - volunteer, donate, and encourage everyone we know to do all of these things, and.
- Assemble and protest peacefully by participating in marches, work slowdowns, sit-ins, teach ins and general strikes,

My Claim

I realize, of course, that the claim I have made about the insanity of our time as well as the one I make on the cover of this practical guide - that The Power of One is Democracy's Best and Perhaps Last Hope - may sound too simplistic to some of you or too inflated and grandiose to others. However, if you will hold your objections for a little

while and give me the time to share the information you will find in these pages, I believe you will begin to experience that some very specific and measurable benefits can be achieved when we each exercise these practices that are included in The Power of One. I also believe that if you will experiment with more of the practical and achievable things that are suggested in these pages you will discover that it is much more possible than you currently may believe to eliminate this threat and take back our sovereignty from those who are abusing it and, in this way, protect, defend and advance not only our personal dreams, but our collective dreams as well.

Just A Few More Initial Things

Before turning to the specific ways we can exercise The Power of One, I invite you to consider a few other things.

Eric Hoffer, American Social Philosopher is reputed to have said, *“No matter how noble the objectives of a government, if it blurs decency and kindness, cheapens human life and breeds ill will and suspicion –it is an evil government.”*

I agree with Hoffer and believe that until we clean up our own act and stop visiting these ‘sins against humanity,’ on people within our borders – including our indigenous brethren, people of color, people of different faiths, ethnicities, genders and sexual orientations – as well as on those in other countries based on our mistaken belief that we are somehow superior and have the right to interfere in their lives - we will never have the genuine moral and ethical standing to pick up the torch and continue our search for a more perfect union.

I also suggest we listen to some very good, sound advice from David Lloyd George, the British Liberal Politician and Prime Minister who helped guide Britain to victory over Germany in WWI.

“Don’t be afraid to take a big step if one is indicated,” he said. *“You can’t cross a chasm in two small jumps.”*

Unfortunately, this advice appears to have fallen on deaf ears for far too long, our own and especially the ears of those who currently serve as our elected Republican representatives in Washington, as well as the arch conservatives who sit on our highest court, and those who are out of control in many of our state capitals and legislatures. This group also includes the wayward members of the press who now substitute their misinformation and opinion for news and everyone else who is working to replace our Democracy with a form of white, pseudo-Christian autocracy. This is also unfortunately true in the case of many who call themselves leaders in our private sector organizations, in our religious institutions, and who are part of the international bodies that were ostensibly formed for the purpose of creating greater peace, harmony and security between nations but who sadly – for them and most certainly for us - have fallen well short of that goal.

From where I sit, far too many of these individuals have lost their commitment to higher and more substantive goals and instead have become accustomed to settling for the ineffective and bound-to-fail strategy of trying to take ‘two, small jumps’ when only one big step will ever get us across any of the major chasms we face. And if you doubt the veracity of my observation, pick any chasm – climate change, nuclear disarmament, social injustice, human rights, immigration, income inequality, food security, etc., and test David Llyod George’s contention for yourself.

I also invite you to keep in mind this prescient warning from Thomas Jefferson as you think about what you can do to make a difference.

“Once the people become inattentive to public affairs, you and I and Congress and Assemblies, judges and Governors (and I take the liberty of now adding - “Presidents”) shall all become wolves.”

And I invite you to give yourself the gift of reading The Declaration of Independence, The US Constitution and The Bill of Rights. For your convenience you will find copies of them in Appendix A that begins on Page 82.

It will not take you very long to do this and I sincerely believe that if you read these documents with an open heart and an open mind, you will remember that they contain all of the justification We the People require to do what needs to be done to honor and protect our form of government and all of humanity at this pivotal time in our history.

Finally, I invite you to take a few moments periodically throughout each day - close your eyes, take a few, slow deep breaths and re-establish the essential connection between your head and your heart. Many of the wise ones who have gone before us have said that establishing this connection – what today is called Heart/Head Coherence - is one of the most valuable things each of us can do to transform the confusion, pain and suffering in our world to greater consciousness, joy, individual empowerment, true abundance, compassion and love.

I Dream of a Re-united America...

*in which we rise above our acrimony and the squandering our precious energies
and resources in uncivil public debate and unconscious political positioning;
a land in which we refuse to sacrifice our fundamental values of decency
and humanity on the altar of winning at any cost; a united America in which
we refuse to settle for mediocrity and expediency and for only marginal advances
against our most serious, systemic challenges; a united America in which
we reconnect with our sense of pride and purpose not out of arrogance
but of in understanding and celebration of
our creativity and innovation.*

Chapter One

“It should never be forgotten by leaders of democratic nations that nothing except the love and habit of freedom can maintain advantageous contest with the love and habit of physical well-being.”

- Alexis de Tocqueville

How We the People Can Benefit From Exercising The Power of One

In this and the following chapters in Part One you will find some specific and practical things I believe each of us would be wise to do now before the midterms and in the time ahead to first, stop the spread of the insanity that threatens the wellbeing of our Democracy and our way of life, and then to deepen and strengthen its structure and fabric.

Defining The Power Of One

I believe The Power of One exists “a priori.” That is, it is there in the beginning, like “The Word,” and is therefore recorded in our hearts and in the DNA of our consciousness. I also believe The Power of One includes all of the rights and privileges that have been articulated and celebrated in many of the world’s great books of wisdom, its religious texts, major philosophical treatises and in our founding documents. And this power belongs to each of us simply by virtue of our birth as a human being. And when I say this, I do not mean the birth of just some of us- just the white, the self-proclaimed privileged or the pseudo-Christian. And I use the latter term intentionally because I do not think anyone who claims to follow the precepts and tenants of Christ can act in the way those who are supportive of the destruction of Democracy are acting. So I mean all of us who occupy the human form and comprise the heart and soul of this and every other nation on Earth.

And when a sufficient number of us who are citizens of these United States, of other countries who are also experimenting with various forms of Constitutional, Representative or Parliamentary Democracy, and especially those who live under the oppression, manipulation and abuse of autocracies and dictatorships remember that The Power of One is not a fantasy or an illusion but is our essential birth right, we will take our next, consequential step beyond the limited beliefs and obstructions that now block our path.

This then is my bottom line and the reason I have written this handbook. Because The Power of One issues from the wisdom of our hearts, it does not require the permission of any other individual, group or authority to exercise it. Nor do we need to pay a tariff, apply for a visa, take out a loan, get a vaccination or even get a note from our mother to exercise and enjoy its full benefit.

The Power of One is, in fact, ours to express not just at the ballot box, but in each and every moment of every day through each of our thoughts, words and actions. And through the exercise of this power and, I believe, only through the exercise of this power, will we join those already on the front lines who are currently hard at work attempting to save the somewhat tattered remains of our Democracy. It will also allow us to find the courage to remember that we are not powerless, not indentured servants in someone else's bizarre and distorted drama in pursuit of profit, power and dominance. Instead, we are as 20th C French philosopher, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin reminded us, "Spiritual beings having a human experience." And this, my good reader, is a game changer!

By exercising The Power of One we will also stop colluding with those who are no longer practicing genuine stewardship of our nation's human, natural and financial resources or working to address the real challenges we face. We will stop delegating our sovereignty, as well as the precious life-blood of our time, energy, talents, aspirations and our hard-earned money in the form of our tax dollars to those who have lost their way, and are currently demonstrating an egregious lack of moral and ethical character as well as the denial of the accumulated guidance of The Wisdom Traditions and of natural law.

As you can see, I sincerely believe The Power of One, gives us a lot options, and taken together all of these options can achieve the common purpose of saving Democracy.

Since this list of short-term things that each of us can do individually as well as others that are mid to long term and will require our collective participation and that involve the repair and strengthening of our processes, structure and the redefining of some of the beliefs we hold as well as some of the less than elevated actions we commit, I want to be clear that I'm am not suggesting that each of us needs to do all of these things.

Although doing the majority of these things would certainly be remarkable and would most certainly announce the arrival of a whole new period of unprecedented transformation and elevated governance, I am aware that the majority of us still believe change has to be evolutionary rather than an all-at-once-kind-of-thing. But it is my sincere hope that, at the very least, each of us will add some of the short-term elements of The Power of One to what we are already doing, especially in the time remaining until the midterms and, depending on their outcome, most critically in the time following.

And the good news is that to do these things we do not have to change our careers and become full time political activists or run for public office. We don't even have to restructure our lives. All we need do is bring more consciousness and intentionality to the things we do every day. This, of course, and continue to hold close the knowledge

that Democracy is a privilege and a right that each of us as citizens need to exercise, if we want to keep enjoying its benefits.

1. Read Our Founding Documents Often.

Before those of us who take steps, large or small, to save our Democracy it will be very helpful to take time to read our Declaration of Independence, The Constitution of The United States and the Bill of Rights. It will require less than an hour and if you read these documents slowly and let the words and concepts find resonance in your heart, I believe you will understand why our founders put their lives on the line to birth this nation. For ease of access, you will find these documents reproduced starting on page 81 of this guide.

2. Maintain Better Personal Balance and Harmony By Addressing Our Individual and our Collective Wounds.

Having read and reflected on both the intent of our founding documents, the next most important thing I believe each of us can do each day is to utilize the many constructive means and tools at our disposal, including but not limited to: prayer and self-reflection, contemplation and meditation, various forms of therapy, experimentation with plant based medicines and a number of other constructive things that can help us heal some of the wounds we all carry as well as contribute to the healing of some of our collective wound. These practices will not only help stem the spread of “Wetiko” but help us realign our beliefs and actions with the truth in our hearts and with guidance available to us through the Wisdom Traditions.

Indeed, if we do a better job of demonstrating our commitment to be better at being human and in this way to love, express our understanding and compassion for each other, and support the greater good, we will do much to support the gift of Democracy.

3. Exercise The Power of One As An Individual.

While it may not be possible for each of us to exercise all aspects of the Power of One described below, being aware of these rights and responsibilities and practicing those that are most meaningful to us each day will make a huge difference in bringing sanity back into our lives. For to paraphrase an old Chinese saying, *“If everyone sweeps in front of their own house, soon the entire street will be clean.”*

- a. The Power of Our Vote** – Each of us who are citizens, without excuse or procrastination, can exercise The Power of One in every public election and whenever and wherever the opportunity to exercise our voice presents itself. And this includes in our institutions, organizations, associations, businesses, clubs, churches and other gatherings. It also behooves us to do everything in our power to ensure that we do not allow anyone, for any reason, to prevent anyone from exercising this right. For by doing this we defend our own rights and prevent tyranny from becoming a reality.

- b. The Power of Our Attention** – As responsible and engaged citizens we can be more discerning and effective in where we place our attention and what we place it on. Indeed, if we only watch, listen to or read – and thereby economically support media and entertainment sources that support truth and the well-being of humanity, we will be taking a very necessary and important step in the direction of saving our Democracy. And when I say media, I include all forms of social media and internet communications that have clearly become an addiction in this 24/7 media mad society of ours.
- c. The Power of Our Dollars** - Every day we have a countless number of opportunities to vote with our dollars by spending them on products and services that contribute to our physical well-being, that of the other species and of our habitat. If we spend them only on products and services sold by organizations that pay their fair share of taxes and are committed to the greater good and the well-being of their employees and our planet. This can make a very significant difference in our world, especially when we consider that profit sits highest in the Pantheon for many people in our time.
- d. The Power of Peaceful Protest & Well Planned, Persistent Resistance** - Throughout history people in this nation and around the world have taken to the streets to protest injustice, repression and so much more. Unfortunately, in the majority of instances these efforts have sometimes gained some attention over the short-term, but because they lacked a truly empowering mission/vision, a sound and conscious plan of action, and a strong and long enough commitment they have too often failed to create lasting change.

For this reason, I believe we would be wise to recognize the incredible gift given to us by the brave individuals who launched the American Revolution. While some of their beliefs, as we now know, have not always resulted in elevated, noble and fair and just policies and laws for all of us and are still contributing to much of the dissatisfaction and suffering we are dealing with today, unlike many previous and subsequent revolutions, the initiators of the American Revolution articulated principles, structure and strategies that looked ahead to what needed to be done, not just what needed to be overcome.

As a result, we would be wise to acknowledge that while the documents they produced are not perfect, they did form the basis for one of the most successful revolutions in history. And as a result, they still are all that stands between us and the chaos of the mob and the malicious intent of those who in elected and appointed offices and from privileged positions in the shadows are out to destroy us.

Conversely, we should stop spending our dollars on the products and services offered by any and all organizations that do not, in the truest sense, serve our individual and collective well-being. And this should include those

organizations who utilize profits from the sale of their products and services to support any and all forms of media that spread disinformation and attempt to divide us, and who support individuals who run for and are in public office who are committed to damaging or destroying our Democracy.

Please remember, however, that to be successful in our efforts we would be both wise and strategic to combine our rights to assembly and protest with a true vision, a real and effective strategic plan, and be committed to non-violence. For we do not want to just get the attention of those who would destroy us, we want to wake them up from the cult-like subservience they are currently exhibiting, and get them to either make the necessary changes we require or to get out of the way.

In order to achieve this goal, I believe our advocacy and activist organizations and many other local and regional groups and We the People, should remember the advice that is given to the captain and crew of ships in peril. We should, at the very least, exercise our powers to vote with our ballots, with our attention and our dollars, and we should also come together, before the midterms and plan and execute a Campaign of Resolve and Commitment. A campaign designed to bring this nation to series of temporary stops; stops that will put those who are intent on destroying our Democracy on notice that we will do all that is right and necessary for the greater good of the greatest number.

Indeed, I believe will only be through this kind of joint effort and the use of multiple rights and privileges that many millions of citizens will once again experience how good and noble it feels to be empowered, and engaged in shaping our own future. And I believe it is only through this experience that we will remember that We the People are the life-blood, the talent, the energy that makes this or any nation work and that when those in power forget this truth, it is our obligation to go out into the streets in cities and towns all across America to march, and to execute sit-ins, walk-outs, work slowdowns, boycotts and general strikes.

And if just a few days in this Campaign of Resolve and Commitment are not enough to get the attention of those who currently believe they do no longer owe us their allegiance, then we should convince them of our resolve by turning a day or two into three or four, a week or as many days as are necessary to make it clear that this is not the land of the few, but the land of, for and by the many.

And I remind you, that this is precisely what the people of Ukraine, against all odds, are doing today. Unfortunately, they are having to do it with weapons of war and at the cost of many precious lives and the destruction of large swaths of their nation. And yet, they are doing it none the less both as soldiers and as citizens and we would be wise to take our lead from them and most especially,

before this war of words and ideas, this war of increasingly divergent philosophies and objectives also becomes an armed conflict.

e. The Power of Our Donations & Volunteer Support. We would be wise to exercise The Power of One by contributing funds and volunteering our time and talents to public charities, religious institutions and private organizations, causes and political parties and candidates who demonstrate their support for the greater good. And we should make it clear why we do not contribute to all organizations, institutions, causes and individuals who do not support the greater good.

f. The Power of Collective Bargaining – We would also be wise to exercise The Power of One at work by requiring that the company, organization or business we work for or purchase goods and services from uphold high standards of quality in their products and services and demonstrate strong ethical standards and values that contribute to the well-being of this nation and include the voices of their employees in the running of their business or organization. And we should stop supporting those that require us to collude in our own destruction.

This means supporting organize unions or workers' collaboratives in every company and organization we are associated with. Unions can support the collective needs of employees and provide a different kind of system of checks and balances on the unrestricted power of organizations in both the public and private sectors. The caveat, of course, is that if our union or workers' collaborative turn away from negotiating for the good of the greatest number and stop supporting the well-being of the organization or institution in which they are formed, we should exercise The Power of One to be sure they return to true alignment.

g. The Power to Give & To Withdraw Our Support – We should support our elected representatives and the organizations, institutions and businesses that support them only as long as they support the well-being of our Democracy, do not violate our rights and they demonstrate allegiance to advancing laws and programs that address our needs. And, under no circumstances, should the delegation of our rights be considered permanent or absolute and this includes our delegation of authority to members of the Judiciary or other public agencies and appointees, especially those who currently have life-time appointments that I will address separately in another section.

To this end, we would be wise to use The Power of One to ensure that term limits apply to all elected offices and appointed functions, and we should also put in place Parliamentary Procedures that give us the right to exercise Votes of Confidence so that all duly elected and appointed individuals who fail to Protect and Defend the Constitution and abuse our rights and freedoms and fail

to respond to the needs of the majority of the people can be removed from office or benched for a period before their terms expire.

h. The Power To Accept Short-Term Discomfort In Order To Experience Long Term Gain– We would be wise to remember that the rights and privileges identified in our Founding Documents and encoded in our hearts must be exercised and defended constantly and that if this defense results in short term pain and discomfort in order to avoid long term suffering and lasting damage, then that is the price we should be prepared to pay.

Other Essential Things We the People Can Do.

4.The Power To Form A United Front & Agree To Prioritize & Address Our Most Important Issues

It should be clear to us by now that it would be both wise and strategic if We the People and all of the activist and advocacy organization, institutions, associations, clubs and groups that are committed to serving the greater good of the greatest number form a united front, agree on what our most strategic priorities are and, in this way, advance ability to accomplish them.

For although there many issues, causes and efforts that capture our attention and that of these organizations including but not limited to – The defense of Roe vs Wade; Available and Affordable Health Care for all; Ending Citizens United; The creation of intelligent, humane and effective Immigration Laws, Gun Safety, Voting Rights and Equal Rights Legislation; Early Childhood Education, , Human Rights, Equal Pay and Higher Minimum Wage, Civic Education, Adult Education, etc. –it’s also time to acknowledge that none of these issues and causes will be adequately addressed if we allow those intent on the destruction of our Democracy to succeed in gaining control in the midterms and beyond.

So, in this time called In Extremis, when so much is on the line, I suggest we and the advocacy and activist organizations who represent the greater good stop placing all of our attention, talents and our resources on these sub-issues and causes, come together and devote more of our time to the single and essential objective of defending and protecting our democracy. Once the work of stopping the spread of this ‘disease of the mind’ that is ravaging our society and the work of healing our individual and collective wounds has begun in earnest, we can return more of our focus to the issues that most call us knowing that we have done our primary job.

And one of the first priorities I hope we will agree to focus on is to insure the thorough and rigorous investigation by our Justice Department and Congress, and if warranted, the criminal prosecution and conviction of our 45th President and all who support him in their attempted coup for sedition and other crimes. I believe this is essential if we are to break the stranglehold this malignant minority has over our government, our media and

our way of life. And our failure to do this will, I fear, prevent us from making progress on all of the other critical initiatives we know are necessary.

And in the case of those are funding these malevolents from the shadow and who believe they are untouchable, I believe that if we cannot find grounds under the law to punish them, we should the power of the press to expose them and then economic pressures in the form of boycotts and sanctions of the products and services their companies and organizations produce.

5. The Power To Fund & Execute A Comprehensive, Ongoing National Media Campaign To Reinforce Democracy and Provide Civic Education.

Instead of wasting huge amounts of time and money on vanity Presidential and Congressional Campaigns that end up dividing our population, distracting us from an honest exploration of the real issues and greatly reducing our chances of defeating those who are committed to our destruction, we should contribute our funds to underwrite a comprehensive, ongoing series of national Public Service Television, Radio and Internet Campaigns that educate and inform citizens on their rights and responsibilities.

We should also underwrite Television Specials, Podcasts and educational courses designed to reach and educate citizens of all ages in all constituencies across the country on our rights, privileges and responsibilities as well as on the benefits of Representative Democracy.

6. The Power To Establish Private Sector Competency Groups To Do What Government Cannot Or Will Not Do

Where needed and, especially in times such as these when the dysfunction of government at the local, state, regional and national levels prevents the articulation and implementation of practices and procedures that advance the greater good of the greatest number, We the People should call for and in collaboration with private sector companies financially support the creation of private sector competency task groups that can identify and implement necessary solutions to major threats and systemic challenges to our Democracy without being impeded by political partisans who lack the character and integrity to do what must be done.

These private sector competency task groups can be funded in the same way political campaigns are funded. And these competency groups or task forces should be charged to proceed with all do speed to create the solutions that are needed and then implement them at the direction of the majority of We the People without having to interface with or deal with those with our government when it is obstructing program needed by We the People.

As individuals we should also be able to claim tax credits for these contributions to the greater good. And these private sector competency task groups should exercise their responsibilities with full transparency and should they fail to do so, they should be

dissolved immediately. For we do not need to put in place another structure that abuses our interests or disavows its allegiance to the will of the people.

And if anyone needs justification for this action, one need only take the time to re-read the Declaration of Independence and understand that it is both our right and our responsibility – particularly when governments fail to do their job - to move around them and do what we are entitled to do as citizens to preserve the safety and sanctity of our way of life.

7.The Power To Establish Elder Councils In All Sectors of Our Society

We are living at a time in history when there are millions of individuals here in the US and around the world who can rightly be called “Elders.” In fact, there are currently more elders alive at the same time in this time than at any prior time in history. As a result, it is essential that we take full advantage of the experience and wisdom gained through their stumbles and failures as well as through their breakthroughs and victories.

And, unlike their younger brethren, these Elder have lived long enough to have witnessed the terrible price paid for the flaws that individuals of distorted character have visited upon humanity in the past. And finally, they have lived long enough to understand that they have an obligation to leave the world better than the one they inherited.

So let us take our lead from past civilizations that called upon the wisdom and skill of their elders by forming Elder Councils. These councils can be formed at every level of our democracy from local townships to regional and national sectors, from small local businesses to our largest institutions, government agencies and corporations. And it should be the job of these councils to contribute insights, recommendations and strategies that can help various constituencies and society as a whole to create a more discerning, positive, constructive and conscious future.

8. The Power to Establish Non-Partisan and Trans-Partisan Citizen’s Councils

Utilizing the tried-and-true system of Town Hall Meetings and other public gatherings, and not just those orchestrated by local governments or sponsored by media organizations or political parties, but instead those executed by private citizens who wish to come together in search of greater sanity, truth and to rescue of our democracy and who will utilize the services of individuals in the private sector who are skilled and practiced in the dialogue process to lead them, We the People should utilize The Power of One to do much more in support of the greater good.

Following effective guidelines and procedures, these gatherings will, no doubt, be challenging to form in the beginning and especially at this time of when there is so much division within our country, but with patience and discipline, they can become sources of civic engagement and pride and can be used to inform and guide participatory Democracy and governance in the same way the Elder Councils do

9. The Power To Redefine The Roles of Our Leaders and The Qualifications They Require To Run For Office.

Frankly, it is incomprehensible that in a nation of over 330 million people we find ourselves electing so many partisan hacks and subservient water carriers for the special interest groups and for those funders who remain behind the scenes who have less than noble intentions. It is also inconceivable that we do demand more preparation and instruction for someone who wants to qualify for a driver's license than we do for those who run for public office or are given life-time appointments to our courts or who are appointed to run our national, state and local agencies, and most especially for those who wish to run for the Presidency of the United States. For this reason, I believe we should take a good look at the requirements we have for those who wish to lead us including and most especially those who seek to occupy the Presidency and revisit and redefine these requirements as soon as possible

And when it comes to roles and responsibilities of our President, we should question the assumption that a single individual who today serves as the Chief Executive of our nation of some 330 plus million Americans should have the same primary duties as the Chief Executive of this nation when it was founded 246 years ago when our population was estimated to have been approximately 2.5 million.

Here are just a few examples of how absurd and unconscious the requirements are for those who wish to run for the highest office in the land. No full and comprehensive back-ground check is required nor are comprehensive emotional and psychological intelligence and stability tests prior to their declaring their candidacy.

Individuals who wish to run for the highest office are not required by law to produce financial records and many of the other essential pieces of information.

And the fact that we fail to apply these basic requirements to those who we elect as Presidents, or give lifetime appointments on Supreme Court to and others who will have the lives and well-beings of all of us in their hands, is patently absurd. And when we compound this absurdity with the fact that we live in a nuclear age, when the well-being of every individual on this planet lies in the hand of one man or women who has the final authority to launch a nuclear strike, this absurdity becomes beyond belief.

These are just some of the reasons I strongly suggest we revisit both the roles people perform once they are in office and what they need to do to even qualify for candidacy or appointment.

And for the record, as we have discovered in recent years and in the case of individuals nominated to the Supreme Court, government agencies, including the FBI are not above being susceptible to influence by political parties and Presidents who represent them and therefore all background investigations should be approved by an independent body of elected and public officials that oversee and approve of the accuracy and depth of the individual investigations before the nomination is even submitted to Congress for

Consideration. Just as other legislation is reviewed by the Office of Budget Management and others functions prior to a Congressional Vote, so too should all major nominations requiring Congressional approval be approved by a body not conducting the background check.

10. The Power to Exercise Oversight Over our Elected Officials

Another thing We the People can fix is the fact that too many of our elected officials have lost touch with the fact that they are supposed to represent us as citizen legislators and that are our employees and not independent functionaries, or as some apparently believe, our masters.

As a result, I believe We the People need to find other ways, in addition to periodically voting for them to remind them of this reality.

Under our current system, as it has devolved without sufficient oversight by We the People, with the exception of the times they run for office or for re-election, they literally get to make the majority of the rules governing their own behavior including: how much money they make, what kind of healthcare they have, the retirement benefits they receive, the amount of time they need to be in session, the number of days they spend in their state and on holidays, the size of their operating budgets, the travel for so-called business they make and the performance standards they must meet.

Considering these things, is it any wonder that so many of them pay so little attention, and in too many instances no attention at all to our needs, wants and desires? In short, they have become a fiefdom unto themselves and We the People must change this.

For this reason, I recommend that We the People exercise The Power of One to ensure that we have a lot more oversight over all our elected and appointed officials, either directly or by proxy through newly formed independent agencies that have real power to evaluate and offer recommendations to We the People the performance of all elected and appointed officials including but not limited to their character, capability, salaries, benefits, work schedules, performance standards, etc. And that before any changes to these elements and more are implemented, We the People must approve them.

I also believe we need to put in place a second system of metrics that includes, at the very least, a publicly announced rating system that is made available at least quarterly and that includes not just response from their constituents but a sampling of We the People nationally.

Included in these metrics should be an evaluation of their accountability to their oath of office to protect and serve the Constitution and their support of as well as their creation of legislation that advances the greater good. And where poor and sub-par performance in these key areas is reported, there should be a direct impact on their salaries, retirement benefits, the level and kind of healthcare they qualify for, the committees they can participate in and any other rights and privileges they are currently afforded.

This, I believe is one way we can begin to regain control over those who work for us and, in this way, help cure the disease of partisanship and dysfunction that is contributing to the death of Democracy.

11. The Power To Revisit and Strengthen Our Founding Documents & Governing Structure.

It must clear to many of us that our Founders were not able to contemplate all of the dangers we currently face nor could they foresee the full measure of the diminishment of individual character and ethical and moral accountability in many who are in leadership positions. Therefore, I believe we would be wise to review our Founding Documents, our Systems of Checks and Balances, our electoral processes, the means by which we fund elections, the requirements for public offices and the process by which we educate and inform our citizens and make practical and achievable recommendations on how we fill in some of the gaps and strengthen any weaknesses they find in each of these areas.

I Dream of a Courageous America...

*in which we move beyond the hypocrisy that has us identify
our critical problems but then to bury all hope of finding genuine solutions
to them under the guise of an economic practicality which masks
the greed and gluttony of the few over the well-being of the many. A courageous
America in which we move past the politics of scarcity into
an age of true abundance, generosity and gratitude; a land in
which our elected officials remember they are our servants and representatives
and not our masters, and that our corporations understand that their
quest for profits is only valid if their products, services, and policies
truly contribute to the advancement of our way of life.*

Chapter Two

“First Awareness, Then Acknowledgment, Then Action.”

-Anonymous

Awakening From The Sleep of Denial

Because of the critical role communication plays in our Democracy and the flagrant abuse of it and of our First Amendment Rights currently being demonstrated by those who are trying to destroy our way of life, I think it would be helpful to spend a little more time in this practical guide exploring how The Power of One can help us address both sides of this equation.

First, I believe we would be wise to admit that we have had more than enough of this virus of fear and distrust, this anguish and confusion that separates us from each other and, too often, even from the better aspects of our own natures.

Indeed, this virus, spread with varying degree of effectiveness throughout history by those who have been seduced by the illusion of power and driven by greed and the need to gain advantage over others has, in the 21st Century, become the weapon of choice used by an unprincipled minority committed to dominating and controlling the majority.

This then leads us to the second issue. The fact is that our First Amendment Rights, have now been weaponized and are being used with increasing audacity and cunning by those who now appear in the disguise of political candidates and elected officials, by corrupt members of the Fourth Estate, and those in the shadows who are pumping obscene amounts of money into these efforts and also now into efforts to misinform and mislead those segments of the electorate who are angry, frightened and ill-informed.

These weapons of misinformation and disinformation are also being supported by many who occupy the C-Suites in a number of our corporations, as well as those who lead some of our institutions, our so-called thinktanks and far too many of our religious organizations who under the tax-exempt status granted to them should not be involve in our political process in any way. Indeed, in this upside down and backwards world that we are now living in, even God has been weaponized in ways even the relic sellers of the Dark Ages didn't even dream of.

And what is particularly dangerous and very sad is that the majority of these individuals have given up even the pretext of serving the greater good. Instead, they are focused primarily on advancing their personal philosophical agendas and those of the special

interest groups they support. Many of them also appear to hold the fraudulent belief that they are superior to the rest of us and therefore entitled to control our society by virtue of their exclusive worship of the Gods of Profit, Materialism and Consumption.

What makes this virus of fear and distrust particularly egregious in our time, of course, is the enormous speed of our digital/virtual communications platforms and the lack of individual discernment and the willingness of many of us to ask ourselves one simple question about the information we are exposed to. “Is it true?” This question, of course, requires that we do our own fact checking. A thing on one hand that is relatively easy thanks to the vast capacity of the internet, but in order to do so we must break our addition to sound bites, repetitive headlines and opinions presented as facts by the biased sources that present what they call news.

In a true Democracy, of course, the dis and mis- information practices that proliferate today are deadly. And therefore, the best antidote is the exercise of a little curiosity and some discernment, a lot more civic education and the willingness to develop one’s own, independent form of critical thinking. Things that are sadly disappearing from today’s education curricula that celebrates and rewards mimicry over originality. subservience over independence and interdependence, competition over cooperation.

Indeed, if we don’t want to become lemmings and lose whatever is left of our ability to think originally and creatively and to act independently and critically, we would be wise to do all that we can to reduce and eliminate the virus of fear and distrust that is ravishing our world today.

This virus unfortunately also spreads as a result of our own addiction to gossip and negativity, both of which tend to promote the mundane over the meaningful, mimicry over originality and substitute the unverified and unsubstantiated for what is true and the accurate.

For what was once a legitimate form of public debate and dialogue has now morphed into a kind of carnival complete with barkers, conmen and clowns, illusionists and grifters, literally a sideshow that as the good Mr. Shakespeare says in Macbeth has become, “a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

This is, of course, not a new story. The history of the world is full of examples of rulers, despots and those who have surrounded and supported them, in both religious and secular worlds who have advanced economic, social, political and religious philosophies that spread dissension, misdirection, distrust and fear as a means of gaining and maintaining control over what has been called, ‘the masses.’ Indeed, humanity has had more than its share of these kinds of individuals, but now, unfortunately, we have them not just at the gates, but at the very center of many of our institutions, organizations, businesses and of our government itself.

How better to control humanity than to play on the fears of the uninformed, to characterize the other as ‘the enemy’, to proclaim that legitimate members of the Fourth

Estate are corrupt and, in this way, ensure that the few continue to acquire ever greater degrees of control and a disproportionate share of the wealth.

Although one would think that in this Digital/Information Age, such old, fraudulent and manipulative practices as these that issue from the desire for greater power and greed would not find real purchase, but they unfortunately still do. In fact, in many ways digital communication and specifically the addictive and seductive aspects of social media have given birth in only a few decades to a new kind of unfiltered, one-way form of communication that greatly accelerates and exaggerates misinformation, misdirection, divisions and other abuses.

So although our First Amendment rights are precious and certainly need to be defended in a nation that is founded on Freedom of Speech, this shadow side to the First Amendment that is now being exploited by those who intentionally blur of the lines between truth and falsehood and who use innuendo, character assassination and intentional disinformation in an effort to control the minds and hearts of those among us who lack the ability or inclination to exercise their discernment, needs to be addressed.

Creating Real Change

If you agree, even partially, with this brief analysis of the abysmal state of our communications and the dangers confronting us as a result of the viruses of fear and distrust that are corrupting our First Amendment Rights, I hope you also agree that it is time we take some very specific and necessary steps to address the dysfunctional situation we currently find ourselves in.

As you can imagine, the first and foremost step we would be wise to take is to exercise as many of rights and responsibilities contained in The Power of One as possible. And I repeat that this list should most definitely include our power to vote, our power to be more discerning in the use of our money and what we focus our attention on and our right to assemble and protest. In this way, I believe we can begin to regain control of our lives and bring greater sanity back into our way of life.

And in seeking to accomplish this goal, I believe we owe it to ourselves and to future generations to also apply a very simple, but valuable and effective formula:

- Identify what is working and do more of it,
- Identify what is not working do less of it, and
- Try on new strategies and solutions to better address the challenges we face.

I also believe we would be wise to remember Einstein's sage advice. *"We cannot get to new and genuine solutions that our nation and our world require by continuing to think and act on the same level and using the same habitual beliefs and actions that have served as the soil from which these problems have sprouted."*

So let us use this advice and The Power of One. Let us as citizens be more committed to birthing a new story and then have the courage to live it so that we begin the next stage of our journey to reawaken and reclaim more of our humanity, humility and love. Let us also keep close the knowledge that the soil of our political process and our path to true constitutional and representative governance for the greater good has been polluted primarily because, 'We the People' have, as a result of our inattention and lack of direct and informed engagement, delegated too much of our sovereignty to those who have proven unworthy of it. And the only way we can reverse this dangerous trend is to remember that our unalienable rights are tied directly and unalterably to the exercise The Power of One.

I Dream of a Realigned America...

*in which what we demonstrate within our boundaries and through the values,
products and services we export to people around the world
that our wisdom, experience, indomitable ingenuity, compassion, innovation,
hope and inspiration are of ultimate value; a land in which we model for others a higher
level of consciousness which holds that none among us is free until all of us
are free and that none among us is secure until all of us have sufficiency of food,
clothing, shelter and the opportunity to manifest our dreams; a realigned America
in which we remember and honor the core on which this nation
was founded and that have since been refined, upgraded and improved,
and the courage our forefathers demonstrated in their effort
to end unfair taxation and oppression.*

Chapter Three

“Knowledge without sense is double folly.”

Baltasar Gracian

On The Need To Exercise More Control Over Our Government

Since exercising responsible oversight of our governing process and most specifically, over our elected and appointed officials is a critical and essential thing, I believe we would be wise to go deeper in our exploration of this topic. At least, we should if we truly want to save our Democracy and improve our way of life.

Our Founders clearly understood that left to our own devices and without an effective system of checks and balances, there would be those among us who would go off the rails. And unfortunately, at this time in our history, and as a result of our inattention and failure to play our essential and necessary role as citizens, this is precisely what has happened.

Indeed, as mentioned in previous sections, we currently find ourselves reduced to exercising our oversight rights by voting every two or four years in the midterm and general elections. Beyond this the vast majority of us sometimes exercise some oversight if we are part of a private donor or public interest group that contributes money in what has become our “play to play” political system.

With these exceptions, our elected and appointed representatives, especially those who are not up for re-election, do pretty much what they want to do whenever they want to do it. And today, for many of them this means serving their own personal career ambitions and giving the majority of their time, attention and fealty to those who pay for it.

Under these conditions, it is no wonder that a significant number of these elected and appointed officials have forgotten that their primary job is not to accumulate large amounts of wealth, power and influence, spend their time answering the demands of special interest groups and wealthy donors, and holding on tenaciously to power, but to uphold their oath to protect and defend our Constitution, to serve as responsible stewards of our natural and financial resources and to listen to and serve the needs of We the People.

So, in addition to a significant revisiting and redefining of our laws regarding our right to vote, eliminating the fraudulent practice of gerrymandering that have been practiced by both political parties, eliminating the Small States Strategy that renders the US Senate

dysfunctional and implementing other changes to protect the peaceful transfer of power and abuses of our election system, I believe it is also time We the People create new and more effective means of exercising much greater control over our elected and appointed officials

How can we do this? By practicing The Power of One more frequently and with greater consistency. For example, as discussed Chapter One, we should be raising our voices and communicating our needs and desires through emails, phone calls, petitions, through exercising our right to peaceful assembly, participating often in public town hall meetings that should be required for all elected officials to conduct on a regular basis. In short, We the People should ask questions, share our perspectives, insights, offer and require the execution of solutions, our own and those created by elected official We should also demand much greater, more timely and accountable response to our needs by them.

As I stated earlier and repeat again here, I believe we do all in our power to overturn Citizens United and also be very quick to stop donating or volunteering to the campaigns of those elected officials who stop paying attention to us and, instead, are showing fealty to special interest groups or high net worth donors. And when we discover through the public monitoring of their voting patterns and through lists of the special interest groups, large corporations, businesses and private donors they support, we should also direct our attention to these the special interest groups, large corporations, businesses and private donor by exercising The Power of Our Dollars and imposing boycotts and sanctions of their products and services.

These are just a few of the steps I believe We the People can take to reclaim oversight of our government and especially of those elected officials who either signal or are already demonstrating that they are intellectually, morally and ethically challenged, and who demonstrate too much autonomy in any of the three primary branches of government - The Executive, Congressional and Judicial.

And please know that these steps will have real impact. For if there is one place real public scrutiny and economic impact matters, it is most definitely in the political arena and most especially among those who are primarily in it for personal gain which sadly and appears to be true for far too many of our elected and appointed officials. And when I say this, I am not suggesting that there are not a large number of elected and appointed officials who thankfully continue to demonstrate high levels of integrity and who actually are committed to serving the greater good of the greatest number.

However, to honor these individuals and to encourage more people of high moral and ethical character to enter public service we must not let those who do not belong in public office, stay in office and continue to deny our needs.

This applies as much to the timid, political chameleons on the democratic who are called 'corporate democrats' as to those on republican side of the aisle who lack the courage to stand against this tide of corruption and resistance. These individuals, especially those who come from what are called Purple states and who are far more concerned about their

re-election prospects than about performing their duties to Protect and Defend the well-being of citizens of this country should be given especially close scrutiny.

We the People can also exercise various aspects of The Power of One in dealing with those arrogant poseurs who try to pass themselves off as commentators and television journalists, but who, in fact, are little more than empty suits and skirts parroting party lines and delivering talking points given them by those who hide behind the cover of so-called think tanks that are committed to the demise of our Democracy. And the best way to protect ourselves against these mis and disinformation mercenaries is by monitoring their false narratives and then doing all we can to get them off the air or fired from their jobs, boycott their negative blogs and all of the products and services of the organizations who sponsor their programs. In short, we need to start literally voting more powerfully and in greater numbers with both our attention and our dollars.

And if we need additional motivation and justification for our actions, I remind you of Henry David Thoreau's comment on the sacred contract that needs to exist between those we elect and those of us who elect them.

"There will never be a really free and enlightened state until the state comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power from which all of its own power and authority are derived and treats him accordingly."

And lastly, let us remember. the very essential and necessary truth found in our Declaration of Independence – *"Governments are instituted among Men, (people) deriving their just power from the consent of the governed."*

I Dream of an Informed, Educated and Engaged America...

*in which each citizen, no matter their age, is inducted into an understanding
and ownership of their rights and privileges; an empowered and empowering
America in which citizens are encouraged to act on behalf of themselves and the well-
being of the whole; in which each appreciate and honor their rights rather than
feel they must somehow fight for that which is theirs by birth;
an informed America in which the collective wisdom of the whole
is acknowledged and celebrated as being stronger and more relevant
than the contributions, desires and needs of a special few;
an educated and inspired America that celebrates the gifts
of all its citizens for the greatest good of the greatest number.*

Chapter Four

“Start by doing the necessary; then do what’s possible; and then suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

Francis of Assisi

Focusing On Now and How, Not Why or If

Margaret Meade reminded us that we should, *“never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”*

I know this to be true as do those of us who are now or who have been a part of making a difference in the quality of life in our families, our schools, our businesses, communities and our world at large. I also believe strongly in the wisdom contained in the words attributed to Francis of Assisi above. And taken together these two statements can, I believe, help us remember that we serve ourselves and others best when remember the critical and essential role we play as citizens.

From The Power of One To The Power of All

Another thing that both of these statements help us to remember is that when we exercise The Power of One, individually, peacefully and with a focus on the common good, by natural extension it becomes The Power of All. Indeed, the essential strength of The of Power of One is that when we come together in alignment and collaboration with others to share our talents, offer recommendations, protect our resources, seek new perspectives, and experience the true healing power of community, we demonstrate the wisdom of the African Proverb that reminds us – *“If you want to go fast go alone, but if you want to go far, go together.”*

Hopefully, by now, those of us who are committed to saving the promise of our Democracy, to protecting our rights and privileges and to living lives of greater sanity, compassion and regeneration, can also admit that what happens to least of us, happens to each and all of us.

Indeed, not only is our world getting smaller by virtue of the speed of digital communication, faster forms of transportation and economic and ecological interdependence, but we – with the exception of the reactionaries and xenophobes among us who keep trying to walk backward into the future – now better understand that in our

world today when someone sneezes in Tokyo someone in New York or London or Moscow has to reach for a tissue.

Yes, we are inextricably interconnected and, if we pause even for a few moments every day to reflect on this undeniable truth and allow ourselves to be grateful for the fact that we are much stronger together than we are separate, we can still emerge from this time of darkness and ignorance and once again continue our progress toward a time of greater harmony and the greater good of the greatest number.

Other Essential Things I Believe We the People Can Do Now

Every citizen who is troubled by the current state of the state can also, as part of their practice of The Power of One, commit to creating and focusing on a vision of true health, wellness and prosperity for all of humanity. Indeed, if we make it our practice to visualize our habitat and the other species healing from the wounds and abuse our species has inflicted upon them and hold in our hearts as well as our minds the image of the people of the earth living in a time of shared abundance and harmony, a time in which all human beings have the opportunity to explore the unique gifts they have come here to develop and to share, we will make great progress.

For as Seneca, the Younger, is reputed to have said, *"If you do not know the harbor you are heading for, no wind is the right wind,"* Management guru, Peter Drucker communicated this truth in a different way, but clearly with the same intent. He said, *"If you want to know the future, invent it."* And please remember, this is not something we require anyone's permission to do. No matter the external circumstances, we can invent the future inside our minds and hold it in our hearts every day and, in this way, help it to become our reality in the world.

And least you call these recommendations romantic or unrealistic, I direct your attention to this quote by Daniel Webster -- *"The contest for ages has been to rescue liberty from the grasp of executive power."* And I add the words 'legislative and judicial' after executive.

On Redefining Our Leadership & Structure

At the same time that we are using The Power of One to reclaim our sovereignty and protect our unalienable rights as citizens and execute better our oversight of those we elect, I believe We the People would be wise to participate in a revisiting and re-defining the expectations we have for our leaders and specifically the roles we require them to play when they hold public office and represent us at this seminal time in our history.

For it should be apparent to all of us that no system of government by itself will ever be stable, if good character and core values, a high level of consciousness, genuine compassion, integrity, honesty, love and commitment to serve the greater good are lacking in the individuals who we elect to public office.

On Establishing Minimum Requirements For Elected Office

When I reflect on the enormous influence our elected and appointed leaders exercise over our lives, it is inconceivable to me that we do not have much more rigorous requirements in place for those who wish to either run for elective office or accept official appointments at all levels. For without high enough levels of intellect, a stable emotional foundation, strong ethical and moral character, sufficient knowledge of and competency in the areas over which they will be responsible, and a track record that reflects who these individuals are and how they have performed both as human beings in their personal lives as well as career professionals, we are literally playing a form of Russian Roulette that puts all of us and the world at large in jeopardy. And if one questions the value of this, one need only look briefly at the strange, ragtag army of those with questionable competencies appointed by Donald Trump during his administration. In addition to the number who were forced to resign for violating their oaths of office, or who were convicted for insider trading, spousal or partner abuse and other crimes and misdemeanors, the majority of his appointments who were temporary and never received Senate confirmation actually held beliefs that were in opposition to the duties and responsibilities they were appointed to enforce on behalf of We the People.

So let's quickly review some of the suggested requirements for office we have already discussed - basic psychological tests emotional intelligence tests, in-depth back ground checks even and especially for the office of President, regular and thorough physical exams, periodic drug and alcohol tests, full disclosure of their financial status, tax history, and temporary assignment of control over their assets and holdings while in office to blind trust or other individual not susceptible to their influence. And the results of these tests and assignments should be made available to the public.

These requirements are already in place in the private sector as part the vetting and employment process, so it makes sense that these requirements should also apply to all candidates for all public office and appointees for all positions and most assuredly for those in the judiciary who are appointed for life.

We do, after all, want the best of the best to lead us, don't we? And by the best of the best, I mean not only the brightest, but the most principled, not only those who are intellectually sound, but those who are principled, discerning and who pay at least as much attention to the wisdom of their hearts as to the information they hold in their minds.

On Creating A New Level of Public Political Dialogue and Debate

I also believe we would be wise to redesign our election process so that it ensures a genuine, open, and honest political dialogue and will result in the election of the most qualified and capable candidates. And to this end, we should stop the current practice of

allowing political campaigns— especially those for higher public offices – to begin years before the actual election. Not only does this absurd practice require candidates to raise obscene amounts of money that corrupts both the political process and, all too often the candidates themselves. It also results in an absurd waste of time and the opportunity for those who are not qualified to eventually, through sophistry, convince at least a portion of the public that they are worthy of their trust.

If we instead require that all candidate participate in the kind of rigorous pre-qualification process suggested above, we will be better able to evaluate each candidate and come to a mature and reasoned decision in a reasonable amount of without having to deal with the kind of ever repeating carnival and side show we currently are subjected to.

These changes in the qualification requirements for public office as well as changes in the length of political campaigns will also go a long way toward greatly reducing and perhaps even eliminating a good deal of the unsubstantiated claims, sophistry, character assassination and buffoonery that have become the signature of far too many candidates in far too many of our current election cycles.

We should also change the rules by which candidates can interact in public with their fellow candidates during political campaigns. This will go a long way to preventing elections from becoming contests between school yard bullies and their sycophants, and instead encourage intelligent, mature, solution-based interactions between mature adults who demonstrate the kind of qualifications and characteristics that should be essential pre-requisites for those who wish to become our citizen legislators.

In addition to the changes discussed above, I believe we should also, without any further delay, set very specific spending limits and require all candidates to use only public campaign financing. The current practice of allowing multiple year, multi-million/billion dollar fund raising marathons disguised as political campaigns, is as ludicrous as it is ineffective and wasteful. And we, as a society, should finally grow up and stop selecting our candidates based physical appearance, sophistry, name recognition and the amount of money they have to spend rather than on character, content and competency, things that can actually give us the opportunity to create conscious governance and a much more conscious world.

On Returning Sanity and Candidate Responsibility To Our Elections

One of the other things We the People can do utilizing The Power of One is to bring greater sanity both back to and for the first time to our political process by reducing both the length of campaigns and the use of political surrogates, professional mercenaries, ad-men, handlers, spin doctors, self-proclaimed tea-leaf readers, communication manipulators and other hired guns who sell their services to the highest bidder and who too often suffer from many of the same limitations and flaws as the candidates they represent, We the People can significantly reduce the abuse in our current election process.

If we do these things, we will also automatically reduce the influence of the billionaires and large corporate and institutional donors even without overturning Citizen's United that allows the few to remain in the shadows manipulating and co-opting our election process, buying candidates and influencing our nation's legislative agenda suit their own personal ends.

The bottom line is that if we want noble leadership and more conscious governance, we will do these things.

Let us also admit another simple truth. If a candidate has not previously demonstrated that he or she can clearly articulate their goals and visions, exhibited high ethical standards, communicate their understanding of the major issues and challenges before they even put themselves forward as candidates, we can hardly expect them to demonstrate these qualities, characteristics and skills after they take office.

And in instances where candidates somehow manage to fulfill the initial requirements before entering a race, but then begin to duck and weave, put forward ambiguous and conflicting opinions and positions, try to obscure and hide their beliefs behind clever slogans during the campaign, start behaving like school yard bullies rather than mature, intelligent human beings, we should require them to appear before a neutral, non-partisan campaign oversight body which should include ordinary citizens as well as designated appointees from the media, and past office holders who served in good standing. This oversight body should be authorized to review the candidate's behavior and give the candidate opportunity to refocus and return to the required standards and practices, and if there is no significant improvement during a trial period, the candidate's privilege to continue their campaign should be revoked and their names should be taken off the ballot.

Obviously, in a democracy, this kind of substantial redefinition of candidate requirements and of our election process calls for careful and thorough analysis and testing before changes are implemented, for we do not want to provide the unscrupulous with more ways to game the system or others the ability to further disempower the electorate. At the same time, considering the challenges we face, we should not delay in doing this.

On Requiring In-depth, Continuing Education For Our Current & Future Leaders

I believe we would also be wise to ensure the creation of new university degree programs and special schools and institutions dedicated to providing quality education and training for individuals who wish to pursue public service careers. These programs and institutions should provide in depth education in leadership skills and practical experience in the art of public service and true governance. They should also include in the depth study of ethics, the arts, the humanities, history, economics and other essentials and not just business management, economics and the law.

All current office holders should also be required to take ongoing classes and programs and to earn a specific number of CE's or CU's in the same way other professionals must

to maintain their credentials and ensure they stay current on the scope of their duties and responsibilities, and deepen their study of leadership, governance and civic affairs.

Yes, just as we have military academies to train our military leaders, medical schools for our doctors, law schools for our attorneys, we should have specialized political and public service schools to ensure that all who want to serve as citizen legislators and represent our interests receive an enlightened and in-depth education in noble leadership and true governance. And no one should be allowed to run for public office or to be appointed to a public office who does not graduate with a credible record of performance from one of these schools or has taken enough credits in similar courses in other academic and professional institutions to qualify.

The bottom line is that the time for cronyism, nepotism, and the overwhelming importance of money, family connection or physical attractiveness and verbal sophistry as the primary qualifications for leadership should be declared over. And of particular importance, so should the time when psychologically unbalanced or emotionally immature and unstable individuals are given the opportunity to act out their inferiority complexes and personal wounding on our national and world stages.

Instead demonstrated capability, in-depth training, a quality education in the arts and humanities as well as science and commerce, a wise and discerning mind, and an open, compassionate heart need to become the pre-requisites for those who wish to serve. And I call your special attention to the word 'serve.' For as John Andrew Holmes said, "There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up."

On Re-Introducing Civic Education At All Levels For All Of Our People"

Another important step in the process of ensuring a genuine noble and conscious Representative Democracy is to introduce a new form of Civic Education in all schools at all levels. This will ensure that current and future generations will better understand the foundations of our democracy including our rights, privileges, the opportunities and benefits our system of government offers, its unfulfilled promise and potential, and most important, our responsibility to make it a reality.

Yes, if all of our citizens understand the nature of the challenges we face both in their complexity and scope, and acknowledge that these challenges require informed, educated, committed and discerning citizens and if we admit that these things as well as high ethical and moral character are, in the end, the most powerful antidote we have against the virus of fear and the susceptibility of citizens to manipulation by those out to destroy Democracy and institute the control by the few of the many, we will be successful in creating the kind of future we all long for.

On Requiring Term Limits & High Ethical Standards For All Elected Officials

Hopefully it is now clear to a growing number of us that electing leaders and representatives who have sufficient talent, training and experience in the requisite skills,

genuine understanding of the issues of our time, the character required to demonstrate noble leadership and conscious governance and who are aligned with and committed to protecting and defending the Constitution and the fundamental principles on which this nation was founded, are essential if we are to both preserve but improve our way of life and our form of Representative Democracy.

For this reason, I believe we must also undertake a comprehensive review of the roles and responsibilities of individuals within our three primary branches of government and evaluate where and how they can be redefined and strengthened to ensure greater stability and continuity of our Democracy going forward.

In regard to the Executive Branch, as I mentioned previously, I believe that no one individual should have the amount of power and authority the President currently has. Our world is far too complex, the challenges and opportunities far too numerous and large in both scope and consequences and the dangers too great.

Instead, the critical and essential decision making should no longer rest in the hands of one individual no matter what side of the political spectrum they represent and no matter how intelligent, skilled and well intentioned they may be.

It is also true that no one individual should be the final decision maker in regard to the authorization to use nuclear and any other form of mass destruction. Indeed, in a world where there are far too many unstable individuals this is tantamount to inviting national and global suicide.

And while it is not the purpose of this book to try to offer a detailed plan for this review and refinement of the Roles and Responsibilities of the President and others in the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches, it is clear that at present we have at least a few former Presidents still alive, a large number of constitutional scholars and historians, a significant number of former elected officials with good character who have participated in the Legislative and Judicial Branches, noted and responsible journalists and mature, informed and capable representatives of We the People who could be convened to study and then make a series of recommendations that can bring greater sanity and true effectiveness to our system of governance.

This same study and review should examine our system of checks and balances in order to return the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches to their co-equal status and ensure the stability of this process going forward.

From my perspective, this means that although members of our political parties would continue to occupy the pews in both Houses of Congress, we should review and as soon as possible eliminate all procedures, traditions and operational standards that encourage partisan politics and that allow small groups of individuals to obstruct the well-being of the people and our habitat.

This could: include expanding our two-party system to a multiple party system, and experimenting with some of the best practices other forms of Democracy offer including votes of confidence, specific term limits, the elimination of lifetime appointments to the judiciary, changes to the Small States Policy that has resulted in the ineffectiveness of the US Senate, the introduction of enforceable Codes of Ethics for all members of all three branches of government and most particularly the judiciary, public finance of elections, major restrictions imposed on lobbyists, and other options.

I also believe the number of individuals on all major Federal Courts including the Supreme Court should be equally apportioned to whatever the number of political parties we end up having and that the Chief or Lead Justice on each court should be an independent with a demonstrated track record that makes this fact clear.

On Limiting The Negative Impact of Special Interests

To achieve a much desired and truly effective form of noble leadership and conscious governance, I believe we would also be wise to restrict and eventually eliminate the excessive influence and strangle hold special interest groups, multi-national corporations and individuals of great wealth have upon our way of life.

Like all citizens, this individuals and special interest groups should continue to have the opportunity to advance their agendas and interests, but they should be required to do so in a public and transparent way. They should not be allowed to contribute financially or provide special perks and benefit to any candidate or office holder nor should any of their current or former employees be allowed to serve as the heads of any government or regulatory agencies or on boards that determine policy in that or an intersecting area.

I realize, of course, that at this time when we are facing so many enormous challenges and there are so many issues that require our attention. this may seem to some to be an unrealistic or an impractical goal. Wealth and power have, after all, always exercised undo and disproportionate influence in the world at large. But there are also many examples from the Wisdom Traditions and from indigenous cultures that provide us with important and viable alternatives to the practices that currently corrupt and retard the well-being of our nation and of humanity itself.

On Eliminating The Buying & Selling of Democracy By We The People

To the same end, we would be wise to look at another of the root problems that retards and undercuts our democracy. The exercise of excessive influence generally attributed to special interest groups, large corporations and very wealthy donors, actually begins with each of us as individuals and as members of small groups and organizations that seek to exercise influence over political candidates and elected officials or political parties as a whole, by contributing to their campaigns.

Indeed, as anyone who has ever been involved in or close to a political campaign knows this is where the issue of political corruption and pay to play politics actually begins.

Before the majority of us make a donation or the fund development officer or chief fund raiser of an organization or group we are a part of delivers the group's donation to a candidate -- and this applies to all organizations whether they are benign or malevolent, whether the organization's focus is on advancing left handed dog walkers, the regeneration of the environment, greater freedom for the pharmaceutical industry or unlimited power for the gun manufacturers -- we need to start asking ourselves whether our motives are designed to advance our own special interests or serve the greater good.

In short, if we want to limit the excessive influence of special interest groups, corporations, religious groups and high net worth donors, each of us as individual citizens, must stop condoning and contributing to the buying of attention and influence from our candidates and our elected officials. Because it should come as a surprise to any of us that if we train our political candidates to direct their attention and support based on the amount of the donations they receive, we cannot blame them when they spend the majority of their time in a constant fund-raising mode and end up selling themselves and their votes to the highest bidder.

On Re-Defining and Upholding Truth-In-Advertising Standards

Before the degradation of standards in public advertising becomes even more endemic in our society, and most particularly in the area of political advertising, I believe we need to re-define and uphold rigorous truth-in advertising standards

Perhaps some of us remember when products and services had to pass a 'truth test' in regard to the claims they advance. But these standards, where they exist at all today, are only pale versions of their former selves. And therefore, if we want to take an important step toward eliminating the toxic influence of misinformation, deception and lies in our world, these standards as well as a range of other requirements including the fact that all individuals and organizations, most especially political, religious news, information and social media need to exercise genuine self-regulation responsibility for both the content as well as the form and veracity of the information they communicate. And these standards should go into effect immediately and failure to uphold them should result in the individual or organization being banned from having access to all television, radio, print, digital, billboard and social media venues and platforms until their messages are corrected.

On Raising The Standards and Protecting the Rights of the Fourth Estate

There is little doubt that what today is called the Media and was once proudly known as The Fourth Estate, has lost a lot of its integrity, professional standards and its commitment to truth. While I have identified many reasons for this including the successful implementation by the Far Right of The Powell Memorandum, the ownership of news media by political, religious and corporate groups, etc., the principal culprit is the ethical and moral character of We the People. And until this situation is corrected and integrity, high professional standards and a commitment to truth are re-established,

watchdog groups should be put in place in all sectors of our society and a free, fair, impartial and integrous media should be encouraged.

To this end, we would be wise to find a way to differentiate between legitimate members of the Fourth Estate and those organizations that are utilizing the media and advancing philosophical biases and opinion under the guise of news and information. As a result, all media platforms should be required to disclose their bias and no major news sources should be owned by large, multi-national corporations, religious or political organizations.

For, when if one looks closely at these organizations who own major media sources, there is little or no difference between media owned by them and what are referred to as state own media organizations in autocracies. And this is a situation that must change and change quickly if we want to continue to honor our Democracy.

There should also be a new and very clear set of ethical and professional standards established for individuals who report the news so that We the People can differentiate between true journalists and reporters and those who offer personal opinion or political, religious philosophy masked as news and information.

On Establishing National, Regional and Local Ethics-In-Media Counsels

I recognize, of course, that in a nation that celebrates freedom of speech as one of its most essential and critical rights, requiring truth is not an easy thing to accomplish. But the abuses of this freedom that we have experienced at other times in our history, and again most blatantly during and following the Trump Administration, and our failure to stop the spread of mis-information has resulted in deep divisions in our population.

And of special importance, this corruption of the media, prevents us from doing our job which is to become more informed and educated citizens who can then take this news and information and make intelligent decisions for ourselves about the events and needs of our time.

So, in addition, to freeing media platforms from corporate, religious and political overlords, I believe we must also find a way to revisit and enforce a Professional Code of Ethics for Members of the Fourth Estate on all communications platforms that impact the public. Ideally this will be done by those who still remember what it means to be part of a legitimate member of The Fourth Estate and what it means for individuals to have and exercise real ethical standards in their individual communication.

I also believe We the People should establish independent bodies comprised of individuals who understand and demonstrate high standards of professionalism and ethic to monitor television, print and digital and social media news and information sources to ensure individuals who deliver news and information do so under a clear and unambiguous Code of Ethics. And if any individual or media organization are not willing to self-regulate and thereby regain the trust of viewers, listeners and readers, then

National, Regional and Local Ethics In Media Counsels should make this known to the public and make their recommendations to a newly constituted and much more impactful and empowered Federal Communications Commission CFCC) that the media organization should be fined and, if these practices continue their license should be revoked.

On Eliminating The Electoral College

After a series of elections in which the frailties of the Electoral College have been clearly demonstrated. I believe this part of our election system which was put in place as a safeguard by our founders who were all land-owning white guys who were afraid their control over society would be threatened if ordinary people had the right to elect representatives based on popular vote alone, should be done away with.

This does not suggest that we should not have the means of verifying and certifying the results of our elections, but if Democracy is to survive, we must eliminate all vestiges of policies and practices that favor the few over the many.

On Activating and Strengthening The Power of Our Cities

There is a very valuable and essential movement taking shape in various parts of the country, an example of which is called Yes We Can, _____ (fill in the name of your city here). I believe this effort to re-institute and expand the power of cities is potentially an important addition to our system of checks and balances and should explored and encouraged.

On Ending Our Reliance On Flawed Polling & Survey Methodologies

Kenneth Arrow, American economist, writer, political theorist and joint winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics in 1972 for his articulation of “Arrows Improbability Theory” also known as Arrow’s Paradox demonstrated that one cannot arrive at truth through the aggregation of information collected in the form of answers, - especially binary answers to questions.

This articulation by Kenneth Arrow in addition to disclosing the primary flaws inherent in the polling and survey processes including – the way questions are framed and the conditions under which they are asked, the selection of individuals who participate and more – has demonstrated the fact that the final data collected through this kind aggregation has been shown to be able to prove both a thesis and its opposite.

And yet to this day, we continue to literally run our elections and govern largely based on polls and research that aggregate information in this way. For this reason, moving forward I believe we would be wise to acknowledge the importance of Arrow’s Improbability Theory and to refuse to continue this absurd and fraudulent way of governing.

Instead we would be wise to remember that we will succeed best when we become mature, informed citizens who receive factual and unbiased news and information and who then make up our own minds not based on group think and fraudulent findings, but on personal discernment and a clear adherence to the highest standards of core values, integrity and truth.

On Healing Our Fear Of The Other and Our Propensity Toward Violence with Compassion and Love

Individually and collective, it would be to our advantage and well-being as a nation if we practiced The Power of One and stop supporting those religions, political parties, as well as social, fraternal and community organizations that foster and spread the message of separation; that disparage and condemn those who are different and who are so narrow in their focus and limited in their vision that they create environments that are the breeding ground for ignorance, hatred, divisiveness, isolation and violence.

We would also be wise to shine the spotlight of truth on religious leaders who claim to represent the Divine, but who instead abuse their sacred trust by distorting the precepts of their faiths and contribute to this climate of fear and distrust. And instead recognize the uncomfortable truth in this comment attributed to Jonathan Swift, "*We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another.*"

In the political, social, and economic sectors, where the distortions are sometimes harder to see because the motives of those who perpetrate them are hidden under the guise of obtuse theories and complex philosophical arguments, we would be wise to find other ways to exercise greater discernment and chief among these can be this fundamental question each of us as citizens should be asking about everything, "Is it true?"

And this antidote when coupled with love and the re-alignment of our heads with our hearts. with values that our founding fathers referred to as 'the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God.' can help us to eliminate much that currently clouds our vision and can support us in healing the inner wounds that limit our progress as individuals and the collective wounds that limit our progress as a nation.

On When We Should Make These Changes

I believe we would be wise to take our lead from William James, American philosopher, considered the Father of Psychology and one of the leading thinkers of the Nineteenth Century who said, "*To change one's life: 1. Start immediately. 2. Do it flamboyantly. 3. No exceptions.*"

And I believe we should do this first and foremost, by being honest with ourselves and admitting that we have been asleep at the switch and have delegated our personal accountability and responsibility to others for far too long.

Second by acknowledging that it is not some faceless 'they' who are ultimately responsible for the state of our state; but we are and that our frailties, avoidances and follies that are primary cause of the challenges we face.

Third that by reviewing of our missteps and our misdeeds we will better identify and evaluate the strengths, skills, resources and opportunities we already possess as well as those we will need to develop. In short, to be successful in creating a positive future for all, we must recognize that we are human, that we and our leaders often step off the path, but that, as La Rochefoucauld reminded us, "Almost all of our faults are more pardonable than the methods we resort to hide them."

So, in addition to demanding much more of our current leaders and being much more discerning, engaged and wise about how we select and quality individuals who run for office and represent us, I believe we must also demand much more of ourselves.

We must be courageously honest and ruthless in disclosing our motives and our means and, over time, learn to bring our thoughts, words and actions -- and most especially our addiction to self-numbing behaviors -- under control and into alignment with our highest values. The values that we claim as our own when we in temples, mosques, churches and spiritual centers. The values we communicate to our children when we tell them bedtime stories. The values we know in our hearts to be right.

Yes, in my opinion, we would be both wise and effective if we do all that we can to ensure that truth is the primary currency each and every one of us spends in every aspect of our daily interactions -- in our homes, our places of work, in our communities, in our churches, schools, clubs and organizations. And if we all commit to practice truth, I am certain that we will find that truth becomes the only acceptable currency we exchange in all of our interaction and transaction all across our nation each and every day.

So let us be courageous enough and patient enough to conduct a new kind of public and private dialogue. Let us commit to bringing greater diligence and discernment to our search for real solutions and greater vigilance to the process of identifying, electing and then monitoring our leaders. Let us commit to the individual and personal work necessary to regain our balance and realign our thoughts, words and deeds with the natural laws of harmony. Let us also remember that without our investment in these qualities and practices we will continue to be played and played badly by those who are willing to sacrifice the greater good for their self-serving personal agendas. Let us remember that without our investment in these qualities essential and higher practices we will continue to squander this most precious gift called Democracy and all of the promises it holds for the well-being of humanity.

I Dream of a Truly Competent America...

in which a genuine recommitment to excellence and quality once again constitutes the watermark against which every government agency, company, every institution, every individual measures their success; a land in which we do not have to buy special product insurance to make up for shoddy workmanship, and that the insurance we do buy actually insures our health, our lives and our property; a land in which executive and shareholder arrogance and self-interest is replaced by a code of genuine social responsibility and heartfelt pride in service to the greater good; a land in which the reputation of an organization is measured against the ability of that organization to truly serve the well-being of its customers; a competent America in which all government agencies, private enterprises and not-for-profit organizations have only one standard to gauge their effectiveness -- their ability to serve the well-being of the whole.

Chapter Five

"Nothing doth more hurt in a state
than that cunning men pass for wise."

-- Francis Bacon

Redefining Priorities - Revitalizing Values

In order to create a truly sane and regenerative nation that finally lives up to the promise of our founding documents and then takes this promise even further, I believe we would be wise to take the next and necessary step of empowering and inspiring all of the people who make up this nation to strive for higher levels of consciousness, greater personal and collective fulfillment, more genuine humility and compassion and a renewal of faith, hope and trust. This will, ultimately, be our best defense against the incursions and diminishments that are currently threatening our Democracy both from within and from without and that will most certainly do so in the time ahead if we don't make some necessary and constructive changes.

So let us pick up the torch of individual accountability and responsibility now and carry it into a new age. Let us write a new story that builds on the promise in our The Declaration of Independence and The Constitution of the United States - and takes Representative Democracy to a much higher level.

Let us act now and in alignment with the greater good. Let us encourage each other to turn out in unprecedented numbers in the midterms and in all future elections and send an unambiguous signal to those both within and outside our borders that we are back on track and committed to take our next steps toward the illusive and yet remarkable dream of creating a more perfect union

And let us also remember that there is some good news in the challenges we now face. Most of these malevolents are now out in the open and their threat is helping us to understand some of the deep philosophical divisions and unmet longings that are present in the hearts and minds of different segments of our people, unmet longings and divisions that have been denied and overlooked for too long. Let us also remember the pervasive and tragic level of racism, the fear of the other and major weaknesses in some of the beliefs we hold about competition, materialism and consumption and the misperceptions we have about collaboration, cooperation and sufficiency. Let us re-visit and refine our definitions of what constitutes success and what gives us true meaning and purpose vs what promotes excess, and superficial standards of excess.

In short, let us revisit and re-define what can help launch whole new, more constructive and remarkable age for humanity.

Yes, if We the People exhibit the requisite courage, compassion, and the willingness to do the important and necessary work to heal the divisions and wounds within us and between us we can accomplish our goal of inventing the kind of future we want. And if we have the integrity and humility to admit the shortcomings and flaws in our own character, the limitations of some of our beliefs, the decline in our core values and our loss of hope and vision we can begin this work of healing immediately.

These are just some of the other things I believe We the People are being called to do and can do by exercising The Power of One. Therefore, at this time when our Democracy is facing this very dangerous threat to its well-being, let us also take a little time to identify some of elements that have contributed to the durability of our government in the past and can do so again in the future.

Reflecting On Some of What Makes Our Democracy Strong

The first of these elements is, of course, the artful intent, craft and spiritual inspiration invested by those who drafted and signed the Declaration of Independence, The Constitution of the United States and over the years, The Bill of Rights.

The second is the inclusion in our Constitution of provisions for a very necessary System of Checks and Balances which, until recently, has prevented any one political party or individual from fully contravening the intent of our Constitution and Bill of Rights.

A third reason for the strength of our Democracy is the clear separation of powers between our civilian government and a career military. A separation that thus far has prevented the misuse of our military by anyone who would turn its might against our own people.

A fourth reason is the resilience and commitment shown by the people of this nation in supporting and protecting our rights and privileges from past threats from within and from outside our borders.

And, from my perspective, the most important element of all, one without which these other essential elements could not have been effective for more than 246 years, has been the commitment by those who have occupied the highest offices in the land, including most particularly the Presidency, Congress, and on our Supreme Court - even and especially those who have struggled significantly with their own all too human flaws, to uphold their Oath of Office to Protect and Defend the Constitution of the United States.

Thankfully, this was true even in the case of individuals mentioned earlier including: Warren G. Harding who was largely responsible for the Tea Pot Dome Scandal, Richard Nixon who was responsible for the Watergate Scandal and George W Bush whose

administration was responsible for fabricating information about Weapons of Mass Destruction and leading our nation into two unjustifiable wars.

Yes, even these sins against humanity committed by those who did not always represent the highest and best of who we are, did not ultimately threaten our Democracy because, in the end, their commitment to the well-being of our people and our commitment as citizens to this construct called our Representative Democracy proved to be stronger than their personal agendas and quests for power or our inattention to their flaws.

So although much is in disrepair, not everything is not broken and we have many examples of what we have done in the past to defend our way of life from both internal and external threats, here are a few other things I believe we can do to protect, preserve and defend our nation against this current threat.

Other Things We Can Do To Save The Ship Called Democracy

Continuously Renew & Reaffirm Our Vision

I believe it is time, therefore, to look more closely at our founding documents and the laws, procedures and policies and at the roles and responsibilities of those who are elected to lead us or who are either appointed or chosen by those individuals to represent and adjudicate their will also to do all that is necessary to renew our vision for our Democracy.

Yes, it is time to make a good overhaul of the American way and, in doing this, we would be wise to follow the advice of Buckminster Fuller, noted architect and visionary. "You never change things by fighting the existing reality," he said. "To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."

Focus on Governance Not Gamesmanship

As I said earlier, I believe We the People must demand much more of our elected leaders. This means we must require of them a deeper, truer understanding that it is time to move past this immature and self-defeating adversarial system of politics that is currently being practiced and instead begin to perform as servants of the people political parties and advance the greater good of the people of this nation instead of focusing defeating the opposition, gaming the system and attempting to accumulate personal power. This old story is one we have allowed to play out long enough to the detriment of humanity, the other species and our habitat.

Convene Periodic Strategic Constitutional Conventions

To achieve our goal, we would also be wise and strategic to periodically revisit our nation's vision, mission, core values, strategic goals and objectives, structure, policies

and procedures, roles and responsibilities, norms and standards of behavior and metrics for evaluating the success of both our government and our individual lives and not assume that what was created 246 years ago can always apply to any current period. In short, we should conduct a true national dialogue whenever it is clear that our well-being as a nation and our progress as a people require it. And such dialogues should be always be mandatory after major financial collapses, when scientific, medical or technological breakthroughs are pointing us toward a reordering of priorities and possibilities and most assuredly when it becomes clear that planet altering threats like climate change confront us.

Revisit & Redefine the Role and Purpose of Political Parties

It would also be helpful to require each new administration to actually explore and define how they can best contribute to and execute the new and updated visions, missions, core values, etc. rather than execute and implement their own individual plans based primarily on their political philosophy that reverses the work of previous administrations.

Indeed, We the People should do all that we can to ensure that those we elect to represent us start doing their job and stop acting as if they are independent actors entitled to go their own way. The executive and legislative branches, once elected should then become responsible for guiding our nation in successfully achieving our agreed upon vision and mission.

In short, rather than living under as system of government that fosters competition for its own sake and can only lead to the kind of division and ugliness we experience every day in our world, not to mention the lowest possible level of effectiveness and productivity and a gross waste of human, financial and natural resources, we should find a way to have each new administration and congress seek to build on the best of the past and make life better.

Step The Visioning Process Down To Each Individual

Once we have agreed on our national vision, mission, core values, We the People as well as organizations and institutions at all levels should be asked to re-examine their individual beliefs and behaviors, evaluate their responsibilities and contributions, revisit their policies, procedures and structures, recalibrate their effectiveness, and in this way, contribute to renewing and refreshing every aspect of their organizations in their individual lives and in this way support our national quest for a more perfect union.
Re-vision America

And what do you think would happen, if our government, our institutions, businesses and every American did this revisioning and redefining on a regular basis? What would happen if every man and woman took responsibility for what our government does -- and this includes the President, Vice President, members of Congress and the Judiciary,

Cabinet appointees, and civil servants? What would happen if all participated in an in depth, self-evaluation whose results would be shared with others?

What do you think would happen if each public servant had to reexamine their effectiveness and the value of their contribution and report to each other on the results of this evaluation and on our commitment to improve in areas that require it?

And what would happen if all of us used this process to retune and recommit to higher standards and this process became a baseline for gauging our contribution and performance in raising the consciousness of humanity?

What would happen if We the People joined with our legislators in re-examining the laws that are on the books for their relevance, for possible bias and for inequity?

What would happen if we continued to use our Constitution as our guide and revisit all aspects of our lives, not with an eye to encumbering our way of life, but to refining it and making it even more extraordinary and relevant to the challenges and opportunities of every current age?

What do you think would happen if each company and organization, every institution, every non-profit, church, school, community/fraternal and social organization and family did the same thing?

Finally, how long do you think it would take if every nation on earth and every element within each nation became a constructive learning organism to create a truly remarkable, sane, regenerative and sane existence?

Weigh Individual Rights Against Collective Needs & Rights

I believe we would also benefit, especially at this time when we are approaching a population of 8 billion people and may be moving toward a world population of 14 billion or more to begin exploring the question of how out individual rights should be weighed against the needs of the collective

After all, life is not some kind of sporting event. So I believe it would be valuable to ask ourselves if the protection of the right to accumulate huge amounts of profit by multinational companies or by private individuals under what is called a free market economy is more important to our way of life than the protection and survival of our habitat, the physical, mental and spiritual health and wellbeing of our citizens, the quality of our education, our support for things that can more constructively and positively impact our youth and our older citizens, and the opportunities and quality of life afforded to them and all of our citizens?

Is the right of the individual to bear arms (particularly if these arms are semi-or fully automatic weapons of war) and our right to privacy (especially the privacy of those with

emotional, psychological and criminal histories) more important than the right of our citizens to be able to live sane and constructive lives?

Is the right to accumulate unlimited personal wealth more important than the ability of our society to care for the needs of those who by virtue of poverty, lack of education, cultural biases or norms, physical or emotional abuse or incapacities, and other limiting factors, cannot take care of themselves? Is the protection of patent rights particularly in the area of healthcare and pharmaceuticals more important than our ability to support seniors, children, the underprivileged and those struggling with poverty and homelessness around the world with the kinds of services and medicines they require?

These are just some of the questions I believe We the People would be wise to ask and explore with patience, discernment, and with the goal finding the right balance between protecting the rights of the individual and advancing the well-being of humanity?

Clearly, these are not easy questions! Indeed, they go to the heart of what we call Democracy. And yet if we want to find our way out of the quagmire of confusion and division that we now find ourselves in; if we want to stop our precipitous decline as a nation and the unraveling of our precious and invaluable experiment in true human governance, then I believe we must take time to ask and answer these and many other questions with much greater honesty and integrity than we have previously demonstrated.

I realize, of course, that there will be some who will call this a foolish and impractical approach to real governance. But after living long enough in a world that is clearly failing to deliver on the promise of Life, Liberty and The Pursuit of Happiness for all, it certainly seems to be time that we begin to practice the essential thoughts articulated in our Declaration of Independence. *"That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."*

Part Two

Some Additional Considerations That Support of The Power of One

*“I sit on a man’s back, chocking him
and making him carry me, and yet assure
myself and others that I am very sorry
for him and wish to lighten his load by
ll possible means – except getting off his back.”*

-Leo Tolstoi

I Dream of a Humble & Honorable America...

*in which wise and noble leadership, true diplomacy and conscious governance
serve as our primary instruments in our quest for true alliance with others
both here at home and abroad; a land in which we demonstrate
to the rest of the world the futility of war and aggression; a humble and
honorable America in which divisiveness and dissention are not used by as means those
to manipulate and confuse us or others; a land in which distortion and falsehood
are replaced in the public discourse by directness, truth, understanding,
honesty, compassion mutual respect and support
for the common good of the greatest number.*

Chapter Six

“The beginning of wisdom, is a firm grip on the obvious.”

-Anonymous

Why The Basics Matter

I am grateful to whoever articulated the truth in the quote above. I am also grateful to Confucius who is reputed to have said, “Wisdom is calling all things by their right and proper names.”

For me, these statements invite us to open our eyes and to call the travesty that is being committed against our nation by those who have lost their way and are currently under the influence of this virulent disease of the soul who are intent on turning back the hands of time and establishing the rule of the few over the many, a system we already know does not work.

These opening quotes also invite us to be grateful that those who came before us and who crafted our founding documents had a firm grip on the obvious. In their case the obvious included the recognition that human beings are less than perfect—especially the kind of men and now woman who are called to the business of government by the sirens of power, control, wealth and the illusion of prestige rather than by their hearts to serve the greater good. And therefor in order to protect the nation they were birthing from these less than conscious and often destructive tendencies, our founders created a government that included a system of checks and balances.

Yes, although our founders were themselves less than perfect men who held a number of beliefs and prejudices that were limiting and whose impact continues to negatively affect us in our time, they still managed to be the architects of a form and structure of government that has and that will protect us from some of our own human frailties and flaws, if we are willing to act while there is still time.

So I invite you to take a little of that time now to review some of the basics that many of us may be familiar with, but in all likelihood have not have visited in a while. It my hope that in doing this, we will remember what is actually at stake in the upcoming midterms and why it is so important that We the People utilize The Power of One to prevent those who have unfortunately lost their way, from regaining control of the House and/or the Senate in the midterms and, in this way, send us hurtling even faster along the road to our demise.

Our System of Checks and Balances & The Five Estates

As many of us know, our three primary branches of government – the Executive, Legislative and Judicial – constitute what are called the first Three Estates in our system of governance. And each of these Estates was given independent and co-equal powers by our founders to prevent overreach by anyone over the others.

This, as you may remember, was one of the key points made over and over again by Congressional Managers who presented the cases against Donald Trump in his two Impeachment Trials. The first, for violation of his duties as President and for abusing his powers for personal gain by withholding military aid already approved by Congress to Ukraine in order to try to sully the reputation of his opponent and aid himself in his re-election bid. And the second trial was for his role in instigating the January 6th Insurrection and being central to the execution of the coup we are still dealing with.

During both trials, the House Managers did a noble and, at times, herculean job of reminding our Senators of their responsibility as members of the co-equal Legislative Branch to hold the Chief Executive accountable for any violations of his duties and his oath of office. They were also abundantly clear that a failure to do so could have serious implications and would aid and abet our 45th President in committing even greater future transgressions.

Unfortunately, the warnings of these House Impeachment Managers fell on the ears of those in the Senate of who demonstrated that they were far more interested in advancing their personal career ambitions and nefarious party objectives than in upholding our Constitution and serving the well-being of the people.

The Fourth Estate, a free and impartial press, which may, if we are not very diligent, soon become a myth of the past, must also function as an independent and necessary check and balance on the three co-equal branches of government, something those of us willing to admit can plainly see is fundamental to our safety. Indeed, without the heroic job that has been done and continues to be done by the legitimate members of a free and independent press, the vast majority of the crimes being committed by those who are intent on destroying Democracy would have gone unnoticed.

This then leads us to the Fifth Estate, to We the People and to what is truly the most essential ingredient in our system of checks and balances. For it is We the People who are the reason the other four estates even exist do not play our essential part, Representative Democracy, as we are clearly discovering, simply does not work.

This is why I believe our quest to create ‘a more perfect union’ cannot be explored on theoretical or philosophical levels alone. Nor can it be advanced only through the political jockeying and philosophical sophistry practiced in chambers of Congress. Nor can it rely exclusively on our courts or on the actions of this or any future Administration. Instead, We the People must always remember that Representative Democracy, like life

itself, requires our pro-active, informed. direct participation and constant review, refinement and oversight. Hence my contention that The Power of One is Democracy's best and last hope.

A Very Brief Look At Democracy Itself

“Democracy – “From the Greek: δημοκρατία *dēmokratía*, literally means "rule by people." Western democracy, as distinct from that which existed in pre-modern societies, is considered to have originated in the city-state of Athens and again in the Roman Republic, where various degrees of enfranchisement of the free male population were observed before the form disappeared in the West at the beginning of late antiquity. The English word dates back to the 16th century, from the older Middle French and Middle Latin equivalents in modern usage,”

“In a direct democracy, the citizens as a whole form a governing body and vote directly on each issue. In a representative democracy, the citizens elect representatives from among themselves. These representatives meet to form a governing body, such as a legislature. In this way, the powers of the majority are exercised within the framework of a representative democracy, but the constitution limits the majority and protects the minority, usually through the enjoyment by all of certain individual rights, e.g. freedom of speech, or freedom of association.”.

Three Very Essential Ingredients In Representative Democracy

When I reflect on these definitions and review our founding documents something is very clear to me and I hope it is to you as well. Just as our Democracy depends on the effectiveness of our System of Checks and Balances, this system in turn depends on three critical ingredients.

1. The level and quality of our individual and collective participation as informed citizens.
2. Our willingness and commitment as a nation to remain aligned with the vision and practice of the core principles identified in our founding documents, and on the Covenant of Trust that must exist between those we elect and we who elect them.
3. The level of integrity, competency and character of those who we elect to represent us, and their willingness and commitment to act in alignment with their oaths of office and of our founding vision and principles.

When I consider the first two of these essential ingredients, I find it sad and deeply troubling that at this time when we are facing the most serious threat to the survival of American Democracy in our history, far too many of us who call ourselves citizens have either withdrawn to the sidelines and become silent watchers or we are approaching our

responsibility as citizens and our commitment to uphold and practice the core principles, rights and privileges articulated in our founding documents with far less attention, courage and commitment than is required and certainly with far less than was exhibited by those who undertook the burden of The American Revolution two-and-a-half centuries ago.

The bottom line then, at least for me, is that Representative Democracy only works when We the People are aligned with our nation's vision and individually and collectively exercise The Power of One. Not occasionally. Not just when it is convenient. But constantly and in an informed and committed way.

The exercise of our privileges and responsibilities which constitute The Power of One is also essential if we want to ensure the second of these elements, the Covenant of Trust between those whom we elect to represent us and we who elect them. And please notice that I say "elect to represent us." I do not say that we anoint them to be our rulers and I certainly do not suggest that by electing them, we give them the right to act without our approval and in disregard of our needs and desires.

An Essential Admission

So although it is essential to acknowledge the degradation and corruption present in our political process; the ineffective and partisan way governance is currently being practiced, the lack of both capacity and character being exhibited by a number of our elected and appointed representatives as is also the case with many who are in leadership positions in our public sector organizations, our religious and more, and finally, some of the flaws we have discovered in our founding documents, I believe it is of even greater importance for We the People to admit what *we* have failed to do and must now do in order to save the last vestiges of Democracy before it is too late. And in this way, begin to make this vision articulated by Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell possible.

"There lies before us if we choose, continual progress in happiness, knowledge and wisdom, but we must appeal as human beings to human beings, remember our humanity and forget the rest. If we do, the way lies open to a new Paradise."

I Dream of a Re-inspired America...

rising above the fog of fear and distrust, of separation and division that currently clouds our landscape and appears to be blinding us to our true destiny; a visionary America in which we have the humility and courage to reconnect with our founding vision and values, redefine our priorities, redirect our resources, and recommit our talents to the realization of the true promise of a democracy in which we remember that all human beings are created equal and are entitled to liberty, justice and opportunity for all. A visionary America in which we can step proudly and boldly forward into the fresh air of hope and the sunshine of unlimited potential and possibility to uncover and explore our unique gifts for ourselves and others around the world, not in a quest for power and accumulation of things we truly do not need, but for the greater good of humanity.

Chapter Seven

*“The administration of government
like guardianship
ought to be directed
to the good of those who confer
not of those who receive the trust.”*

Cicero

The Back Story – Some of What Got Us Here

If we want to defend our Democracy against this current group of ill-intentioned, unconscious and malicious malcontents who are actively engaged in trying to destroy it, I believe an essential next step — after admitting the reality of the serious threat they represent, the role “Wetiko” is playing, our own culpability in allowing this travesty to occur, and some of the sins against humanity that we through commission or omission have been responsible for — will be wise to admit that this current coup d’etat now in progress did not begin in 2016 when the previous administration took office.

Instead, we must admit that those committed to seeking control by the few over the many have been at work in one way or another since the time of the drafting of our founding documents. And although there have been times leading up to, during and immediately following the Civil War, as well as other periods in our history, when their efforts have broken out into the open, these individuals have for the most part been very hard at work in the shadows.

The good news, of course, is that their ill intentions have, until recently been reasonably well constrained for much of our history by the strength of the principles and values articulated in our founding documents, by the governing processes and agencies that have been put in place based on these values and by the good character of those who have been elected or appointed to the highest offices in our land during times of great threat.

There have, of course, been exceptions. Prior to Donald Trump, the most recent of these was George W. Bush, Dick Cheney and others behind the scenes who were responsible for very significant crimes against humanity including falsifying the evidence of weapons of mass destruction that led us into war with Iraq. And before him, of course, there was Richard Nixon and Watergate. Further back, there were other malevolents and/or incompetents who occupied the White House including Warren G. Harding, Herbert Hoover, Ulysses S. Grant, and Andrew Jackson.

On the other side of the coin, good character and consciousness were particularly on display in our highest elective office during the Civil War. Few, with the exception of those who were clinging tenaciously to their support of our darker past of slavery and repression and who assassinated him, dispute that the moral and ethical character of Abraham Lincoln and others chosen and appointed by him to protect and defend our Constitution in one of our nation's most perilous times. They and, of course, those who sacrificed their lives in unprecedented numbers on the battlefield to protect Democracy.

So, for the most part, the personal character of our leaders and some of the sound practices and systems already identified in the chapter on the basics were our best lines of defense in other times of national peril,

But there are three other things that I believe have led to our current jeopardy. The first and certainly the most serious was the adoption of the values and beliefs that were born out of the Industrial Revolution and caused us to turn away from guidance of The Wisdom Traditions and from adherence to Natural Law that had sustained humanity for the greater part of the 250,000 years from the time homo sapiens first appeared on the plains of Africa. The second, of course, has been our failure to do the necessary and critical work of healing our individual and collective wounds that gives rise to the disease of the soul that currently infests and distorts our society, and the third is what may appear, at first, to some of us to be a less consequential thing, but I believe it is something that has proven to be very consequential in setting the stage for the serious challenge to Democracy we now face. And this something happened in 1972 a man named Lewis Powell who drafted a document that has since become known as The Powell Memorandum.

For those who are not familiar with Lewis Franklin Powell Jr., he was an American lawyer and jurist nominated by Richard Nixon to serve as an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court, which he did from 1972 to 1987. The reason I mention him here, however, is not to discuss his record on the bench, but to tell you that before taking his seat on the court he was asked by a close friend and neighbor who also happened to be the Education Director for the US Chamber of Commerce, to write a confidential memorandum.

This memorandum Powell wrote was titled '*Attack on the American Free Enterprise System*,' Under the banner of anti-Communist and anti-New Deal document, the document urge the Chamber of Commerce to become more aggressive in molding society's thinking about business, government, politics and law in the US to advance their own ends."

In his document Powell argued that, "*The most disquieting voices joining the chorus of criticism (of corporations and the Conservative agenda) come from perfectly respectable elements of society: from the college campus, the pulpit, the media, the intellectual and literary journals, the arts and sciences, and from liberal politicians.*"

Therefore, as an antidote to these liberal and fraudulently labeled communist forces, Powell advocated "*constant surveillance of textbook and media content, as well as the purge of left-wing elements, wherever possible, from leadership in many organizations, and most especially in local, regional and national public offices.*" He urged conservatives to undertake "*a sustained media-outreach program; including funding neoliberal scholars, publishing books and papers in media from popular magazines to scholarly journals. And in this way influencing public opinion.*"

If all this sounds familiar, it should because The Powell Memorandum became and remains to this day "*the blueprint for the rise of a new and well-organized American conservative movement and for the creation of a network of influential right-wing think tanks and lobbying organizations, some masked as educational institutions, such as The Heritage Foundation and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).*" It also encouraged the US Chamber of Commerce to become far more politically active in selecting and supporting candidates whose values matched its own."

In short, Powell's document, which obviously failed to consider Confucius' good advice - "*The superior man seeks what is right, the inferior man what is profitable.*" Instead it put the profit motive and the philosophy of consumption and materialism that had been given a green light at the end of World War II, on an even more direct collision course with many of the core principles articulated in founding documents. And this misguided and misaligned strategy is, unfortunately, now on the verge of turning our nation into something that is clearly detrimental to the will and well-being of We the People, as well as to that of the other species who reside on our planet, and to the habitat that sustains us.

Yes, at every step along the way, the core aim of this blueprint has been to turn our nation and We the People, who fortunately still hold a slim majority, into a nation without inalienable rights and who will, if these advocates of the principles and practices articulated in The Powell Memorandum have their way, exist in a state of servitude under the will, values and objectives of a Corporatocracy.

I realize that some of you may believe I'm exaggerating. That I'm just another crazy conspiracy theorist who sees the enemy lurking everywhere and that the Land of Apple Pie and Motherhood is doing just fine. But I assure you that I'm neither 'crazy nor a conspiracy theorist and this land is definitely not doing 'just fine.'

The Stealth Revolution.

Chief among my claims is this. For the last 50+ years since Lewis Powell penned his memorandum, a significant number of us have spent all or a good portion of our time and energy living in our own little bubbles trusting in what we thought was the integrity and stability of our Representative Democracy, and the promise that the American Dream would continue forever whether we paid close attention to it or not. Meanwhile those intent on ensuring that the few could control the many were not resting and trusting at all. Instead, with cunning and serious intent and a great deal of funding, those working in the shadows used The Powell Memorandum as a playbook to steadily advance their goals.

As a result, since 1972 they have been working diligently, one might well say, obsessively, to change the composition of school boards and control and censor content in school textbooks. This was a precursor to what they are now doing, which is changing school curriculums and banning books that threaten their false narratives.

They also slowly, and methodically have gained control over a number of local city governments, country and state legislatures and, with the increased funding allowed under Citizens United, have selected and helped to elect candidates of questionable character and dubious motives to a number of state-wide and national elective offices. They have also worked steadily and strategically to gain control of large portions of the nation's media by purchasing the majority of America's local radio stations, local newspapers and creating at least one major, national television network. And in this way, they have acquired the means to slowly and continually influence the minds and hearts of millions of uninformed and disgruntled Americans through a mixture of biased political philosophy, misinformation and distorted opinion masquerading as news.

Finally, they set in motion and have now successfully executed a fifty-year plan to control the Judiciary at the local, state and federal levels and to elect as many men (and also a few women) who agreed to represent their illegitimate agenda in both Houses of Congress.

So, while we were naively and not a little unconsciously pre-occupied pursuing our personal goals and believing our government and our way of life were both safe, they were busy executing a stealth and cunning revolution to take our country away from us. Along the way, of course, they were aided and abetted by some very big wins. Citizen's United, of course, is perhaps the most significant of these.

And what did We the People do? Relative to the efforts of these malevolents, the vast majority of us did little or nothing. Oh, we voted but mainly in national elections every four years. Some of us donated to and also volunteered for candidates we liked and periodically we would wake up long enough to add our names to a petition, write an email or make a phone call in protest or even, on occasion march. But for all intents and purposes the vast majority of us left the heavy lifting to our elected representatives, to journalists, and to advocates and activists who were part of organizations that were founded to defend our rights.

It is also true, of course, that over the last several years when we faced the potential loss of significant healthcare gains, women's reproductive rights, school shootings and the killing of many people of color, as exemplified by the killing of George Floyd, we participated in spontaneous eruptions of outrage and took to the streets. For the most part, however, we have remained on the sidelines and allowed the Conservative Minority to make great strides in stealing America.

One of The Final Pieces of The Puzzle To Destroy Democracy

Their opportunity to really advance this disillusion of Democracy came, of course, with the 2016 election. As we now know, against most predictions and with the help of an undeniably talented and malicious team of Russian Hackers and a group of people within our own borders who cooked up very powerful disinformation strategies masquerading as legitimate news managed to manipulate a badly disillusioned and misinformed segment of our electorate to vote for a mentally unstable, morally deficient, ethically corrupt, secret admirer of some of history's most egregious despots and helped install this unsuitable man as the 45th President of the United States. And as a result, he, and the shadow elements and ragtag collection of sycophants who were appointed by him and the errant members of Congress and members of the court went on to disrupt and violate the vast majority of our societal norms and practices, weaken the majority of our government agencies as well as our strategic partnerships with my our major allies and set in motion the next stage of the Coup d'etat that is currently underway.

Couple this with the fact that a majority of the Republican members of the House and the Senate, as well as those who occupy a significant number of state governorships and control a number of state and city governments, finally began to coalesce behind him – even those who had plainly acknowledged his deficiencies during the campaign and began to not just show their racial prejudices and reactive fears but to openly demonstrate they no longer need to even pretend to uphold their oaths to protect and defend the Constitution, and it is easy to understand why we now face the greatest existential threat to survival of Democracy in our history.

These are just some of the reasons I suggest that We the People exercising The Power of One now constitute Democracy's Best, and Perhaps Last and Only hope.

I Dream of a Wise America...

in which the well-being humanity, of our habitat and all of the species
that reside here are accepted as the sacred responsibility and trust of every citizen
and business even if it means sacrificing levels of comfort or profit;
a wise America in which the incontrovertible interconnectedness between
all members of humanity and all other species that reside on this planet
is used as the basis against which the effectiveness of each and every
policy and practice is measured.

Chapter Eight

“The price of greatness is responsibility.”

- Winston Churchill

Can We Really Save Our Democracy?

According to British Historian, Arnold Toynbee who traced the development and decay of 19 of 21 world civilizations in his extraordinary 12-volume *Study of History*, all of the civilizations he studied passed through the same stages: genesis, growth, time of troubles, universal state, and disintegration. And it is clear that our nation and many others in our world are currently on this same trajectory with disintegration as a very likely final stop.

Among the things Toynbee concluded in his study is this -

“The breakdown of civilizations is not caused by loss of control over the physical environment, by loss of control over the human environment, or by attacks from outside. Rather, it comes from the deterioration of the ‘Creative Minority’, which eventually ceases to be creative and degenerates into merely a ‘Dominant Minority.’ And that creative minorities’ deterioration is due to a worship of their ‘former self,’ by which they become prideful and fail adequately to address the next challenge they face.

“First, the Dominant Minority attempts to hold by force—against all right and reason—a position of inherited privilege which it has ceased to merit; and then the Proletariat repays injustice with resentment, fear with hate, and violence with violence.

“During the decline and disintegration stages, the Internal Proletariat becomes increasingly disenfranchised and alienated, and thus loses their immediate sense of loyalty or of obligation....”

Sound familiar? Toynbee also said that —

“As civilizations decay, there is a ‘schism’ within the society. In this environment of discord, people resort to archaism (idealization of the past), futurism (idealization of the future), detachment (removal of oneself from the realities of a decaying world), and transcendence (meeting the challenges of the decaying civilization with new insight, e.g., by following a new religion). From among members of an ‘internal proletariat’ who transcend the social decay a ‘church’ may arise. Such an association

would contain new and stronger spiritual insights, around which a subsequent civilization may begin to form.”

Toynbee used the word "church" in a general sense, to refer to a collective spiritual bond found in common worship, or the unity found in an agreed social order.

Many of us can certainly agree that America and much of Western Society has arrived at or are very close to this ‘disintegration’ phase. But there is information in Toynbee’s study that can also give us hope. Toynbee points out that the Roman Empire also made this passage from “*genesis to disintegration*,” but Rome managed to halt its deterioration before it reached full disintegration.

Rome, in fact, experienced what Toynbee called “*the Second Golden Age*.” And this he suggested, was made possible because several successive Emperors were able to re-inspire a sense of trust among the people which allowed the empire to begin a new and more inspired cycle. And among the factors that inspired this ‘sense of trust’ was the re-establishment of the old virtues.

In our case, however, especially in this time of In Extremis, I believe the impetus for this resurgence will not come from our dysfunctional political leaders, nor from the sudden appearance of a mythical male or female figure on a White Horse. Instead, I believe our rescue needs to come from We the People exercising The Power of One who finally remember what the Hopi elders have told us. “*We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.*”

And as I have stated throughout these pages, I believe our founding documents provide us with all of the moral and ethical justification we need to do precisely this. And for this reason, I urge you to give yourself the gift of reading and re-reading these documents often and most especially our Declaration of Independence and to do so slowly, often and not with just your mind, but with your heart.

As I also have said, from my perspective, these words constitute the clearest and most indisputable definition of The Power of One. But let us not deceive ourselves. Even reading them aloud and allowing them to resonate in our hearts will not suffice. We must instead incorporate them into our actions in as many ways as we can every single day in order to preserve, renew and sustain our Democracy. And if we do, I am confident we can begin to turn this ship called Democracy away from this time of darkness, ignorance, fear and repression and the many false illusions we are laboring under. And instead can set course into the light of new hope and the possibility and into a time when we can create a more sane, compassionate, regenerative and expansive way of being.

The Midterms As One of Our Multiple Tracks Going Forward

While I strongly recommend that we focus on what we need to do between now and the midterms, I also believe we cannot bet the entire farm solely on our next election or even the one after that. And I say this even if the slim margins the democrats currently hold in

the both Houses of Congress remain in place and eventually allow the passage of the John L. Lewis Voting Rights, truly significant Climate Change legislation and other key measures before it is too late.

But in truth I also note that the amount of corruption, obstruction and dysfunction present in our government today and the number of our elected representatives who have been purchased, lock stock and barrel, by special interest groups, will still pose a great danger. As will the flaws that are now fully exposed in the Electoral College System

I also am aware that the overwhelming power of dark money flowing in unprecedented amounts into our election process also make our elections, by themselves, not the only bet we should be making. And let us not forget the insidious and toxic level of foreign and domestic interference and the incessant barrage of misinformation and deception spread by the corrupt and fraudulent pretenders who abuse the privilege of free speech under the banner of the Fourth Estate.

So while it might have been reasonable and appropriate to bet on a single election at times in the past, and I sincerely hope this will again be true at some time in the not-too-distant future, to expect elections in 2022 and 2024 alone to succeed without the full throated and impassioned commitment and participation of We the People exercising The Power of One will, I believe, be as naïve as it will very dangerous.

In saying this, I again stress that I am suggesting that We the People should not do all that we can to support those who are fighting courageously to turn out the vote and that we, in turn, must be sure to vote, contribute financially to candidates who are fighting for democracy, volunteer, donate and invite everyone we know to do each of these things and more in the run up to the midterms.

Letting Go of The Myth of The Hero on The White Horse

At the same time that we turn out in massive numbers in support of Democracy in the midterms, I believe we would be wise to stop waiting and hoping for some mythical hero or heroine on a white steed to ride to our rescue.

For while it is true that periodically throughout the course of history men and women of outstanding courage, character and competency have come forward to help us find our way out of the darkness, when I consider the strength, cunning and willingness of those who are currently playing outside the lines of honor and decency and who are now arrayed against Democracy and all of the factors discussed above, I do not believe we can afford to rely on any kind of magical, wishful thinking and I sincerely hope that this is true for you as well. I also believe that even if such an individual were to materialize, they would only offer a temporary reprieve from the danger, and might even give We the People another excuse for not exercising our individual responsibilities.

So let us set aside our illusions, our wishful thinking and step forward as courageous, responsible, discerning adults willing to reassert our rights and accept our responsibilities

and always remember that no one can truly do what must be done for us without our genuine participation and constant, careful oversight and close supervision, just as no one can corrupt and destroy us without our collusion and cooperation.

A Necessary Next Step

For this reason, I suggest that a most necessary and essential step We the People would be wise to take is to put those who are out to destroy our Democracy on notice that we will no longer remain quiet and on the sidelines and that we will most assuredly not allow them to be successful in their efforts.

And I believe the most unambiguous and irrefutable way we can do this – which the study of most successful on-the-ground-change-initiatives confirms – is to take to the streets in mass and execute what I have called “The Campaign of Resolve & Commitment. And this campaign will benefit substantially from the support of a coalition of our leading and most trusted advocacy and activist organizations.

And through this Campaign of Resolve & Commitment our goal can be to peacefully and resolutely protest, conduct work-slow downs, sit ins, teach ins and general strikes and to continue this effort until we have demonstrated the depth of our own commitment and require those who are currently committed to our destruction to either agree to be faithful to their oaths of office and start representing our will or resign.

And while I know that those of you who are still putting your faith exclusively in the political process may roll your eyes when I talk about our taking to the streets because you believe it will be a distraction or you are concerned about the danger presented by the bad actors in this time of division who may try to use our protest as an excuse to bring violence into the picture, or who may believe this kind of national protest can only happen when some event calls people into the street, I encourage you to rethink your positions.

I ask you to remember that time is too short and the danger too great to wait for some possible event or to hope that by keeping our heads down we will somehow protect Democracy and pacify those who threaten us. Instead, I believe that We the People must be resolute and proactive and in this way create the future we want, rather than waiting and hoping that it will somehow magically happen.

As I said, I base my recommendation on a review of successful change movements. Take for example, the original suffragette movement, the Civil Rights movement, the anti-war movement of the late 60’s and 70’s, the first stages of the modern Feminist Revolution, the effort to save Obamacare, the MeToo Movement and the reaction to the killing of George Floyd. While I believe these movements did not go far enough, each did bring greater awareness and resulted in some legislation and some positive results.

On the other hand, consider other recent occasions when We the People did not exercise our rights to protest and assemble peacefully. Consider the unconscionable number of

school shootings including the most recent ones in Buffalo, Uvalde and Highland Park and our failure to protest and the resulting failure of our government to take truly significant action by banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines and requiring full background checks. Consider the fact that by remaining on the sidelines for years we have failed to counter the false claims made by the NRA and other who constantly mislead us by misinterpreting the Second Amendment. Consider rise in violence being perpetrated against Jewish, Asian and Muslim minorities, the ugliness visited on members of the LGBT community and most especially in this time against transgender and gender-neutral citizens and, of course, the unconscionable and senseless killings of young black and brown men and women and the disregard for the native peoples that continue to this day. Consider the impeachment trials of Donald Trump in the Senate, the Big Lie and the Coup currently in progress.

In each of these instances what did We the People do? Unfortunately, we did far too little. Yes, some individuals and organizations protested on some of these occasions. But did We the People turn out in truly significant numbers? Did we bring the business of business of this nation to a stop until the need for real change was understood and new legislation implemented? No, for the most part, in the majority of these instances we made some noise and then we went home before the actual changes we demanded were put in place.

And what did We the People do in the face of Donald Trump's Big Lie? Did we go out into the streets and call the fool and his sycophants on their deceit? And what about the January 6th Insurrection. Did we turn out in mass after it? Did we demand a full investigation and the punishment of everyone involved including Trump, his sycophants, participating members of Congress and from the illegitimate media? And when Republican controlled legislatures in 40 something states passed laws designed to obstruct voting rights and allow local officials to overturn fair election results, what did we do?

You see, unless we go out into the street. Unless we march and protest in front of the local in state and national offices of the recalcitrant Republican and Democratic members in Congress. Unless we conduct sit ins, teach ins, work slowdowns and general strikes. Unless we boycott the products and services offered by companies who support the members Congress who are supporting Democracy's demise, or those in the media who are spreading misinformation and lies every day the 'disease of the soul' will continue to have its way with us.

In short, the failure of We the People to act only emboldens those who have lost their way and their sanity and are now so brazenly committed to the destruction of our Democracy. Yes, the undeniable bottom line is that if We the People do not exercise The Power of One and do not interrupt the business of business of this nation those who are out to destroy us will continue to advance undeterred toward their goal.

And this truth should now be apparent to all of us. Only We the People, here in our country and in countries around the world, can require our governments to act on our

behalf. Only We the People can make a difference because we have the power to do so. Because without our participation, neither our government nor our economy nor anything else works. So either we face our fears and override our timidity and suffer some short term discomforts or we and future generations will all end up paying a severe price for a long time to come.

And if you need some recent examples of what The power of One in the streets can do, here are a few recent examples that I take from a recent post by author Charles Eisenstein.

“India and Ecuador. In both places, a massive popular movement has succeeded in stopping and reversing horrible government policies.

In Ecuador, a mass indigenous-led movement has gained concessions from the right-wing neoliberal government following a nation-wide strike. Campesino families, from grandmothers to little children, mobilized to block roadways and paralyze transportation. Huge crowds converged upon the cities, braving police violence to make business-as-usual impossible. The government capitulated. It agreed to the movement’s demands to halt new mining and oil and gas drilling in national parks, indigenous territories, and water supply areas, and gave indigenous people veto power over future projects.

This is really good news for the Amazon rainforest, where the resource extraction was to have occurred. And, mining and drilling cause devastation beyond the ecological. As the roads and machines encroach, traditional livelihoods and ways of life deteriorate, bringing alcoholism, domestic violence, and poverty. The indigenous are defending not only their territories, but their very culture

Meanwhile in India, the Modi government has waged a near decade-long assault on traditional village life under the banner of forging a “modern India.” Covid provided an opportunity to accelerate these policies, which critics say are designed to transfer rural resources to large corporations. The most recent element of the plan was a series of three farm laws that would have corporatized rural India and destroyed the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of small-scale farmers. However, the government wasn’t counting on massive popular resistance, led by farmers, that mobilized millions of people who virtually surrounded New Delhi for most of 2021.

So can this “people-in-the-streets-in-peaceful-protest-strategy, be successful? You bet it can. But it will also require that we be willing to pay the price of some short discomfort and disruption for long term gain.

In addition to this suggested step of using peaceful protest to bring this nation to a stop temporarily until we gain the attention and agreement of the malcontents who are intent on our destruction to cease and desist. I also believe we would also be wise do a number of other things that the Power of One instructs and entitles us to

But before we explore these specific actions. I invite you to consider three essential things.

First, we will do ourselves and our cause irreparable harm if we act out of the same levels of fear, hatred and demonization that drive those who currently constitute this most serious and immediate threat to our nation's future. Instead, we must act on the wisdom from our hearts even more than on the information in our heads and we must use integrity, compassion, honesty and truth as our primary benchmarks. In short, we must always focus on our primary job of learning to be better at being human while doing the very real, tangible and immediate things we must do to save our Democracy.

Second, there should be one, and only one criteria that guides our actions and help us evaluate each and every one of our thoughts, words and deed going forward. We must be motivated only by the best and highest good for the greatest number. And in order to do this we must be honest with ourselves about any ulterior motives and set-aside our personal goals while we pursue our common goals. And if some among us need an example of this, I recommend we remember why the generation that saw us through the Second World War is called the Greatest Generation. Remember the depth of commitment and the single-point of focus they demonstrated in order to contribute to defeating one of the greatest scourges in the modern history of the world. Also remember the courage and commitment of those whose signatures were applied to our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. And remember, most of all, that none of these beings were perfect nor were they without a host of different political leanings that were limited and biased. And yet when the call was sounded, they set these things aside in order to address the threat they faced.

Third, we would be wise to remember these words by Archibald MacLeish, American poet, playwright, lawyer, and statesman. While they may seem naïve to some, to me they are a source of great strength especially when I get lazy or timid about my goal of contributing to saving our nation.

“There are those who will say that the liberation of humanity, the freedom of man and mind is nothing but a dream. They are right. It is the American Dream!”

I Dream of a Compassionate America...

*in which healthcare is not the privilege of some, but the birthright of all;
a land in which we spend more time, energy and money preventing disease and illness
than we do trying to diagnose and cure it; a land in which our older citizens
do not have to slowly descend into lives of isolation and neglect and
end their days in medical warehouses, but instead are rewarded
in their twilight years with quality life, outstanding medical care and
alternative ways of living that give them choice and dignity; a compassionate
America in which we honor the wisdom of our elders --
gathered from both their stumbles as well as their victories
-- and apply it for the betterment of all.*

Chapter Nine

*"What makes greatness is starting
something that lives after you."*

—Ralph Stockman

Living in The Fresh Air of Hope

As I hope it is clear from the information I have shared on these pages I believe that if we have the courage, patience and discipline to pass through a re-visioning process - and not just once, but periodically and most especially, whenever threats arise that point out weaknesses and limitations in our system of governance, of our core values, practices and institutions - we will be taking new and long-awaited step into the fresh air of hope and unlimited possibility.

And when combined with the true exercise of The Power of One by each of us as proactive and responsible citizens, I believe this kind of periodic review and revisioning will go a long way to regaining our footing whenever we slip and demonstrating our inalienable rights to ourselves and to others all around this planet who wish to do the same. Yes, through the practice of The Power of One, We the People can break out of our prison of the habitual, the redundant, the restrictive and the obstructive and step more fully and joyfully into the new story.

And what can we or will we find as a result of doing these things? Renewed energy, enhanced self-confidence, greater creativity, improved productivity, vitality, innovation, true collaboration, genuine compassion, trust and love – love of ourselves, of each other, of the other species and of our habitat.

These are the automatic rewards that come to those who take the time to re-chart their course, heal their personal and collective wounds, re-align their actions with their values, continually refine and/or redefine their roles and responsibilities and commit their resources and talents in pursuit of worthy and meaningful goals. And I want to stress that these rewards are not accidental or random outcomes. They are automatic.

What other benefits will we discover in this sunshine and fresh air of greater consciousness? We will experience even more of the promise of our Representative

Democracy in which all human beings are treated as equals and where the promise of life, liberty and promise of opportunity for all becomes even more of our reality.

While this may not be of value to those who are enjoying significant personal advantages in this Age of Inequality and Division and others who have lost their way and are out to destroy our Democracy. I know with certainty that the vast majority of us will find tremendous value in these benefits. For these practices are a prerequisite for positive, constructive growth and well-being. Indeed, when Carl Jung, was asked to identify the reason some of his patients achieved major breakthroughs while others did not, he said that in his experience those who achieved genuine breakthroughs were driven by an inner secret or vision. And it was this secret that fueled their ability to overcome great obstacles and impediments.

In the case of America, I believe our secret has been the sacred covenant on which this experiment in human governance was established, the essential character of the individuals who articulated it and that special ingredient that perhaps can never be fully captured in words but is encoded in the hearts of all of us, even those who have forgotten it or denied it for far too long,

And the more we allow this special ingredient, which in my opinion is discovered when we all practice The Power of One, to help us in steering our ship of state, the more successful we will be in renewing and upleveling our faith in the greatest good for the greatest number. And in this way, we will more easily and swiftly move past this dangerous, erratic and destructive period in which we are currently living and into a new and extraordinary future.

So, I ask each of us to do the work of revitalizing our vision and mission, refreshing our values, refining our strategies and realigning our actions, beliefs and values motivated by love and the still unfulfilled dreams that are in our hearts.

These things will help us to first stop the spread of the disease of the soul that plagues us, and then to stabilize of our Democracy and many of our primary institutions so that we can once again celebrate and explore their extraordinary opportunities and promises and re-establish our faith in our way of life.

Let us also remember that we do not have another sane and sensible choice, at least, not if we want to survive this time of In Extremis as a nation and rescue humanity, the other species and this endangered planet.

So let us take up this challenge of cleaning up the messes we have created or allowed others to make and, in this way, avoid being witness to the decline of one of the most noble, human experiments in governance in the history of the world.

Gauging the Tipping Point

How close are we to the collision, running aground or capsizing? How close to the tipping point from which many believe we cannot recover? As I said at the beginning of this book, I believe we are much closer than many of us want to admit – as close as the midterms. In fact, even a cursory look at today's incredibly toxic and divided political landscape – and not just in this country, but around the world – validates the claim that we do not have much time to save and refine Democracy and practice true governance for the greatest number and for the greatest good.

And although we are currently passing through this Time of Separation, Fear of The Other and Division; although in this time demigods and dictators are wielding their egregious weapons against the well-being of humanity, please remember that we are also experiencing a remarkable bubbling up of hope, consciousness, greater understanding and compassion as well new possibilities and strategies. Perhaps the greatest bubbling up the world has ever experienced. And for me this is a sign that the fresh air of hope and the birth of a new story for humanity is closer than we think.

So let us answer the call and invest the requisite courage and awareness, acknowledge the challenges we face and the seriousness of the intent of those who are out to destroy us and our way of life, and focus on supporting this extraordinary bubbling up of hope and promise.

And at the same time, let us not be naive or deceive ourselves with wishful thinking that this new story with all of its promise and possibility will be born without our participation (consent) and without resistance from those who are trying to destroy us. Indeed, the forces of darkness arrayed against us are very substantial and fully committed to our demise. So let us use The Power of One and turn out in unprecedented numbers in the mid-terms to ensure that we stop those who are out to destroy our Democracy from regaining control of the House and the Senate and of may down ballot offices. Let us also commit to participating in Days of Resolve & Commitment.

Let us step forward in concert and with love and conviction in our hearts retake our rightful place in the decision making of our time. And, in doing this, let us take heart and purpose from these words.

"Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Let us do these things and more to reclaim our dignity, our self-respect and demonstrate our responsibility to as create a better world so that we can continue our quest for a more perfect union.

Let us align our thoughts, words and deeds with our best and highest values and always our deep compassion and honoring of life.

Let us focus more on the remarkable aspects of the new story that is bubbling up around the world as exemplified by these reported in a wonderful new book by Jon Alexander and Ariane Conrad authors of *Citizens: Why the Key to Fixing Everything is All of Us*.

“Consider governance. The city of Paris has just approved the creation of a standing Citizens’ Assembly that guides policy, and has committed to distributing more than €100m (£84m/\$101m) a year through participatory budgeting. Mexico City has crowdsourced a constitution for its nine million people, while Chile is in the midst of a citizen-driven Convention to develop one for the entire nation. In Reykjavik, game designers have built a participatory democracy platform that has brought hundreds of people into the operation of the city.

Perhaps most impressive of all, Taiwan showed the world a way through the pandemic, building its response around three principles – Fast, Fun, and Fair. This led the Taiwanese government to open its data, run challenge prizes for apps to track facemask availability (and much more besides), trust people enough only to restrict movement on the basis of "participatory self-surveillance", and even create a hotline that any citizen could call with ideas for what more could be done. The result? One of the lowest case-fatality rates in the world, without ever imposing a lockdown. Taiwan's response to the Covid-19 pandemic drew praise from around the world.”

Yes, let us dream boldly and big. Let us dream of a renewed America, undivided, optimistic, imaginative, talented, compassionate, abundant, authentic, committed to providing genuine ethical leadership and to solving critical challenges and maximizing opportunities for all of the world's citizens; a renewed America that will go beyond fulfilling the hope of our forefathers and, in close collaboration with people all across the planet, finally turn this landscape of fear and distrust into a genuine Garden of Eden.

And finally, let us individually and collectively remember that the future really does lie in our hands and that it is not God alone who needs to bless America. It is We the People who are now being called to do this. And as we take our next steps on this path, let us keep these words from the Hopi Elders close at hand

*You have been telling the people
That this is the Eleventh Hour,
Now you must go back and tell the people that this is THE HOUR.
And there are things to be considered.*

*Where are you living?
What are you doing?
What are your relationships?
Are you in the right relationships?
Where is your water?*

*Know your garden.
It is time to speak your truth.
Create your community.
Be good to each other.
And do not look outside yourself for the leader.
We are the ones we've been waiting for.*

*This could be a good time!
There is a river flowing now very fast.
It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid.
They will try to hold on to the shore.
They will feel they are being torn apart and will suffer greatly.
Know the river has its destination.
The elders say we must let go of the shore,
push off into the middle of the river,
keep our eyes open, and our heads above water.
And I say, see who is in there with you and celebrate.
At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally,
Least of all, ourselves.
For the moment that we do,
our spiritual growth and journey come to a halt.
The time of the lone wolf is over.*

*Gather yourselves!
Banish the word struggle from your attitude and your vocabulary.
All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration.*

We are the ones we have been waiting for."

####

I Dream of An America...

visionary, united, optimistic, imaginative, talented, compassionate,
abundant, authentic, humble, and committed to genuine ethical leadership
and to solving critical challenges and maximizing opportunities for all of the world's
citizens; America that will continue the revolution begun by our forefathers
and, in close collaboration with people all across the planet, finally turn the landscape of
fear, distrust, separation and scarcity into a new age of higher consciousness, individual
empowerment, of the celebration of spirit and grace and hope.

I dream of an America reborn...will you dream with me?

Appendix A

The Declaration of Independence

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen United States of America - When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. -- That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. -- Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of

Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offenses

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable

jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

The Constitution of The United States Of America

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

ARTICLE. I.

SECTION. 1.

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

SECTION. 2.

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to choose three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

SECTION. 3.

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Classes. The Seats of the Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Recess of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall choose their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment, according to Law.

SECTION. 4.

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of choosing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

SECTION. 5.

Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behavior, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

SECTION. 6.

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such time; and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.

SECTION. 7.

All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States: If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be returned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

SECTION. 8.

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow Money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court;

To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and offenses against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings;

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

SECTION. 9.

The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another; nor shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

SECTION. 10.

No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its

inspection Laws: and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Control of the Congress.

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

ARTICLE. II.

SECTION. 1.

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows: Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner choose the President. But in choosing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall choose from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of choosing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States. No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of

the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:-- "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

SECTION. 2.

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for offenses against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

SECTION. 3.

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

SECTION. 4.

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

ARTICLE III.

SECTION. 1.

The judicial Power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behavior, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

SECTION. 2.

The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority;--to all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls;--to all Cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction;--to Controversies to which the United States shall be a Party;--to Controversies between two or more States;--between a State and Citizens of another State;--between Citizens of different States;--between Citizens of the same State claiming Lands under Grants of different States, and between a State, or the Citizens thereof, and foreign States, Citizens or Subjects. In all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be Party, the supreme Court shall have original Jurisdiction. In all the other Cases before mentioned, the supreme Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make.

The Trial of all Crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment, shall be by Jury; and such Trial shall be held in the State where the said Crimes shall have been committed; but when

not committed within any State, the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law have directed.

SECTION. 3.

Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted.

ARTICLE. IV.

SECTION. 1.

Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which such Acts, Records and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof.

SECTION. 2.

The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.

A Person charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime, who shall flee from Justice, and be found in another State, shall on Demand of the executive Authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the Crime.

No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.

SECTION. 3.

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by

the Junction of two or more States, or Parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

SECTION. 4.

The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened), against domestic Violence.

ARTICLE. V.

The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Provided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate.

ARTICLE. VI.

All Debts contracted and Engagements entered into, before the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

ARTICLE. VII.

The Ratification of the Conventions of nine States, shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the Same.

The Word, "the," being interlined between the seventh and eighth Lines of the first Page, the Word "Thirty" being partly written on an Erasure in the fifteenth Line of the first Page, The Words "is tried" being interlined between the thirty second and thirty third Lines of the first Page and the Word "the" being interlined between the forty third and forty fourth Lines of the second Page.

Attest William Jackson Secretary

Done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the Twelfth In witness whereof We have hereunto subscribed our Names.

The Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights consists of the first 10 amendments to the United States Constitution. These amendments limit the powers of the federal government, protecting the rights of all citizens, residents and visitors on United States territory. Among the enumerated rights these amendments guarantee are: the freedoms of speech, press, and religion; the people's right to keep and bear arms; the freedom of assembly; the freedom to petition; and the rights to be free of unreasonable search and seizure; cruel and unusual punishment; and compelled self-incrimination. The Bill of Rights also restricts Congress' power by prohibiting it from making any law respecting establishment of religion and by prohibiting the federal government from depriving any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. In criminal cases, it requires indictment by grand jury for any capital or "infamous crime," guarantees a speedy public trial with an impartial and local jury, and prohibits double jeopardy. In addition, the Bill of Rights states that "the enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people,"[1] and reserves all powers not granted to the Federal government to the citizenry or States.

These amendments came into effect on December 15, 1791, when ratified by three-fourths of the States. Most were applied to the states by a series of decisions applying the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which was adopted after the American Civil War.

Initially drafted by James Madison in 1789, the Bill of Rights was written at a time when ideological conflict between Federalists and anti-Federalists, dating from the Philadelphia Convention in 1787, threatened the Constitution's ratification. The Bill was influenced by George Mason's 1776 Virginia Declaration of Rights, the 1689 English Bill of Rights, works of the Age of Enlightenment pertaining to natural rights, and earlier English political documents such as Magna Carta (1215). The Bill was largely a response to the Constitution's influential opponents, including prominent Founding Fathers, who argued that it failed to protect the basic principles of human liberty.

The Bill of Rights plays a central role in American law and government, and remains a fundamental symbol of the freedoms and culture of the nation. One of the original fourteen copies of the Bill of Rights is on public display at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

The Bill of Rights: A Transcription

The Preamble to The Bill of Rights

Congress of the United States

begun and held at the City of New-York, on Wednesday the fourth of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine.

THE Conventions of a number of the States, having at the time of their adopting the Constitution, expressed a desire, in order to prevent misconstruction or abuse of its powers, that further declaratory and restrictive clauses should be added: And as extending the ground of public confidence in the Government, will best ensure the beneficent ends of its institution.

RESOLVED by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, two thirds of both Houses concurring, that the following Articles be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States, as amendments to the Constitution of the United States, all, or any of which Articles, when ratified by three fourths of the said Legislatures, to be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of the said Constitution; viz.

ARTICLES in addition to, and Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America, proposed by Congress, and ratified by the Legislatures of the several States, pursuant to the fifth Article of the original Constitution.

Note: The following text is a transcription of the first ten amendments to the Constitution in their original form. These amendments were ratified December 15, 1791, and form what is known as the "Bill of Rights."

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his Defense.

Amendment VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Appendix B

A Summary of Some Of Our Rights & Responsibilities In The Power of One

1. Read The Declaration of Independence and The Constitution.
2. Commit to Maintaining Personal Balance, Harmony and to Healing Both Our Individual and Collective Wounds
3. Exercise The Full Power of Constructive, Peaceful Protest & Well Planned Assembly
4. Stop The Flow of Our Tax Dollars When Our Government Becomes Dysfunctional
5. Form A United Front
6. Exercise The Power of One At Every Opportunity Daily.
 - a. The Power of The Vote –
 - b. The Power of Our Attention -
 - c. The Power of Our Dollars
 - d. The Power of Our Donations & Support.
 - e. The Power of Collective Bargaining –
 - f. The Power To Give & Withdraw Our Support –
 - g. The Power To Accept Short-Term Discomfort For Long Term Gain– \
 - h. The Power To Execute A Comprehensive & Ongoing National Media Campaign To Reinforce Democracy and Provide Civic Education.
 - i. The Power To Establish Private Sector Competency Groups To Do What Government Cannot Or Will Not Do
 - j. The Power To Establish Elder Councils In All Sectors of Our Society -
 - k. The Power to Establish Non-Partisan and Trans-Partisan Citizen’s Councils

- l. The Power To Redefine The Roles of Our Leaders and The Qualifications They Need To Run For Office
- j. The Power to Exercise Overview of Our Employees
- k. The Power To Revisit and Strengthen Our Founding Documents & Governing Structure.
- l. The Power To Periodically Revisit Our National Vision, Mission and Core Values
- m. The Power To Expand Our Two Party System
- n. The Power To Refresh Our Courts
- o. The Power To Strengthen The Separation of Church and State
- p. The Power To Redefine The Metrics By Which We Measure The Well-Being of Our Nation
- q. The Power To Reject Mediocrity, Practicing Excellence
- r. The Power To Redefine The Customer As The Essential Ingredient, Not An Inconvenience
- s. The Power To Alter Executive/Leader – Worker/Citizen Inequality
- t. The Power To Replace Economics With Meaning and Purpose As The Measure of Success
- u. The Power To Be Accountable For What We Make and What We Do
- v. The Power To Lead with Wisdom, Humanity and Diplomacy

Additional Things The Power of One Will Allow Us To Do

Establish Minimum Requirements For Candidates for All Elected Office

Create A New Level of Public Political Dialogue and Debate

Return Sanity and Candidate Responsibility In Elections

Institute New Forms of Education For “We The People”

Redefine Length Terms & Roles In Our Executive, Legislative & Judicial Branche

Limit The Negative Impact of Special Interests

Create A Level Play Field

Celebrate Democracy

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Heal Our Hatred and Violence with Compassion and Love

Renew Our Vision For Our Democracy

Focus on Governance Rather Than Gamesmanship.

Eliminate The Buying & Selling of Democracy By We The People

Create Sensible & Effective Campaign Finance and Campaign Term Limits

Re-Define and Uphold Truth-In-Advertising Standards

Re-constitute, Re-value and Protect the Fourth Estate

Establish A National Ethics-In-Media Counsel

Eliminate The Role of the Electoral College

Activate and Strengthen The Power of Our Cities

End Our Reliance on Flawed Polling & Survey Methodologies

Convene Periodic Strategic Constitutional Conventions -

Revisit & Redefine the Role of Political Parties –

Step The Visioning Process Down To Individuals -

Re-Envision America At All Levels

Weigh Our Benefits Against Rights As Citizens

Revisit The Role Of the Money Lenders

Gage The Tipping Point

Practice Our Values and Live Our Dreams

Appendix C

About The Author

I have spent much of my career working in the fields of individual, organizational and social change. I am an award-winning author, television producer/director, sculptor. I am also the Co-Founder of AgeNation, a multi-platform media company dedicated to redefining what it means to live consciously and age wisely in the 21st Century and the Co-Founder of Empower New Mexico, a 501C3 dedicated to supporting vulnerable elders.

Under the banners of The Information and Training Company and AgeNation Consulting, the business consulting and training organizations which I founded, I have had the privilege of supporting a number of large organizations, government agencies and national associations and the executive teams that lead them in both the public and private sectors.

In addition to my work in the corporate sector, my wife Sedena and I are co-founders and leaders in conscious living and wise aging field under the auspices of AgeNation.

I have also been privileged to work on projects and initiatives with a number of world leaders including: Desmond Tutu, Lech Walesa, Golda Meir, Mother Teresa and The Dalai Lama. And as President and Founder of two New York based film and television production companies, Theater Visions and Axial Productions, my work has been recognized with International Film Awards, as well as ANDY and CLEO nominations, two regional EMMY Awards and more recently two Telly Awards.

I served as Director of The Institute for Individual and World Peace and the Co-founder The International Integrity Program, as Executive Director of The Sedona Institute and as one of the Directors of The Society for the Advancement of Human Spirit, an organization chaired by The Dalai Lama.

I have also had the privilege of being a lead facilitator for Insight Seminars and was a member of the group that developed The Insight Consulting Group. My background also includes work in the advertising and marketing field as Executive Vice President and Creative Director of Allerton, Berman and Dean, A New York Marketing Firm.

In 1991 I also managed the launch of Jerry Brown's U.S Senate Campaign in California. And served behind the scenes as a special consultant in three presidential campaigns, the first Clinton Campaign, The John Kerry Campaign and the Bill Richardson's campaign.

I am blessed to have discovered an interest and talent as a sculptor and my works in stone, wood and bronze are in a number of public and private collections. As a writer, Sedena and I have co-authored include: "Do Not Go Quietly" (Hay House & On Life Books 2013 – A Gold Nautilus Winner) *"Say Yes to Change"* (Walking Stick Press 2002), *"Authenticity"* (Emmis, 2004), *It's About Time* (Onlife, 2001) and *Making The Best of The Rest of Your Life*.

I am also the author of a trilogy of novels entitled *"Old Stones & Promises"* *"The Merlin Dialogues,"* *"In Extremis,"* *"It's About Time and Timelessness,"* *"A Man Is"* and I am currently at work on two new works of fiction, *"Life After Life, After...."* And *"The Art of Living At The End of Time."*

Sedena and I live in Santa Fe, New Mexico and you can reach me at George@agenaion.com

