



## Wellness and Oneness

Which structures of Mind, Society, World will Covid 19 pandemic reveal next? Like a crisis reveals the character of a leader, there is no pretense to hide behind – for now. The structures are breaking and the systems within are in need of change. But only when the pain-point is relevant to those in power will the discomfort be intense enough to warrant change. This is a chance to re-structure, to be changed by the seeming negative. Just like the old photographic negative which illuminates the dark images, we can see more clearly what may have been hidden at the base of our systems. Everything from structural racism to archaic computer coding to our personal bad habits. Though Covid 19 is an equal opportunity virus the impact is not. Madonna sits in a milky bathtub broadcasting her philosophical insights, while others are standing in food lines. We can't see what we can't see. We need others to show us. Our view is too skewed. It's not personal, it's the biology of brain to make up reality based on implicit bias built all on the history of mind. To wake up takes many views. Now that we have a new view, from the precipice of our pain, and the uncertainty which leaves us teetering on the edge of just which change, we can see what remained in the background. Whether it's deep societal structures, or the structures of our own psyche, we can decide to design forward, or wait for this to be over to go back to our old 'normal'. Fact is, we will never be the same, so in what way do we want to be shaped and to shape our future?

Page | 1

I was listening to [Van Jones dialogue with Charles Barkley](#) on Don Lemon's April 18<sup>th</sup> segment about the disproportionate impact of Covid 19 on the black population. They explored the *Both/And* of - Racism *and* Individual health choices - to learn forward the good care of Self in the midst of limitations designed by a racist society. First clarifying their full acknowledgement of structural racism that has led to the *Pre*-preexisting conditions that make African Americans more vulnerable, e.g., food deserts, food engineering, advertising targeting, redlining, poverty of educational, job, medical resources, based upon a lack of value for black lives. All of this leading to the medical preexisting conditions of obesity, diabetes, heart disease which leaves a system weakened to battle new pathogens. Charles Barkley talked of Self-Responsibility in caring for the wellness of body, (and I would add, mind, brain, behavior). Van Jones added the gathering of his learnings from Covid 19 stating, "the virus is teaching us Wellness and Oneness". I imagine they will get a lot of push back, and in my mind, this is not a blame game, further marginalizing the marginalized, nor relinquishing the responsibility of societal structures that support that marginalization, it is encouraging empowerment, how not to be lulled by a society that wants us lost to avoidant pleasure-seeking addictions that diminish our agency.

This then the 'negative' illuminating, no matter race, what bridges or blocks our health and well-being. Looking at one individual system or to the societal, world, and planet, we can begin to assess the patterns of these systems to see where we might intervene to bridge the resilient robust nature of each. We may have known some of these underlying issues previously but the current pain is requiring a change. In the understanding of neuro-bio-plasticity, it is clear from the research that, based upon what we pay attention to repeatedly, we are changing the very structure and function of our brain, and the cellular health of our body, down to our very DNA and expression of our genes. So, it's worth our consideration toward a real change to see what our repeated patterns of behavior are building in and around us. Time to deconstruct and reconstruct to reveal a better system. Whether we do or don't depends on what motivates and leads us. We could very well solidify old patterns, digging around in the past the brain will attempt to make certain the current uncertainty by fitting it into old compartments of mind and thus behavior. We could intervene with the new. As Van Jones and Charles Barkley were pointing toward, the intervention of Wellness habits of change to strengthen those individual systems.



But this is all dependent upon what our preceding intention is that guides our intervention. As clearly demonstrated by an unintegrated brain\*, (\*different circuitry not linked for full connection), the “leader” of the “free world” and his varied interventions, or lack thereof, are based upon a self-limiting external perception of personal “success”, metrics limited to profit over people because he has no self-value other than outer metrics. His ‘survival’ depends upon economic metrics. Not for the greater good, but his good alone. His brain cannot explore the complexity of uncertainty that might lead to collaborative long-term sustainable change. His actions come from a self-protective survivalistic stance that is deeply embedded in his psyche. Without sustainable inner structures, everything external that does not reflect his worth becomes a threat, and actions based upon threat are reactive and limited. This is a ‘system’ to study.

Instead of limiting this period of time to political divide, or about a particular person, we can see the patterns as either fixed or open, that reside in all of us and thus expressed in what we construct outside of us. This is *our* study, for each of us to know, in our own body, brain, behavior, what is showing itself? To begin the study we could ask as a moment-to-moment inquiry, “When I don’t like \_\_\_\_\_, I tend to \_\_\_\_\_”, as a great and continuous reflection. Without condemning or concluding, just interested in how whatever it is you do either bridges or blocks your health and well-being. Could be simply looking, for example, at the ‘stay at home’ habits like our incessant societal internet connectivity, the portals of escape, where have you been lulled into immediate pleasures that only spend your energy instead of investing? How are you grappling with uncertainty? How do you make yourself more certain? What ways do you avoid the appropriate anxiety? What does freedom mean to you? Is your happiness contingent upon circumstances?

I wonder about this in our American constructs like “TGIF” – push push push, produce, prove, and wait to exhale on Fridays, which often looks like one ‘drug’ or another to find the relief. This leads to ideas about waiting to live, for the vacation, for the retirement, for the deserved reward, but from what I can see, we are not any happier for it. Curious that the cruise industry is one of those structural systems that is now illuminated, though the way in which that industry has brought harm to our environment by dumping into the very oceans that carry its profit, has always been known, but covered. Our current cost analysis has found the benefits of profit and pleasure outweigh the rape of the earth’s resources. Maybe this time of devastation might demand our review of unsustainable systems? The cruise industry reveals an inherent value for immediate reward at any cost. With Covid 19 there is even more to see now in that business model which sells a cruise by counting on the biological pleasure-seeking nature for immediate gratification over long-term wider concerns. The cost is to compromise sustainable habits that lend themselves to generative living, and a healthy bodily system that might survive new pathogens. We get to see the way in which we have been trained to believe that the good life is the pleasures at the tips of our fingers, more food than anyone needs to sustain a life, entertainment galore, until we can’t feel or taste until our lives are over stimulated and over seasoned. Our entertaining rewards are all ways to mitigate our pain, certain of our ‘right to pursue happiness’, but costs us, and the planet’s, health, leading to the pre-existing conditions that make us vulnerable to this virus, and, to the viral want in an American life. What is there to learn?

Like memory, when it is recalled, can be related to in a new way and integrated differently, then again restored with more accurate information, to later be retrieved to inform a revised perception and practical steps forward, we are now seeing what remained hidden, and in the seeing are given an opportunity to update the systems to sustain life. It is a calling, a decisive moment to determine to design forward, or to simply default to old familiar systems that serve a limited intention that blocks the full potential of individuals, societies, countries, world, and planet.



“So much you can’t do if intent on forgetting. So much more you can do if you grab it by the reigns” – Ta-Nehisi Coates on Memory

Charles Barkley and Van Jones <https://youtu.be/0QMXpp75Wqk>