

Session 2 Transcript
Chapter One: Our Wicked Predicament and the Consensus Trance
A New Republic of the Heart: A Guide To "Being the Change" For Real, with
Terry Patten

Terry: Hi, delighted to be beginning again with all of you. I want to begin a little differently this time. Certainly I want to welcome you. I'm delighted that we're beginning to gather as a community of people who get it, who get the situation we're in, who get that sense of our own personal responsibility, who are really interested to be in the questions together. There's something really profoundly beautiful and sacred about that. And I want to interact with you.

I sent out in the emails an invitation to begin with live questions. I think that will be a wonderful beginning point for our conversation. But even before that, I want to set a tone, a sacred container for the conversation. So I'm going to begin by offering a guided meditation to help us make a transition from profane space and profane time, crowded with all the interruptions in our crazy-town public world, into the sacred space and the sacred time that we're invoking here to begin an entirely different kind of conversation and to meet with this level of sincerity, vulnerability and presence to all that is real and good and true and beautiful.

So please, find your way into a posture with a straight spine. Relax your belly. Open your feeling down into your feet and your sitz bones and into contact with gravity and earth. Please open your feeling being, from the heart upward, especially the top of your head, to the qualities of light and freedom above. And take a few deep breaths. Together, let's feel our sincere appreciation and gratitude for the miracle of life, the wonder of this moment in this beautiful world. For the fellowship of one another in this brother/sisterhood we're experimenting with finding our way into together.

And feel with the feeling intelligence that integrates the brain and the head, the brain and the heart and the brain and the hara, with the whole feeling intelligence of the whole being. Then close your eyes. Take a couple of breaths in silence. Let's feel together into these profound impossible questions that we all share. And into this disposition that is present to the miracle of life and the inherent joy of being. And therefore, present in a way that is truly capable of real happiness, even as we are also feelingly present to this enormous civilizational predicament.

So we'll stay in this silent feeling mode until Sherry is able to recognize someone who's raised their hands and promote them to panelist and we can interact live. Please go ahead and raise your hand. We'll wait for this call to enter into its interactive portion. I see that Susan is here with a question. Welcome Susan. You're unmuted. Please go ahead and or ask your question.

Susan: Okay. What I wanted to share were three quotes from Buckminster Fuller that I thought may just fit right in. The first is, "We are called to be architects of the future, not its victims." The second is, "You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."

Terry: Yeah. It's one of my favorites, that one.

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Susan: Yeah. And the third is, "When I am working on a problem, I never think about beauty, but when I have finished if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong."

Terry: Those are each really beautiful. Thank you.

Susan: Thank you.

Terry: This second one is one I have thought about especially long and hard. I think that this course, this convening of this set of conversations is an attempt to do exactly what he is talking about, which is to begin to build a different frequency of connection and friendship and community among us that has the potential to make the non-intimate modes of being that are so prevalent and even often dominant in our world, obsolete. And that's such a grand ambition. And what we're able to realize at first can seem so small and so just-beginning, so preliminary, that we very often have a hard time treating it as being as serious, as substantial, as potentially consequential as it ultimately could become.

It can become hard for us to invest as much belief and energy and commitment and inspiration as the project, by its very nature, requires. So there is a continual process that is part of my practice. And I think appropriately part of all of our practice, that has to do with sort of suspending that disbelief, suspending our own skepticism, opting in and saying, "Well, something healthy, different, truly better has to begin now with me in some way." And sometimes all we're able to do is something we see lots of well-intended people doing in this world.

And it isn't really such a radically new or different pattern if we keep opting into our experiment with one another as if there is no reason it couldn't break new ground, opting in with the sense of possibility, with a willingness for a different paradigm, one that is generous in a different way, one that is not weighted down by the conventions of skepticism that ordinarily would prevent us from believing in what we're intending to do. That is how we begin to create this New Republic of the Heart, this new possibility. Our current way of being a human civilization is going to become obsolete of its own accord. We don't have the weight of trying to make it obsolete.

But the weight we do have on us is to create something that is actually healthy, that expresses wholeness in a more radical way and that therefore would be able to make it obsolete. Oh good. We get to see you. Hi Grant.

Grant: Hey Terry. How are you?

Terry: Welcome.

Grant: There's many questions I'd like to get into, but one element that you brought up in your book was around this issue of the need for constant growth in the economy and the fact that it's really based on a fundamental that I think we're going to have to wrestle with if we're ever going to find a solution. And that's the fact that every dollar that is printed is actually loaned into existence and that whole paradigm of trying to keep up with the interest on a go-forward basis is what kind of underpins this hyper-fascination with growth.

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Grant: And your book cautions that it becomes problematic on a planet with finite resources. How can that possibly be? How could infinite growth continue? And I get that and I imagine some part of the solution may be around moving from a material-based society to growth being indexed by say, the amount of purpose or the amount of the quality of our connections with others. A community like this - we could amplify this infinitely. It wouldn't be a drawn on resources, for example. I imagine it would be moving into the non-material realm, but yet, as we all live under a dollar system or whatever currency, whatever country we're in, that this whole notion of interest tethered to every dollar brought into the system, seems to be the core of our problem.

Grant: And I'm just curious about what's the alternative and if we were to make a change in this arena, are we just essentially canceling all of our debts and starting all over? It's a big problem. And I appreciate the fact that you brought it up so early in your book and I think it's the fundamental root of any of our efforts to make changes. I was hoping we could maybe go into that a little bit.

Terry: I'll be happy to comment on that. I don't think that this is a problem that has a single discrete solution. My answer will be an exploration of deepening this question rather than a full answering of it. There are many ways this could possibly change. One thing is that there is a very real and widespread movement to create alternative currencies, particularly local currencies or currencies that exist only in a certain ecosystem. And I think that's really healthy and valuable.

I do think it's small and kind of at the edges of things. It's not going to change the force of the global economy at first, but those experiments are just like our experiment in community. They're an attempt to make another paradigm work and become healthier. And there are some really vital experiments of that kind. Obviously, the crypto currency, Bitcoin, that world is particularly significant in terms of the size of that economy. And it's true that crypto currencies are not by their very nature inflationary. They don't bear interest by their structural nature, but they do depend upon Bitcoin or other crypto currency mining, which exacerbates the issues. It uses a lot of power actually. It's much more costly than people realize.

So in a sense, for no obvious productive, tangible benefit to human lives we're even more rapidly speeding up our burning of fossil fuels and the whole climate predicament simply through these crypto currencies. So they're not a fully sustainable alternative either. There's also, and much more fundamentally, and this is maybe more at the heart of my answer: there's this whole idea of beginning to participate in a gift economy. That is, recognizing each other as brothers and sisters in a different and more fundamental sense and beginning to relate to one another with a fundamental attitude of generosity and recognizing that our generosity and the friendliness we extend to one another is generative in profound ways.

The basic idea of a gift economy is when I give to you out of the generosity of my heart, without necessarily expecting anything in return. It evokes in you a response of gratitude and an impulse to reciprocal generosity or even to paying it forward to others and that's the virtuous circle we want to be giving emphasis to. Now, I think that we also have to face the fact that none of these things, by themselves, are going to convert the momentum of the global economy. They are potentially healthier models in their practices that uplift us, but they don't necessarily create a different pattern altogether.

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Every one of us has to pay for housing and food and clothing and transportation etc., etc., etc. Mostly in terms of the currency of the realm, which is dollars or euros or whatever, wherever we live, pesos. And we're all, in that sense, kind of enslaved to that system. And how will that system ever change? Well, unfortunately that system probably will have additional crises. We had this liquidity crisis in late 2008 that made solutions that hitherto had been completely unthinkable politically, completely thinkable. As soon as we have a real financial crash, you can think outside the box.

And I think that unfortunately we're going to have such crises and there will be moments in which policymakers will have an opportunity to do a more fundamental redesign of our currency. And I think that's one of the healthiest places that we could go. It's still going to be difficult. We wouldn't have to cancel out debts or securities to transition. We could just redefine what a dollar represents and that dollar would be able to not be inherently interest bearing, but there's still going to be a lot of disruption because lots of people will have retired and be dependent upon their savings or investments.

And any change at that point, no matter how well you create special programs or allowances as a governmental policymaker to account for the largest numbers of people who would be negatively impacted by any redefinition of the value of the primary currency, there are going to be winners and losers in any redefinition and it's going to be profoundly disruptive. Financial crash is the thing coupled with a loss of faith in government that can create social upheaval and breakdown of civil order. And the breakdown of civil order, particularly in the United States with all the guns that are circulating, is an ugly thing to contemplate. It essentially means, at least a temporary dystopia; some measure of dystopian things going on and probably the instantiation of a police state under those circumstances.

So our greatest hope is that we have a more enlightened, rather than a less lightened form. We have a government and collective decision making at the point of any such financial crash or a breakdown of civil order that will be doing its best to restore wholeness and order and harmony and some measure of fairness and compassion to a new regime. And at the end of the book, I talk at some length about what I call the ancient strategy. Earlier in a blog post I called it Buddha Dharma strategy, I think you might remember it.

And that idea essentially is that in the anticipation of disruptive events, people who are really serious policy wonks, can over time build access to key decision makers and well thought-out policy proposals such that under the circumstances of one of these disruptive moments, it might be possible to furnish the white papers and the policy proposals that we think are wisest and most benign and most likely to lead toward authentic sustainability. I think that's enough on that topic for now, but I hope that's helpful.

Grant: Yeah, thank you Terry. And I think given the fact that all oil is still sold in dollars around the world, the petrodollar, I think this move to sustainable energy sources and move away from a dollar denominated global system, handcuffed as it is, to the trade in oil, is going to be a big part of this. In fact, I don't think we will get free of one without getting free of the other. Some of my more conspiratorial friends would suggest that we look around the world at some of the people who've tried to sell oil outside of the dollar system, whether it's Hugo Chavez or in Iran or the guy in Libya, Gaddafi. People kind of mysteriously find themselves no longer among the living, when they try to move around the dollar system. It may be worrying for us as revolutionaries and evolutionaries as we begin to try to

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push against the system; we may find resistance among those who have vested interests in the current system of oil and dollars and the petrodollar, how they're tied together in a kind of incestuous way. Hopefully, our move to sustainable energy might be a time for us to find our way to a currency that's not predicated on printing dollars out of thin air that have interest accrued to them immediately and forcing us into debt slavery forever. It's a complicated issue, but hopefully it's all part of a sustainable future.

Terry: One of my ideas, one of the fundamentals of what I hope to be founding - I haven't talked about this so much to this group of folks in this gathering - but I'm launching a nonprofit that can be a vehicle for the educational and community building dimensions of this New Republic of the Heart coming into being. But this nonprofit can't be a vehicle for all the integral revolutionary activities that I think are important, we'll need other vehicles for this. I don't think we can quite get our act together in time to be a force during the midterms this year, but I think that another way of engaging is political. In some countries that will coincide with the founding of a political party and there's a pretty enlightened political party already represented in the Danish parliament.

There was an integral political party founded in Switzerland even longer ago. There's a new party in Sweden too. There's a theoretical book, of a kind of integral politics called Metamodern Politics, that's having some influence in Europe. I think along the same lines in the United States, because we have a two party monopoly, a third party isn't unfortunately yet a viable focus for our engagement. But it can be that you can pool a lot of political donations and allocate them in key directions. Congressional candidacies would be the focus probably during this, or Senate candidacies, during this upcoming midterm in the United States.

And then along the lines of what I did with my integral Obama initiative in 2012, we can identify some key enlightened policy ideas that we want those who benefit from our donations to seriously consider bringing forward in some way. We'd have to think very clearly about what are going to be the highest leverage policy proposals that we would want the beneficiaries of our donations to seriously carry forward wherever they are represented. But I think that that's a very important piece of it.

But then I think there's another completely different organizational vehicle that is not political but is really all about technological innovation. And I've put some serious time and care and even some money into an initiative around another whole approach, which kind of has to do with wise stewardship of transformational technology. And the basic concept of that is that it is extremely probable that there will be disruptive technologies. Some of which will be Black Swans. All the hip tech people are talking already about biotech and robotics and nanotech and informational technology and super-intelligence and how these are going to revolutionize our world.

But I think there are also going to be some surprises, some so-called Black Swan events. And some of the people who are bringing those forward are going to care that their technology is stewarded in a way that's pro-social, pro-future. And I think that there are going to be some pretty substantial investors who are going to want to see the world changed with world-changing investments. I think there is room for another for-profit entity that we might think of as a venture fund, but it isn't really money looking for winning investments. It's more like stewardship as the key ingredient. So it's a wisdom circle that would attract both the technologies and the money.

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And that has to interact with this issue of currency. It would include a technology that would disrupt the fossil fuel foundations of our current economy and it would have to interact in just the ways you're describing with the currency issues. So I mean, that's kind of an intellectual abstract thing, but it's part of my strategic thinking and it does address what you're observing. So, thank you very much for bringing that forward.

Grant: Thanks Terry. Appreciate it.

Terry: All right. So we have a couple of other people who have come forward. Christina, hi. Welcome.

Christina: Oh great. Thank you very much Terry and all. My name is Christina. I'm calling from Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. I've got actually a basic question to ask your help to clarify a little bit more in terms of the type of conversation that you talk in the book. Because something that is a little bit confusing for me is because we currently live in this kind of cultural clash, this cultural war - especially here, particularly in Brazil, but in many countries where we have multiple stages of development online at this moment, like using the color like red, amber, yellow, green and everybody speaking different things and people hearing different things.

So, when you talk about having profound conversations, subculture conversations, do you mean uniting those different people from different stages of development so we are able to have conversations with all of them? Or do you mean selecting individuals who are already at a later stage and who can more easily advance to another state of development? Because we cannot force values on someone who is not ready for that. So, that is a basic question that I would love you to clarify please.

And also on top of this, you were talking about the gift economy and about the feelings that can generate upon our behavior, on our offer. And my question is - do you think that we have universal values that are common along those different structures of development? That is another question that I have. Thank you so much.

Terry: Again, the really good questions are questions that we are going to deepen in our relationship to not simply answer and do away with. The things you're caring about when you bring forward this question remain as deep questions that we have to stay in an inquiry with, in a relationship to. So we don't dispatch them. We'll get into this in a lot more depth in the later sessions of this course. In a way the question you're asking right now isn't so much about what's in Chapter 1 as it is about what's in Chapters 10 and 11 or 9, 10 and 11 actually.

I think that we have to have a whole bunch of different kinds of conversations and that all of them perform critical functions in terms of the evolution of consciousness and culture and the reknitting of the social fabric and re-establishing wholeness in a whole variety of ways. But there is an awful lot of conversation going on right now in the United States, and perhaps this is also true in Brazil, about reknitting the social contract across the liberal/conservative, left/right divide and that's what everything is focused on.

And often it's the populists of the left or the right who are creating a kind of threat of violence in the system that makes everybody afraid of what that could bring and then - oh well, we really have to learn

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to talk because we don't want to degenerate into a breakdown of our civic discourse and our ability to make wise decisions together. However, I think right now our opportunity is really to talk with people in the later stages of development who have access to higher states of consciousness as well as higher structures and stages of consciousness. And for us to begin to pilot a whole different level of brother/sisterhood and communion.

In evolutionary theory, the next stage of development that might be possible beyond what we see today would be a human super-organism, a social Holon that would be so efficient that it would function at a whole new level. That would be a Sangha, and an idea that I speak about often in the book, which we'll get into again and again across these weeks. The idea that the next Buddha may very well be a Sangha and that our work and our own practice might be to become more and more capable of the intelligence and self-discipline and clarity and awakening and love that are required for us to participate as a real citizen of such a Sangha or New Republic of the Heart.

But I think we can practice our ways of being with one another right here, even in our book study groups, even in our time with one another on our calls like now. And therefore, that's what I will be focusing on with all of you. I don't, however, mean to say that we have to accomplish all of that before we even begin to bridge these other social divides and have conversations between different worldviews. Our different worldviews do have to come into deeper conversation.

One of the initiatives that I'm very inspired about involves Joan Blades, who's of the left (she had founded MoveOn.org) and John Gable, who's of the right, who brought together these conversations that do bridge that cultural divide and that's something I think is a huge priority for us. I also think that there are some particular conversations and in Chapter 10 where I talk about three groups, the innovators, the ecologists and the revolutionaries. And we'll talk about that.

I think there's a whole host of conversations that are super important and one of the first, not the very first, but one of very early projects of the nonprofit will be that I'd like to launch a podcast. I used to conduct public conversations through the Beyond Awakening teleseminar series and I want to start a podcast where I'll try to model different ways of talking. Not all of which will be about this higher we-space, this deeper higher level kind of interaction. So it's a both/and answer. We really need all of it. I think that some of us may have real expertise and real opportunities to bridge social divides in our communities and in our nations.

And I think that work is super important and I don't want anybody to feel undermined, but I think that for most of us, the place where we can make the biggest contribution is at the level of this higher integral evolutionary we-space. And that's what we will be able to do a little bit of even here in this course. So that is what I'm focusing on, but not to the exclusion of the others. Did I answer all of your questions or was there something left?

Christina: Thank you so much Terry. The other question that I asked was regarding the feelings of gratitude and generosity and how does this resonate with different worldviews?

Terry: I think there's some degree to universal solvent. Kindness, love is a universal solvent. It does wash through different worldviews and everybody has access to some measure of it. One of the things

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that Charles Eisenstein points out in his book Sacred Economics is that the use of currency to create fairness in the value exchange, of every value exchange, breaks down something very human. If I babysit for you because I want you to be able to be free to go out and I like your kids, the bond between us is very rich. And then if you then want to give me stuff from your garden because you just feel how much I've extended to you, our bond is very rich.

But if you pay me \$30 for the babysitting and I pay you \$30 for the produce, it deadens the humanity of the exchange and this commodification of exchange is something we're all suffering. So the restoration, the simple acts of kindness and generosity are very crucial - I mean, I think it's a political act to just discover a way to make empathetic, compassionate eye contact with a stranger in public. Not weirdly, intensely looking at somebody and creeping them out, but just breaking through the anonymity is worthwhile. Little acts of kindness, letting somebody go through the door first or lifting something for someone or opening a door or whatever.

All these little acts of kindness are what leaven our world and so those are important. They are part of what I call the social mycelium in the book, but they are not sufficient as a social change strategy. I do think that this principle and spirit of a gift economy is important and that it pervades everything. So I hope that's helpful. Thank you so much, Christina. And it's great to hear from you in Rio. My heart goes out to every Brazilian over the loss of your beautiful museum. I'm sure that everyone's heart is broken over the loss of so much there.

Christina: Thanks so much.

Terry: Sure. Take care. Marjorie, hi. You're unmuted or you will be in a second.

Marjorie: Okay, great. Wow. I had asked a question last week that you had said you might want to address this week, but I also have another question now that I've finished reading Chapter One and I'm going to read the whole book, but I'm going back and rereading it. And at the end of Chapter One you say something like – 'this New Republic of the Heart can go forward...' and then the last sentence, 'if, that is, we grow up and show up at our very best.' And it seems to me that obviously right now, as a collective, we are not functioning at our best. We're barely functioning.

And I sort of feel like Trump and his followers are representing the belly side, the underside of the collective and that perhaps they are actually the scapegoat for the rest of us. So I'm just wondering, as we go forward, to this New Republic of the Heart, for each of us individually, we hope that we're functioning at our best and that we strive for that, but there is going to be a part of us that is not functioning at our best or that is the shadow side of ourselves. And I'm just thinking that we're going to have to go forward anyway. We're going to have to move forward even when we're not functioning at our best. I'm trying to piece together for myself and I'm just wondering if you can shed some light on that.

Terry: Yeah, I can. Well, first of all the whole principle of how to deal with political irresponsibility, which is what we have, you might say pathology or psychopathology, socio-pathology expressing itself in sociopolitical terms - we clearly see that there's something really sick about this, that it needs to not

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carry the day. But that doesn't necessarily mean that our only move is to simply oppose it. However, one of our moves is to oppose it.

One of the ways of understanding what's going on in the United States with Trump, it is to analyze it in terms of the colors, the spiral dynamics or the color scheme, in which we would say that the Republican Party was amber or blue, that there was a modernist center of gravity in American politics that was either sympathetic to traditional values, amber or blue on the Republican side or post-modern values and green on the Democratic side. The democratic side is modernist and post-modernist. The Republican is modernist and traditional. And that there's been this populist upwelling that is essentially red, that has taken over the Republican Party.

So what we're we dealing with is opportunism, selfishness. And the thing about red is, at the level of the kind of society we have right now, it's pathology. It's a cultural regression and it's essentially negative. And the only thing that red understands according to that system is power. It means essentially be overpowered because trying to be more understanding, trying to be more sympathetic, trying to get their point of view, is futile. You're going to simply have to overpower them. The only way you're going to be effective with that kind of action logic, the logic of the action of people who are thinking like that, is such that they simply have to lose. We all win some and lose some. They have to lose some at this point in time. That's my best understanding.

There's a lot of truth in that. But as an individual, we're always faced with individuals in our lives and there is a faction within the Trump supporting world that is functionally evil: I think Trump managed to get 100% of the psychopath vote, the racist vote, the ethnocentrically violent Nazi vote. We can't really reason with it. But most of the Trump supporting world is much, much better than that, much healthier than that, much more capable of wholeness.

And in that regard, I think the most effective thing we can do in our conversations with Trump supporters very often is to find places where we resonate. Often the deepest place we can resonate is over common shared values. But often the first thing you have to resonate over is maybe, I don't know, cooking or cars or something you're both interested in that you genuinely enjoy. It gives you a chance to remind yourselves of your human connections. When there is a family connection, like we both love grandma or whatever it is, there is an opportunity to resonate. And sometimes the most creative thing we can do in these difficult conversations is to just restore social bonds. So that's often the skillful move that's available to us.

As far as showing up at our best or showing up at our worst. How are we at our worst now? How are we at our best? What can we do to restore our best? The most important thing that you can do is to be a practitioner, which means that you have to be both Yin and Yang. That is, you have to be questioning yourself, opening yourself up to new possibilities, willing to learn in beginners mind, holding these big questions. Those are Yin moves and they tend to be the rare moves.

I emphasize them a lot in my book because in the Yin Yang symbol there's a little dot of white in the black side and a little dot of black in the white side and that's the source of the power, where we can really kick ass. We've got to Yin-open into a kind of profound receptivity and surrender, from which comes a kind of truth, a kind of inherent authority, out of which we're more powerful. And that's super

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important. So there's that but equally we have to be Yang. And that Yang, on the superficial level means that our practice has to involve us striving for excellence, not just reformatting the hard drive, not just popping over to a new paradigm, but being as healthy and as productive and as willing to endure the discomfort that is a part of a self transcending practice for everyone at every time.

And therefore, the more that you are alive in a process, a self-transforming process that is getting you outside your comfort zone - you're waking up. You really are getting past it. You're getting over yourself. You're not just sleepwalking in the same old/same old, but you're actually breaking new ground. That is what is going to give your conversations with other people a possibility, a liveliness, a potential for creativity. Even a humor and a playfulness and that capacity for affection, a little sexiness, like all the pizzazz that makes things really flow comes from you really being alive, really showing up for the next moment with that kind of openness and that kind of curiosity. And that committed energy that has you bright, that has you alive, that has you showing up for this event of life.

And that's showing up at our very best. And so finding ways for us to be doing that and doing it in a self-aware, self perpetuating way. That's the key. So I hope that's helpful.

Marjorie: Yeah. Can I ask another question?

I think what I'm tapping into is that when we are striving to be our best, there is the shadow side of that. And I think, unless I've got it wrong, which is certainly possible - even at the higher levels of development there's still shadow or there are still the parts of us that we do not want to acknowledge. So even when we're striving to function at our best, the aspects of us that do not function at our best or that are negative or that are weak or asleep, those areas are still present. It's the whole paradox we're actually tapping into here. But to be able to hold space for all of it, to be whole, would allow space for the aspects of ourselves that are not strong, that are weak or that ... I mean, we're humans...

Terry: That's such a deep topic and it can be explored very, very deeply for a very long period of time. I want to offer a rather brief answer at the moment. If we're self-skeptical, if we get that shadow operates in every psyche and we are to some degree self-skeptical and we really practice beyond the negativity of our beings such that we're finding our way then we are positive, proactive, engaged. When you're practicing, you're not enacting a dejected, depressed way of being. You're in a somewhat can-do mode. You're finding your way past things.

The fact that shadow will tend to operate needs some measure of attention, but the fact that you're opting to really bring in the light is where you're standing. So you continue bringing forth what's best in yourself. Yes, the shadow will creep in and you need to continue to be humble enough and self-skeptical enough that you keep growing, but don't let that become your excuse for losing that fundamental can-do, positive, proactive orientation that really is the soul of practice.

I just put that forward for now and this is a topic we can go into more. There'll be quite a few opportunities to explore the shadow in the weeks ahead.

Speaker 7: One of these supplemental readings you suggested was *What Lies Beneath: The Understatement of Central Climate Risk*. It goes into tipping points, carbon budgets, Arctic sea ice, polar

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ice mass, sea level rise, that kind of thing. It is kind of in the context of the United Nations climate report with statements from scientists and the net of it is that the report obviously underestimated the risk and the reality of climate change.

Terry: The speed. The speed with which it's moving. Yeah.

Speaker 7: Right. I want to understand what the inner goal analysis of that kind of problem is. In other words, if I, as a person, go to a doctor and I get tested and the doctor says, "You got to do this." I'm going to do it. At a global level we have the evidence, the tests. And yet, there is a lack of response and lack of will and an underestimation. So what's the integral view of the source of this problem?

Terry: Well, I don't think there's one single integral view. Years ago, Ken Wilber interviewed Michael Crichton on *Integral Naked* and Michael Crichton was expressing some skepticism about the climate science. Michael Zimmermann, the co-author of *Integral Ecology*, he's a lifelong environmentalist and a friend, who I really respect, but he also detected various kinds of group think among climate scientists and had room in his mind for some measure of skepticism.

One of the ideas I put forward in Chapter Six of the book, which we'll get to in a few weeks, is the idea that there is no one integral view that can bring together all the perspectives that are necessary, but that the integral practice is to, and to put quotes around the phrase, "to be in conversation with", that we can be in conversation with a variety of perspectives that have relevance and that need to be taken into account.

I am in conversation with a whole variety of perspectives. I think that the particular perspective embodied in that report, the *What Lies Beneath* report, is particularly important because it's a scientifically-based empirical attempt to imagine that there's such a thing as an objective truth and it tries to get at it. It's a modernist document, a rational document. And that drives at what has tended to be missing from the global conversation about climate change, the IPCC report.

And what it says is there's a systematic bias against appearing alarmist because there are so many attacks from vested interests in the United States, who would say they're on the right, and that therefore, because of this potential vulnerability to attack, the climate scientists have consistently equivocated in ways that have understated the urgency and the speed with which this disruption can take place. And I want to be in conversation with that point of view and I think that it has a lot more substance to it. Everybody's got an opinion, but there's a lot of science behind that argument.

I don't think it's necessarily the final word however. I think that I need to be in conversation with it and I take it very seriously. And I think that there are the potential for positive Black Swan events that create a future very different from what it seems to imagine is likely. Now, an integral relationship to all this, in my view, right now needs to bias toward the position that has been called alarmist, but it needs the bias toward taking radically, seriously an urgent civilizational dilemma and having a real conversation about it in a way that we tend not to do. But not in the mode of anxiety and alarm.

Usually recognizing urgency, we tighten up and we think, "I've got to do something now." And we narrow down our attention to a more narrow focus and that way of responding to this is not going to

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bring out our best or produce what we need. So it's a little bit paradoxical because a lot of what we have to take seriously tends to draw us toward a way of being that isn't optimal. I keep talking about passing through the darkness to a different kind of positivity on the other side. That has to be emphasized because in terms of a cool, objective discussion of the facts, the postmodernists are right that that is impossible. That our emotions, our responses, everything we care about being threatened - that comes into play and that affects things.

So I suggested some caution when I recommended that reading. I said, "It's more challenging. It's not for the faint of heart." And I think that there is something to practice with here. I imagine you're asking the question because you found it really disturbing.

And the way that you're disturbed by it, I think of as being really valuable grist for the mill of your own maturation and growth and development. I want to acknowledge that's also a part of what we're dealing with when we talk about this.

Speaker 7: It does seem to be the nature of politics and human consciousness that the right ... sort of the corporate mentality, they're sort of defending the turf. In fact, they have an easier position or a more popular position than the other side. Don't you think? I mean, because the other side, it requires people to make sacrifices and to be challenged, as opposed to going along with business as usual.

Terry: Well, that's right, except that they fare better until you have Hurricane Harvey. They fare better until you have a wildfire wiping out 5000 homes in Sonoma County in Napa. They fare better until the actual objective consequences of climate change becoming more rapid and sudden and profoundly disruptive than they have accounted for begin breaking through that denial barrier. So alas, in ways we wish were not the case, time is on our side in terms of the argument itself.

I think that the part of what we're dealing with is being here with each other in the midst of a very profound challenge. I think you're going through a stark confrontation with a shocking reality that you're absorbing more fully as you face the information in that particular report. And I honor that and I want to be your friend in it. And I think there is something really good for us on the other side of it. And in a way, I need to allow you to have your own passage through that lonesome valley, because that's what's steeling your spine and tempering your soul and deepening you to be a full participant in another possibility. And the courage and intellectual and moral integrity that causes you to take it seriously, I want to honor, respect, appreciate, express fellowship with, but also to some degree to trust your process and let you follow it. In some sense it's - I'll meet you on the other side. The deepest work is on the other side of some reckoning that we're all going through.

Speaker 7: Thank you.

Terry: There's something important that I want to make sure we're able to do. I hope many of you will be able to stay a little later than the 1:15 stop-time. It's only in seven minutes and I want to ask Sherry to help us do a poll. Because we might want to change something about the way we set up these calls and I want to hear from everyone who is on the call right now and how you feel about this possible change, which Sherry can explain.

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Sherry: Okay, great. Thanks Terry. So many of you have written in and requested a little bit more of a community feel. So we would love to create that with you. And there are a couple of differences. I'm just going to go over some pros and cons of Zoom Webinar versus Zoom Meeting. So those will be two choices that will appear on a poll on your screen in just a moment. But let me just give you a little bit of background.

With Webinar, which is the platform we're using currently, used last week and this week, it's a very simple, straightforward platform. Anyone asking a question, as you've seen today, can appear on video and there is minimal visual distraction and possibly less of a community feel. We opted to go with Webinar originally in an attempt to reduce the visual distractions.

The second option is Zoom Meeting and in Zoom Meeting we can see each other. You'll be able to see everyone in the call if you wish to turn on your video. There is a stronger sense of community that comes with that. There is more opportunity for conversation with the option to move into a smaller discussion groups. The Meeting option can come with a little bit of distraction just because we do see everyone on video. Now, we can and will invite you to keep your video turned off during certain portions of the call. And the only other drawback of Meeting, which is fairly simple, would just mean a bit of a change in the meeting number and length. So we would communicate that to you by email.

So, given that information and other information that you may have in other experiences, I'll send out the poll now and if you could just respond by checking either Zoom Webinar or Zoom Meeting and then please remember to click the submit button. You should be seeing that on your screen now. It will take about 20 to 30 seconds. The votes are coming in quickly. Thank you so much for participating. We'll just wait a few more seconds. Things are slowing down a little.

Terry: Everybody, we appreciate it if you can all vote. That's helpful to us. Okay. Thank you very much. We'll take that into account. We may make a change. We think there are pluses and minuses to all of us.

Well folks, I'd like to take a moment. This particular session, by its very nature, was a little bit more conceptual and a little bit less transformational, I would say, more a matter of understanding our situation. There are other ways of interacting that are possible that I hope will begin to come into our future meetings more richly.

However, everything we talked about was in terms of understanding it more clearly and in a way this was I'd say didactic, a more academic exploration of the ideas here. And there's something about that, what I was addressing is that that's juicy to our understanding, but it's not as juicy to our feeling. And it's important to me that our gatherings also be juicy to our feeling being. So I want to take a moment to go into one of the things I do that's probably among the juiciest, which is prayer. I don't pray to some imagined mythic God. I pray to the unimaginable source of all things. The one who causes me to meet the people that come into my life that are wonderful and that create more learning and love and community. The invisible source of inspiration and understanding. The invisible source of all good things in life, upon which I realize I am completely dependent.

And I want to take a moment to turn to that source. You are in some sense my deepest relation. You, who are beating my heart, I do not know who you are or where you are. And yet, I am so grateful. In

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fact, to turn to you seems almost impossible because you are not separate from me. And yet you are Grace itself. You are everything that I love. You are the one to whom all gratitude ultimately goes. You are the divine. You are the mystery itself. You are easiness itself. Thank you so much.

Thank you for giving us the courage, the intellectual honesty, the seriousness and the sense of humor that make it possible for us to stick our heads up above the consensus trance of denial and face what's hardest to face and somehow have what's best in our hearts and spirits, survive that, such that we can have a deeper, more profound, more authentic meeting with ourselves and with reality and with each other.

Please help us to stay in this process to keep learning, to keep exploring, to keep deepening and to make the best use possible of our opportunities together as we explore all this. Thank you so much. Please grace us. Grace everyone with new strength, new willingness, new humility, new courage, new commitment, such that what we do here together finds new traction and in-depth new expression in the time ahead. Thank you so much.

Okay. We will be finishing up here in a minute. I will send you some deepening questions and reflection questions for Chapter Two. It will be posted on our course home page probably any minute. You'll also find the MP3 and PDF of Chapter Two there. And we'll gather again next week at this time to have another exploratory session. We'll let you know in the meantime about any changes.

Also, tomorrow ... Oh, this is very important. I hope not too many people have left. Your last opportunity to ask to be put into a book study group where you'll be able to meet and discuss these points is today. So we need to get those from you and we'll take what we get. And tomorrow we'll create the groups and we'll put you in touch with people who might be able to meet with you. So we hope that aspect of the course will begin very soon. Thanks so much. Take care.