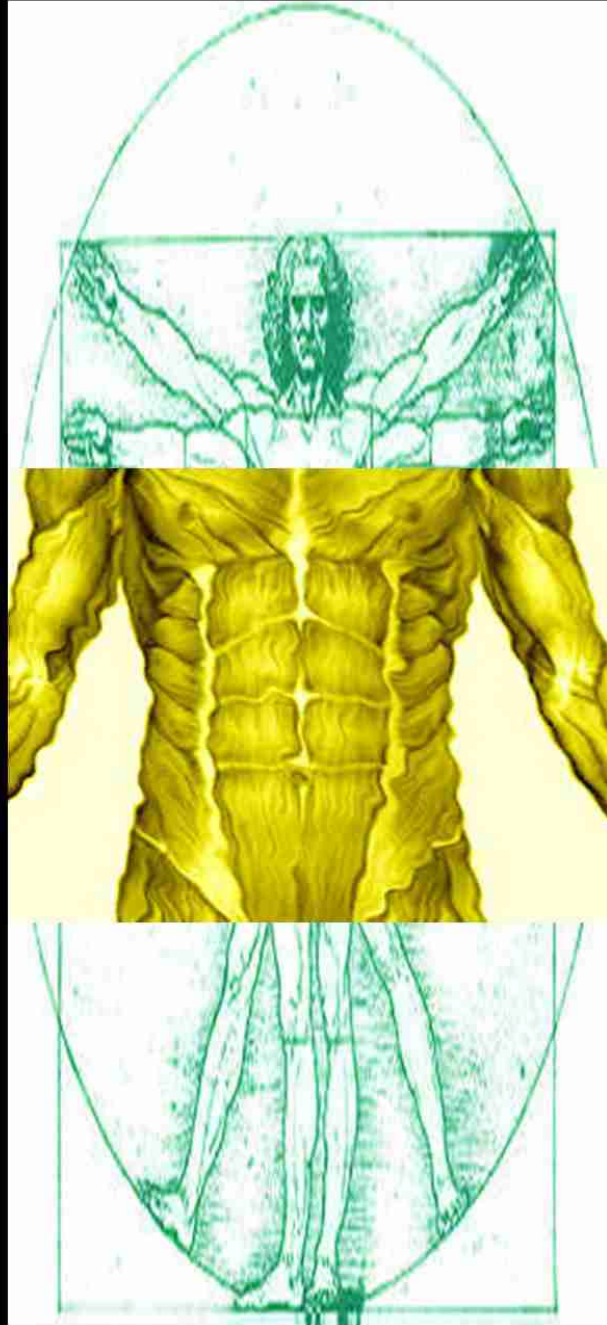


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IMPACT TIMES

Volume 2: Issue 7:
Fall 2009



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AMERICA'S HEALTH CRISIS: HOW TO FIX IT— I am not a physician or a research scientist but I have worked with and/or collaborated with enough brilliant minds in the past decade, including top physicians and scientists from major medical, educational and research institutions around the world such as Harvard and the National Institute of Health, to name two, to know a thing or two about health-related issues. A disturbing trend happening in this country, as many of us already know, is that Americans are not getting any healthier. We are becoming a nation of industrial feedlot. We fatten our cattle with harmful supplements other than pasture grass and we fattened our people with these inorganically fed cattle in the form of hamburgers and steaks. As the old saying goes, what goes around comes around. Whether they are the chemicals that we used to control infection that spreads among the animals in crowded and industrialized cultivating environment or the fatty foods that we consumed each day, the tale of the two tragedies continues to unfold. The days of people making an honest living with their two hands on green pastures are gone. Also gone are the days when Americans had to walk to work on dirt roads flanked by tall trees. We are living in a civilized and industrialized society flooded with dietary supplements, fast food chains, and congested traffic. The twenty-four hour marketing schemes that float on television screens and billboards do not help in our fight for survival and search for longevity. For each new pill that we put into our mouth, each gram of unhealthy fat that we consume, and each step of exercise that we neglected to take, we cut short our life span by an immeasurable amount. We are the most obese nation on earth and the trophy that we are about to receive is not something of which we should be proud.

A 2009 article published in the *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians* shows that one in four deaths in this country are cancer-related. Millions of Americans are dying each year from this disease. Cancer itself is only one of the many leading causes of death in America. Other top killers include heart diseases, respiratory diseases, diabetes, accidents, and suicides. Yes, suicides and accidents, the result of high stress. We are so obsessed with burning calories that we forget to ask ourselves why we have to burn our calories to begin with. Why is this nation's obesity rate spinning out of control? Why are we celebrating weight loss competitions on reality TV? The solutions to our current health issues require the participation of all three entities: the consumers, the manufacturers and the policy makers. Unless we are living in a totalitarian controlled government, no one can tell us what to eat, how to exercise or when to rest. It is up to us, the consumers, to enforce a workable regime by which we can abide to ensure the stability of our sacred temple, our body. The basic rule of thumb is to maintain a sense of balance physically and mentally. Creating that balance involves getting the proper nutrients, regularly exercising, and allowing the body time to rest. The body needs time to heal itself and getting enough sleep is essential. There is no such thing as I'm too busy to sleep. To where are you rushing, death?

How we exercise is a personal choice. Whether we do yoga, jog, run, or engage in intimate physical activities to keep the heart racing and the body healthy, it is up to us to decide. What matters is that we do it routinely and not carry our activities to the extreme. Too much of anything is never a good thing and too little of something can prove just as lethal. When we don't exercise or eat properly, we built up fat deposits that could clog our arteries and veins. Cardiovascular diseases and hypertension, two major killers of Americans, are examples that arise from an unhealthy diet and a lack of exercises. While we do our part, it is also up to our policy-makers to do their part, making and enforcing rules that can benefit the society as a whole. This government must pass stricter laws to enforce healthier food production. During my past visit to Japan, I noticed a substantial difference in how foods are served in fast food chains. For example, the selections of Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonalds in Japan are smaller and leaner in content than those served in the U.S. These trends do not come about voluntarily by the fast food chains themselves. The Japanese government had a major say in how its citizens are to be fed before they even allow these American based companies to establish a branch in their country. In the meantime, while policy makers on Capital Hill debate over which healthcare bill to pass, you, an American citizen, must take aggressive steps now to take care of yourself. For goodness sake, get out of the house and walk a few miles instead of sitting on a couch watching TV. It is a rare sight in America today to see neighborhoods filled with people playing outside. The green lawns have become a national pastime for viewing rather than for tramping on. Each front yard may be nice and pretty and each house that lines each street may be sturdy, but the problem lies behind the closed door. Once our workday comes to an end, we drive home in our cozy car, sitting for hours in congested traffic, and once we get home, we edge our vehicle into the garage and shut the door. "DO NOT DISTURB!" the door sign says. That is the state of America. The consequences, if this trend keeps going, are not only costly, but also deadly.

Richard Quan
Managing Editor, Impact Times

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HEALTHCARE IN AMERICA— No one can argue that the healthcare industry in this country isn't broken. It has been for decades. That something hasn't been done before now proves the power of special interest groups in Washington who would rather stay the present course, as well as the inability, or unwillingness, of our elected officials to accomplish much to benefit We, the People, who elect them to office. Opposing pundits argue that President Obama's plan is socialism. In 1961, before he ever ran for public office, Ronald Reagan said, "One of the traditional methods of imposing statism or socialism on a people has been by way of medicine. It's very easy to disguise a medical program as a humanitarian project. Most people are a little reluctant to oppose anything that suggests medical care for people who possibly can't afford it." Unless someone comes forth with a better alternative, one that doesn't involve changing nothing, I back Obama's plan and hope that, when the time comes, I'll have access to the best care available to me the same quality of care accessible to the very rich. Isn't that part of what equality means?

J. Conrad Guest
Contributing Editor, Impact Times

I'M NO EMILY POST. I applaud Casual Friday expanding to fill the workweek, enjoy no longer feeling social pressure to ponder my silverware placement, and fully appreciate a woman's right to wear slacks on all occasions; but enough is enough. Lack of tech-etiquette breeds anarchy, and since Ms. Post never sent an email, answered a cell phone, or tweeted her posse, someone needs to step in. Basic etiquette cannot be allowed to disappear like files in a hard drive crash. Reluctantly, and humbly, I will attempt to address the most egregious contemporary faux pas in her stead:

Cell Phone Usage & Texting: Cell phones are a sci-fi dream come true, but just because you can talk to anyone, anywhere, anytime doesn't mean you should. Do you really need to converse on the phone while driving, grocery shopping, in a movie theater, or when having lunch with actual, physically present company? After all, Star Trek's Captain Kirk didn't answer his tricorder with: "Hi, Bones, where are you? At lunch...? Yeah. Yeah. No. Nothing. What's up with you...?" Answering such calls is rude to the people present, and, sorry folks, texting, like a silent fart, stinks too. In essence, you are saying to those present, "This phone call, or text message, which is most likely about nothing, is more important than you." The world will survive if you wait until you've actually finished your lunch to tweet everyone that you had lunch.

Making a phone call and/or texting while driving is not rude, it is extremely dangerous (and in many states now, thankfully, illegal.) Let this sink in: your idle chat could kill someone. Taking or making phone calls while in theaters, churches, or during any public performance should warrant the death penalty. A friend of mine, to prove a point, has begun inserting his own dialog into any overheard public cell phone conversations, figuring that if he can hear what's being discussed, then it qualifies as public conversation. I applaud his logic and encourage everyone to adopt this practice.

Group Emails: The ease with which a group email can disseminate information is laudable, and when used for such things as broadcasting address changes or important announcement, it serves its purpose. But being on someone's group email list for funny links, YouTubes, chain-mail nonsense, political action pleas, things containing large attachments, or generally useless snarkings, relegates that sender to cyber hell, AKA my spam filter. An equally annoying corollary to the group email is your own witty response sent via the "reply all" button. You assume I care about your "LOL" or "IMHO" and frankly, you assume far too much. You are a Bandwidth Bandit, IMHO. LOL.

A last thought regarding emails: it is argued that emails are not letters, and therefore do not require the receiver to reply. This is a lame excuse for sloth. The email is a valid form of written communication, and, in case you haven't noticed, has usurped snail-mail, so any personally addressed email requires acknowledgement and response. Anyone who neglects responding is rude, and anyone operating a business or service neglecting to respond to a query is unprofessional. Literary agents, please take particular notice.

Blog Decorum: I have yet to understand the need to make one's personal diary public. Most teenage girls of my era hid theirs under their mattresses and had the kind that would only open with a key. Now, it seems, there is a desire to Twit (an apt term if ever there was one) every little, boring bit of one's life to the entire world. To each his own, and I still have the choice to log off, but there should be certain considerations taken when one is addressing the entire world. Trashing someone else in a private diary may serve a valid therapeutic need, but to do so in front of the entire world is defamation of character, so wise up. And, like a game of Telephone, rumors spread, change, and grow, and on the web, everything has the potential to go viral, so think, think, think before you post your poisoned darts.

Likewise, to those who comment on other's blogs: keep in mind that, even though you may possess an avatar and/or pseudonym, some real person is on the receiving end of your flaming, so have a heart. If you are prone to habitual flame-wars, you might want to examine your own psychology, and if you have more of a tendency toward verbal violence on the internet than you would otherwise express in real life, seek therapy. In short, put a smile in your snark.

I realize this call for exercising etiquette in a digital age is tilting at wind generators, but I urge all those reading this to remember one great truth: you have power over yourself. You can change your own behavior, you can educate by example, you can refuse to become the thing you hate, and maybe, just maybe, our new tech-etiquette can go viral too.

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AFTER WATCHING President Obama speak earlier this month on the progress of his health care reform bill, I'm resting a little easier, even if I'm a little uneasy with some of his claims, namely that this reform will pay for itself.

No one can argue that the health care industry in this country isn't broken. It has been for decades. That something hasn't been done before now proves the power of special interest groups in Washington who would rather stay the present course, as well as the inability, or unwillingness, of our elected officials to accomplish much to benefit We, the People, who elect them to office.

Opposing pundits argue that Obama's plan is socialism. In 1961, before he ever ran for public office, Ronald Reagan said, "One of the traditional methods of imposing statism or socialism on a people has been by way of medicine. It's very easy to disguise a medical program as a humanitarian project. Most people are a little reluctant to oppose anything that suggests medical care for people who possibly can't afford it."

I don't deny Obama's bill more than hints at socialism, and I'm nothing if not a proponent of smaller government. Lately my inbox has been filling with email slamming the plan and telling me that it won't work, and, worst, questioning Obama's honesty. Sadly, none of them offers an alternative. I can't speak for Obama's integrity any more than I can for the next man. Who can know what is in a man's heart? He's eloquent, that much is certain, perhaps the best orator we've had in office since Reagan, but until he is caught in a lie I'm prone to give him the benefit of the doubt, as I would any man. Frankly, I'm more leery of those who are making this a partisan issue. For too long government has been party pitted against party, at the expense of the nation.

Many say Obama is forcing, rushing, this bill through Congress. No, he has an agenda, and he affixed a timeline to get this task done. For too long Congress has discussed and debated this issue, then tabled it for further discussion later, and another year passes, another term expires, and the decades elapse while the status quo is maintained. Kudos must go to Obama for making something happen. If nothing else positive can be said of Obama during the first nine months of his presidency, it's that he's a doer.

I turn fifty-three in October. I've been concerned for many years over the future of my own health care, that it won't be there for me when I may need it most. I've gone so far as to voice a conspiracy theory that health care for the rich may go a long way toward solving the Social Security and Medicare problems.

That something needs to be done is obvious. Some minor tweaks along the way during the last forty years may have prevented the monstrous and potentially painful overhaul that now stands before us.

Change to some, including me, comes hard, but a change to the health care industry is necessary if the Baby Boomer generation, and those that follow, are to have any hope for the health care that most of us will, at some point, need.

Unless someone comes forth with a better alternative, one that doesn't involve changing nothing, I back Obama's plan and hope that, when the time comes, I'll have access to the best care available to me the same quality of care accessible to the very rich. Isn't that part of what equality means?

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RAVAGED BY A SERIES OF MISSTEPS, bad luck, or a combination of the two, the remnants aren't enticing. All that work for nothing, he thought. The most well laid plans, a perfect entrance and exit strategy if there ever was one. Then something spectacular happened. Or perhaps not a single cataclysmic event, only a series of well orchestrated incidents that totaled up to failure. Why me, he asks. I've always tried to do people right; treat with respect and kindness. Tried to help others reach their goals.

I remember as a child riding through Panama City with my parents, enjoying the water of the gulf rolling in, than back out like clockwork. Opposite the beach stood rows of houses and businesses, some new, a few old and battered, others nothing more than a foundation, with debris still covering some. The remnants of a violent storm a year earlier, still leaving a trail of evidence. As a young child, maybe eight years old, I looked at this stark reminder with wonderment. With youthful innocence and no predetermined ideas of why it couldn't be done, I remember thinking, why don't they just rebuild? Got the water right here, it's a great spot, the others rebuilt, why don't they just do it?

Life's heavy weights had not yet begun to pull on me, one negative thought at a time, a sharply spoken word by an authoritative figure, well meaning people that simply had no ambition to do anything and could only teach what they knew. In my youthful bliss I simply couldn't understand it.

Why do some choose to rebuild, while others seem to vanish, leaving behind a trail of debris and unfulfilled dreams?

The debris field may be the most prevalent deterrent to recovery for a failing enterprise. Storms will come and go, taking with them a fair share of dreams and hard work. A solid foundation will stand the test of a storm, despite the destruction of the main structure. The foundation, upon which everything of substance began, is still there, waiting to be rebuilt upon, better this time, correcting a few mistakes along the way. But to rebuild, the debris field must be dealt with. Painful and overwhelming, the cleanup takes time. Credit takes time to re-establish, memories are sometimes slow to fade. It's tough to see over the pile of reminders.

Lying in the debris field, bleeding and full of despair, a half wall remains, reminding of what once was and could have been. A painful reminder of the failures of one's past. Dwelling on the remnants will not entice anyone to move forward, but only to feel despondent. What's the use? I'm a failure, I can't do anything right.

Cleanup is essential. No rebuilding is possible until it's complete.

On your back, looking up at the overwhelming scene, a swift blow comes across your head, a piece of lumber from your dismal failures. So expected, yet so unexpected. Could be a creditor, with others lined up waiting their respected turns. Could be a family member, full of venom, waiting for the opportunity to rub salt in your wounds. Perhaps it's that good friend you thought you knew so well. Definitely a naysayer.

If only they could walk in my shoes.....

Sadly, some never build it back. Better than before, off the same foundation they have already worked hard to establish. One day in the not so distant future, a savvy investor will walk by the field of debris and say, "If they aren't going to rebuild, it, I am."

Start with an unshakable foundation and mix with determination. Nothing can stop you now.

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DO YOU REMEMBER SOYLENT GREEN?

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by M. Sandi Aigoro

DO YOU REMEMBER SOYLENT GREEN? This timeless movie starring Charlton Heston depicted seniors making a choice to die with dignity aided by assisted suicide. In 1973, the concept of assisted suicide was just beginning to emerge. The '70s were a time when young Americans challenged the values of prior generations. Sex and sin were okay and indulged among friends and strangers. Wife swapping and other risky behaviors were tolerated. The '70s also introduced integration of the work force in America, when women and minorities, black and brown workers gained entry to a white male dominated world. Values continue to shift.

Recently, some American corporations pursuing profit have challenged the value of experience and loyalty provided by their senior employees. A question emerges, "Can policy be leveraged to protect older women and minority employees (like it has for white men) by using a case of reverse discrimination?" What would happen if a group of senior workers presented a case that claimed reverse discrimination by a corporation that displaces seniors for younger workers, on grounds that their employer/employee contracts were breached because their replacements were less expensive? At first glance, the '70s were supposed to represent freedom for women and inclusion of minorities. Two generations later, the 21st Century has evolved into the removal of older workers; anyone over thirty is threatened. The struggle with discrimination is submerged beneath the fear of job loss.

The more things change, the more they stay the same. In 1963, Congress received a Civil Rights Bill authored by President Kennedy to deal with discrimination in employment, education, public accommodations and voting. In 2009, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission still struggles with the employment of Hispanic Americans who are often discriminated against by others, including those in some protected groups. At second glance over the past 40 years, looking at the progress or vision from the '70s when corporations opened doors to new ways to view and manage ethics, discrimination and harassment, things are not much better under the surface. Seniors are still being forced into retirement too early, too often. Consultants who now deliver harassment training in corporate environments are challenged to walk a thin line of acceptance by their corporate clients and protecting the rights of the employees who depend on their educating them on their rights.

Employees are trained to take their concerns to their employers i.e. to supervisors, HR, or diversity officers who are also on the payroll. This is the primary reason why women and minority seniors do not report harassment, and fear loss of their retirement and other benefits. In fact workers, especially seniors, do not feel protected by the law or the courts. Like the judicial system, corporations are tainted by political decisions that skim the surface of the law, ethics and fairness based on a party's dictates. In a microcosm of our society, we can examine the complexities our seniors face daily. Senior perks are challenged by younger employees as preferential. Seniors are often eradicated from the workforce and placed into senior camps (senior complexes) to protect them or otherwise exploit them. They are laid off or fired because they are felt to be too expensive, after investing years of opportunity costs toward the corporate bottom line. Was the '70s a prophetic view of our society today? Age discrimination affects women, blacks, white men and Hispanic seniors alike. After age 30, a career can end abruptly without any justification except the bottom line. Only one step remains to bring the prophetic Soylent Green to life, which is to have the senior finish the cycle of corporate disenfranchisement by agreeing to assisted suicide, decreasing their retirement costs.

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During the first moments of hunger, real hunger.

You feel a burning in the center of your chest, under your lungs, and you become alert.

As that moment quickly passes, the growling at the pit of your stomach begins , and you become concerned.

Then fatigue embraces the situation, you're now not as coherent as normal, and you're fidgety, reckless and
needy.

During the last moments of hunger, you're ready to burst.

You're ruined.

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"And make not Allah an obstacle to your doing good and guarding against evil and making peace between men."

— Koran 2:224

IRAN'S WOUNDED REGIME under the leadership of the incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been relentless in its persecution of political dissidents and in its imprisonment of activists, advocates, and journalists. On the morning of June 13, 2009 the Islamic Republic News Agency, Iran's official news agency, announced that with two-thirds of the votes counted, the hardliner Ahmadinejad had become re-elected with 63% of the votes cast and that the reformer Mir Hossein Mousavi had received 33% of the votes cast. Subsequent to the disputed presidential election held on June 12th, Iranian proponents of Mir Hossein Mousavi took to the streets of Tehran and many other cities to kick off a green revolution. They wanted to claim their votes and protest against the alleged fraud. Their hopes and aspirations for reform have been shattered, but they did not keep quiet. They expressed their anger towards the alleged irregularities during the vote. Political dignitaries abroad voiced doubts about the authenticity of the outcome.

Iranians followed the advice of the reformer Mr. Mir Hossein Mousavi and launched a green protest rally without committing acts of violence. They relentlessly marched along the streets and chanted the phrase "give us our votes back". The intent was on promoting peace, justice, and non-violence within the Islamic jurisdiction. However, the Basij and the Revolutionary Guard under the ultimate ruling of the supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei were called on to put an abrupt end to these demonstrations.

During Iran's post-election political unrest, the Basij militia killed and arrested many including Shapour Kazemi, the 62-year old brother of Zahra Rahnavard, Mir Hossein Mousavi's wife. Kazemi was among thousands of protesters who have been arrested by Iran's militia and police. Protesters instead retaliated against the Basij with their protest marches. They relentlessly chanted the phrases "death to the dictator" and "give us our votes back" and showed their remarkable resilience.

Iran's recent crackdown gives rise to a new awakening; a spirit of hope pervades the entire nation. So far, Mir Hossein Mousavi has gained the trust of his people and is planning on standing by his people. The hardliner Ahmadinejad is sworn in for a second term on August 5th. This long-held battle of presidential candidacy is a battle of ego and power. Today, with Iran waging a battle of egos between the political candidates, the cry for peace is heard loudly and clearly through massive peaceful demonstrations in the streets of Tehran and nearby cities. Peace is attained not through action but rather through inaction. Peace is an energy that permeates the entire being and is the art of directing the attention inward, surrendering, and suspending judgments.

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THE INNER BATTLE is the human tendency to dualism, a spiritual warfare with two opposing forces of the unenlightened narcissistic ego against the enlightened self that are manifested in our physical realities. This is a profound contrast between two polarizing perspectives. The unenlightened perspective is the relative, separate, and personal view of the ego that epitomizes darkness; the enlightened perspective is the absolute, universal, and impersonal view of the authentic self that symbolizes the soul or a stream of light.

If the physical reality is perceived to be a continuous battle between light and dark, then the planet would look like a dreary place to inhabit. If we take a close look at our planet, often people resort to either extreme to harbor safety. We have been conditioned to believe that the only way out is to polarize these two forces, to choose one over the other and to completely wipe out the other uninviting force. Drug addicts resort to self-sabotage and violence to bring out their demonic attributes. Evangelists and their followers preach the concept of Christianity to come across as or project angelic qualities. Almost all religions segregate rather than integrate forces of good and evil, dark and light.

An important paradigm shift is taking place. If the old paradigm contains a winning strategy, then why can't we claim victory and come out on top? We are in a constant struggle to meet our own expectations and those of others. We can never please others; yet, we continue with our quest to seek constant approval or conform to a certain standard. If we fail to preserve and defend the status quo, we are labeled as underachievers. If we choose not to follow the herd, we become separate. If we choose to follow the herd and become achievers in the eyes of others, we still feel separate. This inner strife for more and better keeps us trapped in a vicious, perpetual cycle, and it creates an imbalance in the energy flow that takes place moment to moment in our physical and ethereal bodies.

Within the physical temple resides the spiritual or ethereal temple that contains the chakras – in Sanskrit translated as the wheels. Chakras express life force energy and are responsible for our physical, mental, and spiritual functions. An imbalance in the chakra is the direct result of a disruption in the energy flow and thus creates an inner discord. Is it really worth engaging ourselves like warriors in this inner battle of light versus dark for the simple pursuit of winning a prize that is a mere illusion? It seems that this battle is less about victory and more about a shift in perception. It is far more beneficial to conserve our energies and expand our awareness to new ways of thinking and being.

Should we fall in the ancient trap that keeps us locked into our very polarizing beliefs? Should we not alter our core beliefs that hold in place the battle of darkness against light? According to Gregg Braden, New York Times best-selling author of *The Spontaneous Healing of Belief: Shattering the Paradigm of False Limits*, the new paradigm opens the doors of perception and invites us to a new way of perceiving the world. This new paradigm contains a set of new beliefs that allow us to make an important distinction between our innately polarizing dualism. Our mode of thinking and behavior and behavioral creates an imbalance in our minds, which blocks the natural flow of energy and causes illness to manifest in our physical bodies. As a result of this inner duality and instability, we are never at peace with ourselves and with our surroundings. We constantly view ourselves as separate entities. We see ourselves trapped in an imaginary built-in prison and resort to conducting ourselves in two distinct manners. First, we might withdraw into our own cocoon because we don't feel safe and lead solitary lives. Second, we might mingle with crowds that lead us astray and make us victims of our own karmic past conditioning. Regardless of which path we take, we arrive at the same destination. We become enlightened and aware of both the dark and light within us. Rather than fighting it, we learn to acknowledge and merge with these forces.

We are called on to rise above our polarizing perceptions and heal them. Instead of seeing two entirely distinct impressions of good and evil, we are invited to acknowledge their presence. It is necessary for us not to attach labels and view these forces as friends or foes. Rather, we recognize that both are necessary and are required for our own evolution in life. The dark merged with the light no longer is perceived as either; it simply becomes one form of energy. As we begin to suspend judgments with respect to light and darkness, the yin or the dark and negative in us becomes integrated with the yan or the light and positive. This healing will be reflected in the ways we interact with ourselves and with our surroundings. The old paradigm is deeply ingrained in our collective subconscious that we may not be aware of its inherent presence. This paradigm shift in perception is the next step to expanding global consciousness and becoming the changes we wish to bring about in ourselves and to our global community.

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THE MAN THROWS the ball. The little blonde -headed boy dashes across the green grass to catch a little white ball, as if catching it will save someone's life. He reaches, jumps, stretches and grabs it in his glove — the smile that emerges lights up my whole yard.

“Wow! That was incredible!” I say.

“O.K. Now run back a little. Get back a little further.”

The man throws the ball.

The little blonde boy looks up, moving forward just a little, then stares at it long and hard. The ball drops in his glove. I hear the screen door slam and a little girl comes running outside holding a small paperback book.

“Mama, listen to this! I'm reading Romeo and Juliet. Shakespeare's good!” She stands beside me and begins thumbing through the book. “I'm almost there. Listen! This is soooo good! O.K. Here it goes!” She starts off with Benvolio's line,

In love? She pauses, Out.

Of love?

Out of her favour, where I am in love.

Alas, that I love, so gentle in his view,

Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof.

She continues for a minute, not looking up from her book. Then she pauses and checks to see if I'm paying attention.

“Listen to this!”

“I am sweetie. I'm listening!” I glance over at her father who's still tossing the balls to our son.

Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:

Why then, O' brawling love! O' loving hate!

O' anything, of nothing first created!

O' heavy lightness! Serious vanity!

Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!

Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!

Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is! —

This love feel I, that feel no love in this.

Dost thou not laugh?

- No, coz; I rather weep.

She looks up at me and states her opinion. “This is awesome!”

Her brother hollers, “I didn't understand it. What's it about?”

She gives him a sentence summary. “It's about how bad love is!”

Her father glances at me and says, “Yes, it's about how bad it is.”

My son runs, catching the flying white ball. My daughter, stands beside me, reciting the lines again. I interrupt her.

“What's your favorite line?”

She begins, “O heavy lightness! Serious vanity! Mis-happen chaos of well-seeming forms! Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!” She stands beside me, continuing her reading, with lots of passion.

“Watch this one!” the father states.

I see our son diving towards us, getting a little too close to the cement driveway, but he catches the ball.

“Zebbie, that was great!” I exclaim.

He gets up and runs back again.

“O.K. I'm throwing it left.”

The boy runs left, staring at the ball, jumping horizontal at just the right moment, and makes a catch that would make the cover of Sports Illustrated. I look at his dad. His smile is so big it looks like his cheeks are going to pop. He's having his Shakespeare moment while I'm having mine...and we both know it.

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