Internalisation of Change

The characteristics which define any human society are made up, in simple terms, of two parts. Firstly, the evolutionary history of how the society has developed from its birth, with its centres of power, and associated social structures built by the complexity of its human interactions, has often a profound and deep effect on how its members attitudes and behaviours are exhibited as they grow from infancy to adulthood and participate in a way which is deemed 'normal' and suitable by the culture of the specific society. Secondly, and without a doubt strongly linked to the wider points above, each individual, at least when they reach an age where they are potentially able to evaluate their participation, and perhaps consider the bigger picture of how their society operates, can choose how much to align their life activities with the direction and force of 'flow' defined by the culture of the society.

If the culture is one which promotes individual advancement economically, way above all else, where the selfish pursuit of financial gain diminishes all other aspects of social development in a manner which breeds cynicism, then the aspects of human nature on display by most members of the society in question will reflect strongly the pervading characteristics of the society. If the 'leading' members of the society who operate in positions of power and influence, create and perpetuate such a culture, encouraging members, either openly or by stealth, to exhibit the desired characteristics underpinning the type of society they have moulded, then it is perceived, at least, to be extremely difficult for any member to align their life activities in a different direction.

If, at a point in their lives, any member or group of members, recognise that the direction of 'flow' defined by the culture of the society could be changed in a way which is significantly more beneficial to the vast majority, then how do they go about instigating change in a way which results in permanence?

Cultural change is extremely difficult. It takes enough individuals, either singly or collectively, to have and demonstrate, the strength of character to 'climb out of the flow' and adopt behaviours and attitudes, at all times, which define the 'source' of the new flow. If they are able to do this, and it is very challenging, they can ensure, to some probably variable degree, that their children are brought up to recognise the 'nascent' flow as the default, and it thus becomes embedded in their nature.

So, in evaluating the current nature of the 'flow' within our society, what kinds of changes in personal attitudes and behaviours could be adopted by those who recognise that change is necessary, and are willing and strong enough to adopt them, in a way which forces (at an undetermined rate) a new direction of 'flow'?

Within an individuals' personal space, which defines all of the conceptual property belonging inalienably to them, a self-examination will allow a recognition of all of the constituent parts that make up this space. In undertaking such a self-examination, almost certainly more than once, not only can an individual take full ownership and responsibility for this conceptual property, but also invest in strengthening the boundary around their own personal space, thus protecting their conceptual property from threat, encroachment, damage, or even theft, and also in strengthening the foundations upon which their character is built. With strong foundations and a strong boundary, well-defended by vigilant self-awareness, any individual can enhance their capability from a personal point of view, to operate as an effective member of a broader society.

What lies within the boundary of an individuals' personal space? Here are some possibilities:

- It is, in my view, imperative that each individual comes to a recognition that their 'value' as a living being, is of exactly equal measure (regardless of the fact that they are unique and, therefore, different to everyone else) as every other living being, and I specifically use the term 'living being' to further assert that every life form which possesses 'life', is also on this measure, of equal 'value'.In recognising their equality of value, it is hoped that they also recognise everyone else's equality of value, leading to a change, perhaps, in attitude and behaviour.

- It is also very important to gain an understanding that each individual is absolutely unique, throughout the whole of human history, past, present and future. Even identical twins are individually unique, although with more similarities, as character depends on not only genetics, but also environment of upbringing, life experiences and circumstances, among other things. Because each individual is absolutely unique, that make them also 'special'. It offers them an opportunity, if they so choose, to make an absolutely unique and special contribution to their community and society, which no-one else can make, and which defines them as an individual. They, along with (in the broad view) every other life form, own a unique piece of the 'jigsaw' which, when put together, makes up the picture of what kind of overall culture exists on the planet. The way in which their piece of the jigsaw if 'filled' and painted, depends entirely on how they choose to make their special contribution. This recognition and focus on special contribution leaves a permanent legacy.

- The recognition of value and uniqueness, results in a further recognition of equality of importance as a human being, built to large degree on those very foundations. There is no such thing as a specifically more important human. There are roles of different levels of importance.

- In order to develop an enduring self-confidence, not only strong foundations and boundary are important, along with self-examination, but self-knowledge and understanding help the individual to come to like themselves and thus make friends with themselves. In order to achieve this level of self-awareness, showing oneself kindness and love, results in a reflection of the same. This allows an open internal communication to take place and from this, a strong friendship can be built and maybe even, beneficially, the individual can become their own best friend. This is a self-perpetuating cycle of self-reliance and self-trust.

- With a strong personal foundation and boundary, built on self-knowledge awareness, the development and affirmation of personal principles and values which constantly guide behaviour and attitude is possible resulting in a coherence and consistency of character. These principles and values, which will undoubtedly differ from person to person (at least to some extent) become embedded, and therefore, second nature, within the foundation of a person's character. Once again, these areas are an important part of conceptual property within the boundaries of personal space.

- The area of rights and responsibilities as both an individual and a member of a community and society, forms an integral part of personal conceptual property. Responsibilities for the care of personal space, and its boundaries and contents, lie solely with the individual. If this responsibility is taken seriously, it should result in either some constant, or regular focus on self-examination – not navel-gazing – but time spent ensuring personal well-being (not withstanding the occasional possibility of the genuine need for medical intervention) which is almost entirely in the hands of the individual, and maintaining personal integrity, based on the foundation of principles and values. Any individual's integrity can only be damaged by themselves – by their own actions. This is why it sits firmly within personal space. Rights (both legally-defined and natural) are the most inalienable of all 'contracts' between the individual and the society within which they live. They belong exclusively to the individual. With a personal recognition of this ownership, and an inextinguishable desire to defend them, comes hopefully an extension to recognise the same for all other individuals who make up the society too. This again, promotes attitudinal and behavioural change. Some fundamental natural rights which should be called out are the right, as a living being, to be treated

with dignity at <u>all</u> times, regardless of circumstances or individual characteristics, and the right to respect, but with the proviso that respect comes from consistency of behaviours and attitudes based on principles and values, and can be lost if the individual neglects these foundations. Self-respect has the same basis, but is maintained or lost on self-examination.

These suggestions for personal internalisation of change, are by no means comprehensive, and represent only a handful of possibilities but they hopefully contribute to the recognition that within any society or culture, the elements of human nature which are promoted over others are those which align the individual's life activities, behaviour and attitudes with the pervading 'flow' defined by the culture, and that it is a self-maintaining cycle between cultural 'flow' and how humans respond to maximise their life chances within that culture. As stated previously, if the culture promotes cynicism and blinkered self-interest, above all else, then the human response, even if individually they feel that it is against their better judgment, is likely to be aligned, because that is how, in their perception, they can best 'get on'. It is also a factor that an individual may take the view 'I don't like how things work, but what can I, a single individual, do to change it? I am powerless, so I may as well just go with the flow!'. A recognition that the flow affects how human nature is displayed, and that, vice versa, the selective display of human nature defines the flow, leads to the conclusion that in order to break the cycle, it is vital for humans, individually and collectively, to climb out of the flow, and regardless of the significant difficulties, exhibit other more positive aspects of human nature permanently to force a break in the cycle and therefore promote a change of flow. This, to reiterate, is very difficult, but with a strong commitment **is** possible. In order to instigate societal or cultural change, individual change of one's own world is vital. This can be summarised as the individual commitment to embed behaviours, attitudes and life activities which embody the changes, and therefore outcome that is envisioned.