

## 41. Doing Good

**Y**ou *can* just go forth and do good. It's dangerous, though. Al planned to be nice to the meek and oppose the powerful, practically suicidal. Something he did was hand hold. When people go through passages they need handholding: a bit of sage advice, commiseration, nods, smiles, winks. Carry each other. When people first take up bicycling, they face unusual fears, don't know what to expect or how safe it will be. This sport isn't always pleasant depending where you ride or what your skill level is. But neither is playing with power tools nor sitting at home watching everyone else on television doing something interesting. Effort on their part was something he was ready to support, even if their attempt was only meaningful to them individually, because overcoming fears leads to confidence, which rubs off and surmounts distance, hate, inhumanity and suspicion. He had heard that everyone should, "Do unto others as you'll have them do unto you," a central doctrine in many religions. At first he tried that plan, but found it was one-sided and seldom reciprocated. You get more flies with honey than vinegar, for sure, but who wants flies? Better to receive first and reciprocate with those you begin to trust. When you share pain, you can no longer hate, but there's no point in attracting low lives and letting down your guard to manipulators. Samaritans are often abused, killed, and ruined by lawsuits, or so you're told, which makes impersonal contributions to charities seem safer though unsatisfying.

The notion of *paying it forward* was supposed to jump start random acts of goodness by showing a courtesy to a total stranger, who, once coming to appreciate an original good turn, perhaps too late to reciprocate directly, continues in kind to another stranger, like a chain letter, a laughable scam you used to see more often when postage was practically free. But, as far as he could see, rather than inspire philanthropy this only reinforced bad behaviors among those who didn't appreciate your gesture. What's wrong with random acts is they're random. Organized kindness is infinitely superior. A better approach would be to mix with many individuals, learn to read them, make friends among those with tender hearts, and reciprocate their caring and warmth. Builds an effective base. You never need be lonely. There are gobs of miserable losers at large who hunger for your attention. Listen to them for a few minutes without destroying their delusions and you'll have annoying, bothersome, clinging friends forever wasting your time.

Kindness may work for a while. Then that passes, and you go on with the rest of your life, for which you have no aspirations or notions, just confusion and longings.

Had he known all this crap when younger, he'd have no wants today and real friends to fall back on rather than acquaintances and betrayers. His master was clear about it, "Never consider yourself a master." Listen to those who say what's right, yet only follow example of those who follow their own advice, not hypocrites. This might mean lining up behind a zealous madman on an insane tear, blind following blind. Such a plan demands you already know what's true before you decide what to do. No, life seemed to be about choosing, collecting impressions for yourself, experiencing, living, seeking shelter or standing against storms, then suffering consequences. No point in passing such experiences along. Let them find out for themselves. Times he asked advice were just wastes of time. Contexts shift; what once worked doesn't. Why tell anyone what to think unless terribly important to mutual survival? Just do things for yourself. Declare independence, don't doubt it.

Sitting across from Mona over a discount dinner, conversation veered into politics, a sore point he couldn't help but pick at. Something about a mediocre meal always made him bring up topics equally unpalatable. A conservative convert after years of Republican radio propaganda, Mona couldn't agree with him about anything, never mind something as despicable as Fascism. Having had their fear buttons excessively poked, humans have exceedingly effective filters against reality, particularly repressive, ugly stuff, such as genocide, injustice, slavery or totalitarianism.

"Fascism!? I'd give up some freedoms for security. Didn't they get trains to run on time? Lay a foundation of good in society? Maybe they weren't so bad," Mona rambled, without the least idea what her words implied: constraints, ethnic cleansing, repression of personal freedoms, and threat you'll be their next target.

"You're not listening to what I'm talking about," he grumbled. "You need freedoms. People die for them. Diversity is useful. Being a melting pot is what made America great. But people are only free to do what's responsible." God, how he hated these exchanges, more angst than logic, too general to be of any use, unreasonably skewed from balance. Where was Mona's mudita?

"Responsible? People never act responsibly. It'd all go doozybots with billions thinking whatever they want, a great big mess. An immigrant takes your job, gets government assistance, and laughs at you. People need to be told what to do."

Her answer was just another knee jerk response to trigger issues. Just let monsters dictate? Hell, no. How do you get beyond emotions? Such exchanges left him drained and miserable, looking over his shoulder for that pale rider carrying a scythe. He felt like saying, "Why not just join the Ku Klux Klan?" but instead reproached her, "Whose fault is that? Not theirs. It's your leaders in government and their policies. True, at first," he demurred, "but eventually..."

Blaming immigrants for society's woes is either ignorant or immoral, take your pick. They left wherever they came from because it was poorly governed, then must figure out how to mix into equally hostile conditions. Police, public servants and teachers see green carders getting assistance for each child, ridiculing, and working the system, and immediately react as if it's wrongdoing. Wouldn't you take any handout offered to you? If not, you're a bonehead, or lucky enough not to need any. He'd be the first in line for free cheese. City workers have no scruples over enjoying the best benefits and pays of any employed class. There's definitely something wrong when hard working families are held hostage to pay for those who contribute little. But isn't that the fault of laws, legislators and policies? Blame congress, governor or president, but not immigrants, some of whom were your ancestors and parents.

In reply to the question, "Why does America have more children in poverty than any other industrialized nation?" he heard a radio announcer actually say, "In America, if you want a fancy car you're going to have to work for it. I worked hard for what I have. Nobody's going to take it away from me!" These notions are so brainless they're hardly worth commenting on. Dismisses the fact that taxes mostly go for illegal wars. Presumes everyone values a status fetish. Suggests sitting on your fat ass slinging shit can be called work. So, what does it really say? "Let children starve as long as I can bellow over airwaves, collect a fat paycheck, and drive luxuriously over their emaciated bodies." Instead of listening, you should turn off radios and televisions and spend more time lobbying Congress or picketing against corporate welfare.

Just like young adults, who go a trifle berserk after being caged as teens, everyone wants to bust out and get in trouble. Body piercing, hair spiking, inconsiderate behaviors, tattoos get to be a bit much, become commonplace, lose their shock appeal. Anarchy can't last, collapses under its own ambiguity. Nothing crucial gets done. Those who do get World's ear for a moment don't know what to say. When Beatles thoughtfully reflected on that point, the best they could come up with was that they were more popular than

Jesus, which was arguably true at the time. All this did was create a horrible backlash and send guilty souls back to church, ultimately lined evangelical coffers and repudiated a century of evolutionary science. What ripples! Better to say nothing? You have no control whatever over the law of unintended consequences. This is old news often repeated. More recently, Sinead O'Conner ripped up the Pope's picture to similar reaction. Guess it just depends upon how popular you are versus celebrity you attack whether your career is destroyed. Celebrity comes from offering something, either hope or substance, not from attacking and destroying. Slayers are never widely popular; prisons are full of them. Revolutions wind down into repressive dictatorial regimes, surrounding ruins, temporary disruptions. Yet Italy recovered. People don't appreciate modern France and Italy, real role models in a complex World, the front in an age-old battle over ethics and personal integrity. After awhile something very peculiar happens, people bizarrely begin to think much alike on key issues. Something new—mental redemption—settles in. Since there's never been anything like this, globally, people won't know how to behave, but, with decent, selfless guidance, they could learn.

The American, 20th, Century, was made great by its unselfish help throughout World directly supported by expanded middle-class spending. Such an economic engine thrives only on a good distribution of wealth, largely a result of FDR taxing the wealthy and labor unions fighting to increase hourly wages. Reagan got in, broke unions, displaced burden back onto middle class, wriggled out from constitutional entitlements. Even Ron's assassination attempt sounded staged; only a .22 caliber short round? After all that magnum force talk and NRA assault rifle support? A market economy depends upon free trade, but it's easily disrupted by poor policies, such as allowing unchallenged tariffs and giving away advantages. What it has all come down to is that congressmen sell rights to evade laws that enable free competition. Federal policy is like an avalanche or storm surge that takes out everything in its path. Nothing individuals can do about it, affects everyone on a macro-level, and severely smacks locally. You might as well shake your fist at the wind. Policies must be extremely well thought out to work indiscriminately. More laws favor lawyers. Any form of repression—including subservience to profit motives—is bad.

If you live in a Democratic state, you suffer through every Republican administration. Politicians sponsor worker training. Sounds good, but what about people who already have extensive experience, plenty of talent, and still can't find work? He was

disturbed that his state's biggest employer was the State itself, which indicates just how poorly they had developed private industry. He supposed that's probably true in many states, since government's autonomous workers on eternal projects are lumped together, while industry, conversely, has management, organization and oversight. Business owners complain that those on the dole don't want to work. When companies eliminate good pays, why should they? Shouldn't they refuse all employment? Make it hard for the rich to get richer? If decent paying positions aren't available, education is mostly useless, except certain specialties which focus on self-employment. Makes sense to restrain business owners from cutting employment, off-shoring, outsourcing, privatizing, and willfully incorporating in other countries to avoid contributing their fair share. This is already law in most industrialized countries. Citizens pay taxes to train youth, who then must leave for work elsewhere. About 15% of his neighbors commuted to neighboring states. Not good for local economy, unless macro-states are created, or statehood was eliminated in favor of national unity or even One World Order. Then entire planet would pay equally; then it wouldn't make a difference where you were educated or decided to live. Colleges are free to citizens in Denmark. There's cash enough to accomplish this, but it's all gathered up and stashed away for that rainy day when there's none left to pillage, squeeze or wheedle.

If policies persecute, some do-gooder needs to challenge them. Do-badders strip all goodness from everything, land, sea, your apartment. And they needn't be burglars. There are fewer evil geniuses bent on World domination than everyday chiselers stealing from you in small ways, retail gougers, tax assessors, utilities. A few grabbing turn everyone into grabbers. Anything else, they'll argue, flies in the face of self interest. Isn't it just the opposite? When people get along well, resources are carefully used and deliberately replenished; everyone survives better. Multinational trade unions could coordinate production and protect individuals and their families. Stocking up against a hostile future practically ensures strife. Survivalist practices come from a lack of faith in nature to provide and society to act competently and do right. Those who amass money without quickly distributing it back to many spenders increase bad faith. Casinos, corporations, foundations, lotteries all exist to pool revenues, not redistribute them. You must create systems that negate evil megalomaniacs, overproduction and stagnant money pools, since none of them contribute to the common good. Figure out how you're being cheated and by whom and counterattack. It seems so simple.

As if borne on ether, he and Janet began discussing charity rides several days before topic arose generally. That's how society operates, a word from someone which sweeps through collective consciousness in a desultory and meaningless way every year as weather improves, which is then forgotten amidst daily worries and Summer fun. Charity rides seem nice, but they represent several unsavory issues no one wants disclosed. 1) To remain as a nonprofit, at least 40% of income must go towards identified recipients. This leaves 60% for pocket lining, partying, and tossing schwag around, not that free keychains and tee-shirts aren't friendly, but they don't cure cancer. CEO's of the top 10 charities make up to a half million dollars per year. Most of what they collect goes to their own salaries. 2) If it's for medical research, you're paying bonuses to doctors and technicians, as if they didn't make enough money already, and insurance companies. Most real advances in medicine come from individual researchers outside fund raising establishment and for-profit pharmaceutical companies. 3) Having already raised trillions of dollars over a half century, why aren't there already cures for AIDS, cancer, heart disease, leukemia, multiple sclerosis? Sure there's been advances, but no reliable preventatives or vaccines? Mankind should have defeated all these years ago. Polio and smallpox were driven into submission, at least in this nation, on far less and without fund raising. 4) Charities seek out grieving loved ones by offering solace and some chance to feel like they're fighting back, yet picking their pockets when they're most vulnerable. 5) Everyone he ever met who participated in charity rides had to anty up, raise funds or reach into own pocket; one friend owed Leukemia Community \$3,000 on event day. This might not seem much to some people, but a struggling dad or mom ought to have some way of participating beyond writing a big check. 6) Once you've donated, they presume they've got a sucker and never let you be. Hello!? Who'd still donate after learning these facts? Humbler folk often feel compassionate, or enjoyed another's compassion for them and feel obligated. Those collecting charitable contributions target those least equipped to give. Those who could do the most good insulate themselves and let their money collect dust in Bermuda, Cayman or Zurich.

Why don't governments directly underwrite charities? Charities probably once tried that, but administrations, with armies of analysts, saw through their schemes. So charities turned to unsuspecting individuals. To get them off their backs, Congress tossed them a bone as a tax deduction. Then they raised standard deduction so there's no advantage anymore to giving, except in cases of

major bequests, from which only the filthy rich and their foundations benefit. Wealth then, controls all charitable institutions, just like it controls government, industry and religions. Charities are never about political issues rich don't want exposed. Watchdog organizations are never tax exempt. Concessions won don't necessarily mean improvements, either, i. e., smoking settlements.

Anyway, your duty to your fellow men doesn't end with taxes you pay. You have to ensure nobody diverts your share to inappropriate uses, that they go for public good, as if that's something you can even define. People who care get a persistent feeling that nobody else does. They do all the sharing and get little for it. Email doesn't get answered, or replies come back curt. Where's the sense of community? Hard to help; no downside to hurting, inconveniencing, making trouble. Anyway, talk isn't your enemy, greed is.

Need to classify charities. If their mission is "distributing information" for "raising awareness", they need practically no funding to do so; flyers, posters, signs, and unpaid volunteers can do it all. This is something you can accomplish with cheap materials in your spare time instead of vegging out watching broadcast violence. He reached 1,000 families with a \$5 ream of paper cut into laser printed handbills, 1/2¢ apiece. If charity's mission is redistributing wealth in terms of clothing, food, housing or medicines, funds need to come from affluence, corporations and foundations, not poor people already spread too thin. Money endowed to foundations goes nowhere; salaries are paid off investment interest while unfortunates who need help get little to none.

To fund their causes, nonprofits confiscate suffering of others, especially those who've endured horrid deprivations. "Bring it on," they say, increases their cash flow. Based on all its disasters, 2005 set a record for American philanthropy, which had been consistently high since *extremists* destroyed the Twin Towers. Pledges get diverted into some scheme that makes collectors better off with a few win-win arrangements for contributors. Devotion and heartfelt prayers can't substitute for doing your part to assist those less fortunate, those lazy losers you ignore and run away from by locking doors and rolling up windows. He didn't want anybody to send anything. He wanted people to stop causing others to suffer. Communities need to form contingencies against natural disasters. Towns built below sea level were begging for trouble. Sensible urban planning is a better way of conserving resources.

Business ethics must ensure consumers and stakeholders are treated honorably. Corporate giveaways are always somehow geared toward improving their bottom lines. Letting corporations give

their own products to school kids for a charitable tax deduction is in some ways like rewarding crack dealers for getting them hooked on drugs. The more you rely on mental and physical machines to do your work, the more vulnerable you become when they suddenly fail. Manufacturers argue that machines avoid risks, let you exercise better and stay in top shape, but just the opposite happens. Users become blobs hanging onto handles and keyboards with attention riveted on machine's performance rather than performing themselves. Eliminating impediments causes weakness.

If all you have is talk, be like Ed Abyss: *tell it like it is*. Abyss railed against how Interior Department resisted whatever might conserve wild areas. Perhaps that's not a high priority when society faces so many other problems. Are special places only for diletantes and privileged eco-tourists? Wooded conservancies exist to create buffer zones around palatial estates. Gated communities are a fine example of denied access, exclusivity, us-them mentality, what's wrong with America—supposedly a democracy, quickly becoming an plutocracy. Why save ANWAR? Global warming didn't seem like a real problem. What's 1 extra degree? As tundras warm, they become overtaken by shrubs, don't absorb carbon dioxide anymore; elsewhere snow cover, which kills bacteria and protects plants and trees from disease, decreases and this decimates bee colonies, without which many fruits and vegetables cannot be pollinated and widespread famine ensues. At 2° polar ice melts, and at 3° hurricanes and tornadoes increase, low lying cities disappear. Devastation follows. 4° Well, surface of Venus, nearest neighboring planet, is 900° under a carbon dioxide sky. Could have once been Earthlike. There's a certain *tip point* after which accumulated harm leads to irrevocable catastrophe on a global scale. How could conservation hurt? Make sure some fields, plots and streams are never developed; use bikeways as barriers alongside them. Ed was passionate to be heard. Annoy if you must. While trying to further your ambitions, don't waste time talking falsely. The hour may already be too late. Make sure yours benefit everyone.

Billionaires crave tax breaks, and seeding a foundation with some of their fortune generates some philanthropy, although hardly any cash actually gets distributed while foundations fatten up. Famous rich always say how lucky they feel, usually because they fell into favor, but probably don't have a clue how to extend their good fortune to those in need. Take Okra Losefree, matinee hostess. She gives stuff away to undeserving viewers, not her own stuff, only what producers can pry from grips of company admen. Doesn't make Okra a better person, and who else could emulate

unless also another billionaire TV hostess? Losefree plays Santa to African children. Hope she brings necessities, like pencils, paper, soap, toothbrushes, towels. Stuff poor kids dearly need are clean water, clinics, and schools. Candy and toys breed dissatisfaction once they're gone. Such gestures spread good will, and surely some feel inspired to "cast their bread on water", which sounded a soggy mess that only ducks and fish might savor. Debt amnesty and deposed dictators are ways to alleviate poverty, which is the primary cause of all this pain and suffering. Meanwhile, Dr. Pill popularizes medicine and psychology among matinee matrons for profit. Anyone who'd actually buy into this hipocracy really needs therapy.

Mormons tithe, give 10% of their earnings whether or not they want to, and other religions collect, often not as forcibly. Try calling a Catholic Church to offer them money under any pretense. He wanted to make a contribution, nothing huge, mind you, on behalf of a friend who buried a family member. The Inquisition had returned: Who are you? How much? Why? They'd be smart to offer cards in varying amounts, that could be bought mostly filled out, then readily sent. Isn't this the same church that used to sell indulgences? No, they act as if they don't want your money, even when it's for their own benefit, make it almost impossible to make any gesture. Donations funnel into slush funds to do such ignoble acts as backing conservative political campaigns, defending pedophiles, and ultimately denying rights, until parishioners feel so beleaguered they turn to religion for solace, a nice self-serving loop. Religions love recession, repression and war.

He considered starting his own nonprofit. *Coming Second Institute* it would be called, and he already began to tell solicitors and telemarketers that he only gave to it, which was technically true, since fabricating a foundation from scratch was hard work, he didn't have any cash to donate anyway, and your time is money, after all. It's vision would be twofold: empowering and leveling.

1) He'd maintain a list of legitimate charities, unlike sites that list *any* charity. He'd start with *none*. It would be up to entries to prove themselves, and maintain a position on his list. Before individuals get suckered in, they could simply look up a charity on [www.coming2ndinstitute.org](http://www.coming2ndinstitute.org). Already off its list are Big Aunts and Uncles, colleges, Dana Favor, LISA, Heart Advertisers, OXFAMINE, Rose Cross, and the swarm of phony televangelists from hell. To be considered would be food pantries, homeless shelters, humble Salvation Brigade, and soup kitchens; they demonstrate direct, effective use of any surplus they scrounge. How Old Sally makes do with such minimal support was inspirational; imag-

ined they could help even more if their clothing and shopworn consignments could be packed and shipped to Africa or disaster sites, but some bigger charity would have to pay for transportation. Unichef serves up some real good, as does Amnesty Ain't, Doctor's Digging In, Greenspeak, and plethora of splinter dot.orgs that nurse issues nobody else will. That said, all charities are marginal beggars at best. He'd have to develop some strict criteria for staying on list, and wondered if it was worth his efforts. How could he ensure compliance? Unlike Old Sally, which has been around for over 150 years helping unfortunates get back on their feet, charities change names and often pop up as something else. Keeping it all sorted out would be like trying to kill cockroaches with a ball peen. Easier to restrict their proliferation by denying or revoking non-profit status, for example, making churches, hospitals and private schools pay their fair share of property taxes for which they are protected by firemen, national guard and police just like everyone else. This might slow executive money grabbing. By law, charities must disclose contributors and open fiscal books. Nobody looks.

2) There'd be a much broader and deeper purpose of empowering individuals to work together to cure all society's ills, set a minimal standard of living globally, share resources, and win peace through cooperation. There would be a focus on interdisciplinary education, particularly arts, ethics and science, and tracking advancements attributable to them. Charities that concentrate upon campaign reform, cancer cures, cardiovascular fitness, clean water, concern for children, conscientious objection, critical mass, and cycling consciousness—those directly involved in improving such things that begin with the letter C—could apply for grants. The letter C would become popular, no doubt, and new words would be coined. He'd stage cycling centuries with appeals to raise funds for only those charities that met his criteria. Might even support websites that educated people in joys of cycling, overcoming fears, and realigning attitudes, but not much. CSI would definitely distribute government free helmet coupons. Would consult with major philanthropists to fine tune their bequests and gifts to minimize misdirection and waste. But, when you come right down to it, it'd be really difficult to ascertain effects of many charities, where on a continuum they lie from *great bang for the buck* to *total waste of resources*. CSI would act as a forensic accountant as well as serve what comes second after what comes first, behaving well among family, friends and surrounding community after being good to yourself. Being first in line only gets you blasted. Better to be second, note what happens and react accordingly, and not third.

Unified Way was tricky. It does operate locally off a trust fund that paid all salaries, yet money is often badly spent among an umbrella of agencies that don't deserve any. Public television is another questionable nonprofit enterprise. While he, if not everyone, appreciated their exceptional, highbrow viewpoints, why couldn't they sell them so as to break even? Is today's marketplace so stacked against intelligence? Dust Cover Channel succeeds on essentially the same sort of programming. Even Dalai Lama sells tickets to lectures. Nonprofit acts squeamish about commercials when much of its sponsorship comes from corporations—Forq, Hard Packed, Mighty Soft, Next on Mobile, Seared, Total Yoyo—who use *sanctity* of a public broadcast as an advertising weapon. Pretty good deal for them, exclusive access to an educated, high class demographic likely to make a good impression on the rest of society. That's why you never see anything extreme—artistically, ethically, morally, politically—no gangster rap or ghetto jive, on not-for-profit stations, only some sanitized version of diversity. Just produce a show and see if they'll broadcast it; while there's a demand and requirement for local programming, fat chance yours will ever see airtime. His didn't.

Whatever *is* is right. Things *are* how they are because someone wills them to be that way. It's scary to think that a schizoid megalomaniac with a loud voice rules, and not vast majority, who generally have little to say but grumble privately despite their collective supremacy. Nobody wanted to give up any amenity; easier to assuage guilt and be greedy and lazy by giving generously to phony organized charities which represent a vague platform you support, as if voting for a politician who promises but doesn't deliver. Only difference is you can recall politicians in disgrace, but never recover misappropriated contributions. After meeting tens of thousands of people, he never knew any who were actually helped. A convenient explanation is their pledge of anonymity; who'd want to be known for accepting charity? As a nonprofit, all you have to say is you're helping, no details, documented accomplishments, names, specifics. Money disappears fast enough anyway; just keep it churning.

Real heroes are those who steadily serve a good mission, not those who atone for evil pursuits sporadically, as if goodness must be a radical spore that sprouts only when decay and destruction surround. Masses are dying from accidents and diseases, yet nobody seems to care about what causes them. "Don't take my ciggies from me! Keep pumping me with hydrogenated and saturated fats! Give me unlimited fuel to burn and speed to attain on smooth pavement!" Why be addicted to fixes? Bicycling isn't a problem

about which impatient motorists should complain, but part of a solution if you get them to choose it as an alternative.

Sinful luxuries are only by-products of freedom, not freedom itself. In a form of government that might approach democracy, by-products don't matter, only freedoms of speech, of religion, from tyranny, and from want. Should you discover a new god, groovy for you. Laugh out loud, pray, sing. He didn't want to be told about it, have it forced upon him, or let anyone deprive him because of it. Freedom, then, is personal, not communal, like religion. People must interact with concern and respect for one another's own sense of deliverance. FDR's freedoms were a baseline, an answer to anarchy, a unified field theory of ethics. But high ideals virtually assure tyranny. One shouldn't care what someone else does. Moral depravity *may* lead to murder, rape, or slavery, but doesn't necessarily have to. Because a high percentage of homicidal maniacs come from broken homes doesn't mean divorce causes criminal insanity. Statistical percentages don't pinpoint causality. Who's without sin? Where do you draw your line? Courts are full of cases where people think they have a right, an interaction doesn't go well, some inherent privilege is trampled, and plaintiffs seek compensation or vengeance. You can hardly do anything without violating anonymity, politically correct sensitivity, privacy, serenity, whatever. These may be perceived rights, what happens when you escape from tyranny, but they aren't guaranteed, by any means. If your country can draft you into military service—at any age, even after having served honorably and been legally discharged—then these rights can abruptly disappear, depend upon situations, not be inalienable. To articulate such ideas isolates you, punishment enough, although it may not stop there. They may blackball or starve you, too.

Books by bipolar researchers, like Whynow's *When More Isn't Enough*, are just waking up to fact that philosophies of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, a secular Republican bible, have long since broken down with a disconnect between those who consume and those who produce. Can't build any empathy that way. But these neo-Darwinists also want to denigrate a Nordic genetic predisposition to storm and sulk. Sounds like Jensen's analysis of racial inferiors, another load of manure. Sure, people are the sum of breeding, community and education, but even excellent genes and an exquisite social system don't guarantee nice behavior. All some people are good for is recycling their otherwise useless waste into organic fertilizer for feeding pocket stands of forests set aside specifically for CO<sub>2</sub> fixation and O<sub>2</sub> production. If people don't act responsibly, they need to have privileges stripped and be forced to earn

them back. But that's only tolerable where there's economic justice, without which nobody can afford to act well. When choice is between starving and stealing, who'd choose the former?

Leaf-Raid, pseudo-Woodstock concert for a new generation, sought aid for Africa, but not from individuals, who gave generously 20 years earlier into a foundation which still hasn't found a way to apply its half billion dollars collected. No, instead they appealed to 8 most powerful nations to endow their cause directly, which, of course, they should. But ultimately this just concentrates wealth even more. Really, this growing number of African afflictions represent early signs of a zero-sum tragedy. Africa's woes wouldn't exist without billionaires and huge foundations elsewhere. Fabulously wealthy monarchs and rock stars who writhe in guilt rely on common folk to relieve them of their responsibility to share. Why should poor multitudes make contributions the rich few won't? More injustice? What society should seek is for corporations and high earners to pay only those taxes they now evade through loopholes. Since they contribute increasingly less, there isn't enough for massive charitable schemes or government programs. Yes, a ground swell of support would be wonderful if it resulted in everyone paying their fair share and it was well spent. There are plenty of conflicts on both sides of that equation.

Instead, what will happen is Africa will become the next China, even cheaper labor, but not until civil unrest and indigenous diseases peter out. If you're not yet good or smart enough to be a slave, they'll kill you outright or let you starve to death. Not only do Western nations hesitate to help, some believe certain industrialized countries bioengineered AIDs and Ebola in an effort to eventually steal Africa's rich mineral resources from the few survivors. Because such atrocities have been documented on occasion, only dolts are quick to deny this possibility. This is the Dark Continent's dark side; in reality, it's a place full of light, shimmering deserts, smiling faces, sun beat yellow pans. "All I see turns to brown, as the sun burns the ground/And my eyes fill with sand, as I scan this wasted land/Trying to find, trying to find where I've been," wrote Robert Plant while trekking through Morocco. Mankind's future depends upon Africa, reputedly its point of origin, perhaps because it is underdeveloped, still primitive in important ways, really ancient in others, and regionally empty. Africa has much to teach modernity about survival despite incredible adversity and diversity. The poorer the people, the more stable their government, you'd think. Any heart of darkness has been brought in by greedy outsiders.

Dud's administration let China take the helm on African diplomacy. Of course, a lot will be promised, a coup for Beijing, but little will be delivered, just as America has been doing to all but a select few nations, who, in turn, vilify their benefactors. Africa has been destabilized, Angola already communist, Egypt a powder keg, Somalia slipping into civil war. Crowded China will colonize the last remaining undeveloped landmass, expand toward the West, take over like they did in Tibet in a totalitarian way. Pretty soon they won't be buying our scrap and sending back second rate trinkets. America used to offer a hand to all with no strings attached. Where are the Peace Corps? No point sending unarmed civilians where you want to sell guns. While overt acts of violence sicken, the real outrage is the policies that cause them as well as voter apathy that allows it. Do you think a handful of activists with fingers stuck in dikes can hold back a flood of evils?

Charities take advantage of natural disasters; foundations are their biggest fans. They rush to collect money, which is tossed around nonchalantly among undeserving recipients. They're greeted with delight by posers, who hurry to ground zero, dig about a bit, commiserate with officers, pose for cameras, and put on an act as if they belong in hopes of a payday. They collect such scenes to prove their involvement. One such poser received \$650,000 after imposing on 9/12/01 near wreckage of World Trade Center. If individuals chisel, shouldn't he chisel by exposing their chiseling?

If Americans can't be World's policemen, they can't be World's saviors either. What are they prepared to do? Send in Rose Cross, who do practically nothing but collect a bundle? Send in troops to secure an area without police presence? Rebuild cities devastated by hurricanes? Isn't that something insurance companies are supposed to handle? Really, then, isn't a total response to be shared by all responsible parties, city, federal, private, state, and United Nations? Instead, charities crop up with little or no supervision as to how much they raise, to what use it's put, and later no survey of how well those stricken were served. You need a score card, some way to assess efficiency relative to similar catastrophes otherwise aided, and jail time for grifters and misappropriators.

Why do insurance companies—HMO's especially—suck? As in pari-mutuel betting which favors house, insurance companies extort big but pay little. Premiums escalate for all, even those who never get in accidents or get sick. When disasters strike, they expect government to bail them out along with victims, whose flood insurance isn't worth soggy paper it's written on. Good to be an expert witness in class action suits against insurance companies.

More judgments should go in favor of bicyclists, unless they can be proved extremely negligent. Since bicycling is inherently a safe form of conveyance and bicyclists seldom exceed speed limits, motorists are almost always at fault when they collide. Motorists, generally lazy, often succumb to a need for speed, penchant for ignoring others, power lust. These character flaws can afflict both but are exacerbated by motor. Insurance relies on you having no faith in your fellow man. For centuries, all insurance companies heeded their mantra, “Instill doubt and harvest from the gullible”, something they must’ve learned in church. Huggers prefer quick provocation. If you can get people to cringe and flee, you can take whatever they leave behind. Neither is exactly stealing, more like mind control, but far easier than distributing, producing, or selling something of value. Stealing a little from many isn’t any better than stealing a lot from one. Actually, the latter is preferable, fewer suffer, especially when target is a billionaire, which explains why blackmail is so appealing if it weren’t so dangerous. A healthy economy doesn’t consolidate but redistributes wealth.

By setting up an equilibrium without confrontation, something that counteracts approaches, it wouldn’t much matter who you rooted for; there’d be no losers or winners. Leads to anarchy, but only when opinions enter. The trouble with generalities is you get detoured by insubstantial mind loops. The trouble with details is you get bogged down. Presenting nothing but facts doesn’t do anything about them; there’s no act of creation, synthesis. But you can’t simply streamline, either, or you mess up; you lose sight of important details, pivotal points, that make it all work. Seems you have to work extremely hard with enormous quantities of mathematical minutia to derive a simple, elegant equation. But how does it translate into a truth about how to live? Or what the right course of action is for you? You could latch onto any plan and stick with it. What if it’s the wrong plan? You need to put aside any expectation you can use your mind to do anything of value. Whatever you think of will be wrong. Whatever you hear from others is already wrong. If you can’t be kind to yourself and everyone you meet, can’t seek to directly assist those less fortunate, no contribution to organized charities matters. With population growth out of control, ethics seem to be another casualty. Why contribute to it?

Emma Lazarus’ cousin, philanthropist Lewis Cullman, explained, “Typical private foundations now give 3% and spend 2% on administration and overhead... 2% of \$10 billion—that’s \$200 million. Just think what good an institution like the Ford Foundation could do if it spent down its endowment in charity.”

There's half a trillion tied up in private foundations. Could be spent productively rather than dribbled out to maintain survival of foundations themselves. To date Cullman managed to give away \$100 million from his own fortune upon his mother's advice, "Why not enjoy the money you've earned?" In the end, stingy and tight-fisted only profits someone else: bankers, lawyers, and revenueurs, those who know how to count but don't count in God's grand scheme. Better to spend it globetrotting, learning new things, and munificence to friends or relatives or whoever you personally know can use it, perhaps artists, filmmakers, musicians who produce something indelible and inspirational, or push boundaries.

True charity is not giving away cash, an easy, lazy way out of your obligations. Actually acting civilly, being polite and sociable despite how people act around you, creating jobs, endowing good deeds, eschewing bad behaviors, offering your time and patience—that's charity, per se. Social mores banish unwed mothers in their hour of need. They'd rather cherish ill-tempered wankers, substance abusers, and thieves. Why not be nice to those who are actually charitable back and let munificence flow together into a prevailing current? He assisted silent do-gooders who'd emulate this behavior, and, chastised those who didn't, but didn't force his views on them either. Even if you donate your time to charities, organizers will assign you a role so they can accuse you if something doesn't go right. It's their beloved sacrificial lamb gambit. Creates a buffer between angry mobs and themselves. Selfless volunteers always suffer whatever downside doing good generates.

He decided doing good meant championing freedoms on all 4 fronts. Being outspoken and fighting fossil fuels had already freed him from tyranny of an every day regimen. But was he enjoying result? No income meant *want*, which seemed to negate another freedom. But, for sure, he didn't want for much, and wasn't really hurting... yet. There were all those unemployment benefits built up over decades of "nose to grindstone" that could be tapped for several weeks. But was being on the dole what he wanted? Not really. Complaisance is as much a prison as conformity. Staying within society's parameters gets you nowhere. Gangs run prisons. States don't protect political prisoners from extortionists, murderers and rapists any more than they do in high school, and keep it so as a well publicized deterrent, as if loss of freedom and menial labor weren't enough. In these days of incurable AIDS, a short term behind bars for a minor offense could be a death sentence. Some inmates claim imprisonment is easier than normal life in certain countries, like Russia, or social classes. Convicts and slaves

yearn to be free, but, sometimes, when the chains come off, they don't run; don't know what to do or where to go, since there's not much outside for ex-cons except recidivism, which afflicts 60% of parolees, and it's terrible to remain poor in America. Issuing ex-cons a passport and visa to a country of their choice would be doing everyone a favor, some new Botany Bay. Society clearly needs freedom training, not such an easy concept to grasp after all, less a practical approach and more a rationale for saber rattling.

Free people amuse and sustain themselves. He circulated ideas. People could use them or toss them. While searching for work, he had nothing else to do besides annoy people, which he excelled at, and ride his bike. Why not combine all 3? Perhaps he could find work as a motivational or personal trainer. Making hundreds of thousands of course corrections per ride makes bicyclists feel decisive, which carries over into other aspects of their life, forms a can-do attitude. But small fast decisions don't require much thinking, just oxygen soaked brain cells. To think yourself in control of a World requires a mastery of macro-chaos, understanding all factors that affect billions of people, and a level of pride beyond mere evil. Effective activism calls for humble geniuses, but where are you going to find any?

Bicycling advocates make little progress when they simply annoy. You have to annoy *and* make sense. A lot more people ought to ride instead of motor, great daily aerobics. City's engineered plan didn't take this into account. Not actually a plan at all, it was just like Interstates, built without thought of traffic volumes they'd draw, and so were obsolete as soon as they opened. Throwing up a few signs didn't think through thousands of new bicyclists at rush hour on narrow streets. To attract cyclists and encourage high cadence aerobics, they'd have to designate flat, long, straight segments with few intersections and plenty of elbow room, something like separate cycling highways. As it is, radio whores were clearly channeling rage and inciting violence against slow bicyclists. To say bikes belong on every surface artery is to bash bike paths and greenways rightly designed to avoid them.

Bicyclists would be best served by more people bicycling: Economies of scale, enhanced accesses to supplies, evolution of technology, greater governmental spending, increased vigilance, and misconduct prevention. The notion, "safety in numbers", doesn't apply to bicyclists among cars. Bicyclists en masse sticking to designated corridors, yes; cars together on highways, yes; pedestrians in malls, yes. Even all together in comparable numbers, yes. Any sudden appearance of a bicyclist or pedestrian where

unexpected presents peril. Since motorists never seem to be held responsible, there's a plethora of better biking books sitting unread on shelves; they're no panacea. Education should be focused on motorists, who point heavy weapons and go. Stats on bicyclists causing another's death are so small as to evade detection.

At every town and local meeting he attended, neighbors were looking for ways to *quiet* their residential streets, so their children can play outside without fear, and they appreciate ideas for bicycling adaptations to accomplish this. There were already some bikeways locally, but they didn't go everywhere, or had dangerous traffic crossings. Streets he'd be glad to use would be within a block of main arteries with connecting side streets, so he could return to main whenever he needed. This doesn't mean you can't ride either, just that you'd prefer those held to higher criteria of repair, sweeping and traffic quieting. Streets that go by playgrounds and schools were good candidates for bike infrastructure. Fledgling youth could safely ride or walk along them to these frequent destinations. Parks could offer paved ovals for tiny tyros to try out new trikes with optimal safety. Unless you enact such suggestions as law, the cost becomes infant roadkill or teen obesity.

They spend over a half trillion a year toward speeding motorists along, mostly on interstates, which flow imported goods to your nearest Huckajet or Tarbees or WallyMart, but from which bicyclists are banned. Interstates stink for anything but motoring, anyway. Because they entice motorists to speed, they pepper side streets with foot high speed bumps without breaks, ruining what few cut-throughs bicyclists and motorists alike have for getting around city efficiently. This forces traffic onto a few congested roads or past playgrounds and schools, which deters bicyclists, endangers children and solves nothing. Don't be fooled that transportation engineers have all the answers. There are books and federal resources available for traffic calming, but they don't appear to ever be consulted, especially if Home Despot needs another giant parking lot. Bicyclists who want to do good need to join advisory committees that get invited into planning sessions.

Signs and stripes say "bikes belong" for cheap. But should bicyclists settle for cheap? No! After all, only cyclists and walkers make any real effort to reduce air, ground and noise pollution as well as alleviate parking congestion and gridlock. Because of this you'd think they'd consider urban bikeways before suburban. Bicyclists get few chances to separate from motorists. They deserve better. It's pathetic to see how they are treated, standing aside waiting for a chance to dash across a huge intersection in fear of

their lives, and that's only bold riders. More tragic are riders who become roadnet prisoners and simply give up, which are legion.

If you fear bicycling so much you'll never ride, get rid of your bike. If you happen to live near an office of Bikes For the World ([bikesfortheworld.org](http://bikesfortheworld.org)), Bikes Not Bombs, Pedals For Progress ([p4p.org](http://p4p.org)), Salvation Army, or Working Bikes Cooperative ([workingbike.org](http://workingbike.org)), you could donate your old, rust-free, unused bike in working order. If not, simply put a FREE BIKE sign on it, working or wrecked, and display it in your yard; someone will gladly take it away. It's never garbage. Not everyone shares your fears. Bikes sitting in basements, behind garages, or stuck in lofts aren't helping anyone, just as donating cash to any such chatter collective as Liveable Stretches Alliance. Nobody needs more bad advice.

He planned someday to rewrite antiquated mo-ve instructional materials and post on Internet, but to what end? Encourage more driving? Better to post a new motoring manual that addresses how to coexist with other users of streets—bikes, pets, walkers, wild animals—entitled to be there. Don't need an entire manual to say, "Slow down!" Each license applicant, if physically capable, should have to master a course on a bicycle, obeying signs and staying within lines, as a prerequisite to a learner's permit. If they don't have balance, poise, road knowledge, or sensitivity to cyclists and pedestrians, do you want them piloting a 2-ton, potentially deadly projectile under any circumstances?

He suggested they draw upon opinions of hundreds of respondents to his survey. Avid bicyclists appreciate any accommodation made with bicycling in mind, including actual bikeways, frequent sweeping, on-demand signals and traffic amelioration. They want to ride on actual streets. His corridor concept made that feasible. Can't keep heavily driven streets in good repair; cracks and potholes make them unbikeable. Banning a few 4-lane roads to gain well maintained nearby corridors *is* a major compromise many avid bicyclists would be willing to make. By law, planners must designate an adjacent bikeway to mirror what they've done for mo-ves. There are some roads nobody needs to bike on: Certain high-speed arteries with direct access to highways but no building entrances, racks, services, or stores. He skipped them whenever possible. Bikes-belong protests over them would be met with anger unlikely to gain consensus. Better not to put a sign, just ride on them, if you dare, or rightly avoid, if you can with new bans cropping up daily.

Illustrious leader Dudbubba rides a bike sometimes, falls off usually. Must have gotten curious when his friend, Rey, the man in the yellow hat, gave him a shiny import. Perhaps Dud heard that

bicycling improves your brain chemistry, something a monkey sorely needs. He was constantly trying to get more to try for that very end, someone with whom to talk intelligently. If not to get everyone riding, get more, or those who already do to do more, especially as a primary mode of conveyance. Activists fight for increased spending on bike infrastructure. All this does is increase awareness, inspire people to be doers, make bicyclists rise with the Morning Star to deliver the news, perchance save babies through courage and ingenuity. Do politicians want people to think for themselves and use their main tools, boycott and vote? Nah! They'd rather evoke your emotions than excite your intellect. Don't want you to think, only react in ways that benefit them; may want to crush this dangerous movement before it gathers momentum and they find themselves taken out with yesterday's trash. What *you* don't want are politicians who don't serve your needs.

Keeping people polarized through extremism, greed and hate only benefits whoever is in power. After Mother Earth, absolute power would belong to any majority of people who agree, if they so decide. It's called democracy. Assigning an arbiter, as a last resort, is only necessary when people don't agree. Leaning leads to toppling. It isn't like there aren't better things to do with your time on earth. You can bridge gaps between nations through diplomacy, explore new methods of production and sources of energy, feed the hungry, free the oppressed, save environment, shelter the homeless. Mankind is faced with big challenges; solving them is a full time occupation. Today's conversations are steeped in a vapid culture war that lacks any understanding in basic logic or respect for individual dignity. Talk has become practically worthless. You better really argue your case well in print before it's summarily dismissed.

Being nice to selected individuals is not enough. Neighbors expect you to keep your property not only neat but pleasing aesthetically. Anything you collect must be made to conform to their sense of order. You can't plant meadows with wildflowers to attract butterflies, you must maintain tightly clipped lawns. You can't keep a pile of rubble as raw materials for building projects that slowly get done without hearing complaints. When you improve property, tax assessors come along and raise your valuation. Pay, pay, pay. Better for an individual to keep land like a pigsty. Leaving a forest untouched or operating a strip mine are both better than improving from a cost standpoint.

What should you do with yourself? How can you align what matters to you with what matters to all of society? Only to behold, comprehend, form groups, move forward, persist. For a conserva-

tive, only monarchy would suffice, because they don't grasp cooperating, enfranchising their constituents, or sharing resources and wealth. But all advancements in this World follow from trading personal attitudes for community awareness, from working cooperatively rather than dictating. Did Americans depose one Stalin overseas only to raise another stateside? People's personalities matter and make a difference. Strong wills overshadow weak. Selfishness negates nobility.

Topics, the sacred 3, you're never supposed to discuss in polite conversation are: money, politics, and religion. By never discussing them, you never learn about their strengths or weaknesses, or manage to compete for power. Who benefits? Not you! Liars organize others against you. Profit is the sole goal under capitalism, a zero sum game with countless losers and one winner. Money is how they keep score; this deal is nearly over, and billions are already losers but don't know it. A few millionaires have short stacks but will soon be *all in*. Slippery slope of religion is a catchall for ideas that have no logical basis, only faith that, if a mind can conceive them, they must be true. Who couldn't conceive mighty strange ideas depending upon their frame of mind? They make countless films with bizarre suspensions of reality. Moviegoers hardly squirm in their seats anymore. Outrageous is now commonplace. After seeing *Spiderman II*, had a daydream about a maniacal machine operator crushing another bit of material into an already pulsating machine, feeding its technological fire, fueling its speed, increasing its reaction until it nearly explodes. Isn't this madness what motoring is all about? Fictional webslinger finds all conveyance too confining, but, of course, not all crime occurs between tall buildings with ideal leverage, even though a lot of it starts within their corporate offices, migrates to Madison Avenue, and plays out on mean streets. Cravings create criminals.

Christianity became popular by welcoming everyone to its congregation, unlike its root religion, a self-proclaimed chosen tribe into which you had to be born. When its doctrines could no longer be flexed to accommodate everyone, it became another *us-them* division. Popes forced it upon indigenous peoples to expand its base while mercilessly rooting out any civilized opposition. It gravitated from "we hope you'll join us" to "you will obey or die". When it simply became another blood sucking leach and money funnel, it splintered into a bunch of competing factions battling one another over minor details and revenues. You'd think any true religion would gain universality by merit of its charitable works, not by creating fears, intimidating members, or political wrangling.

Tithing at these ceremonies should equal what you'd pay for a comparable short film or stage performance, nothing less or more. Removing profit motives wouldn't help; been tried. Really, only removing *fear* would work: of austerity, of being overrun by foreign interests, of being put out of your home by escalating property assessments, of being wiped out by medical costs, of nuclear annihilation, of retiring poor. People really do have real worries.

From religion they derived secular laws, Hammurabi's Code, among similar documents, mostly for throttling life out of anyone who deviates. Underlying is some notion that people don't ever get along, must be forced to comply, reigned in, lest community is harmed. Since then, laws have focused more on granting privilege to a few at majority's expense, unfairly distributing property and resources. Any system that isn't voluntary has this problem: Those who will subvert it will anyway, while peaceful, tolerant people need no regulation. Logic dictates that laws are practically unnecessary except as reminders, but then there are so many nobody can keep them all in mind as they act, sins of commission and omission. Possessing power puts a person in a terrible position, having to make decisions that effect everyone. Given the final say yet compelled to do what's right in spite of self interest, who'd want power? Only people who shouldn't have any.

The *correct way to get things done* is to express opinions, plan with everyone in mind, question rules, stay vocal, and, as taxpayers, task lawmakers to make sure they represent you. At least that was theory behind his bicycling activism. Few officials are aware of the attitudinal, fiscal and political deterrents that have stifled participation during past half century, excluding, of course, automaker marketing departments, who've used them against you. On beautiful days, instead of actually riding, these bit players spin their wheels penning belittling repetitive minutia to shout down opposition for their unsuspected deceptions. Spin a prayer wheel, why don't you? Instead of blindly agreeing, he ran a local survey. He'd rather consider what hundreds of survey respondents with a fantastic amount of saddle time were saying. Real enthusiasts take time to educate each another on fine points, or actually read and understand what's forwarded. All he heard were fellow cyclists telling him how good roads to bike on are disappearing at an alarming rate. To flow more mo-ves, 2-lane roads were being turned into 4-lane shoulderless speedways coated roughly with new, bike hostile aggregates. Commercial concerns cater to consuming motorists, not conserving cyclists. Public safety is their least priority.

Despite contrary share-the-road opinions expressed by automaker spin and bike cartel stats, he sought out calm, flat routes. But what do he know? Just personal experience. Accommodations were only needed where usable segments are cut off. Advocates need to get out of their armchairs and impartially assess local conditions. Pastoral elitists just want to feel good about their ineffectual efforts. If all you can achieve is an unbroken thread of suitable roads, that would suffice. Over 85% of those surveyed would use such an area-wide connected bikeway system. His survey respondents got it right, "Let us ride our bikes everywhere within reason. Create a better biking infrastructure with ways to deal with bad intersections, bike friendly traffic signals, and judicious lane striping. Maintain roadways better; sweep more often. Supply more bike paths for the health of it." What else could he conclude? Roadways as they now exist intimidate. You must respect people's fears, but you can't smother them with unreasonable anxieties. Extreme viewpoints may tug over a few adherents, but they don't win popular support, which is what democracy is all about. Freedom is in balance. But when entire roadnet is designed to exclude you, activists must turn outrageous for awhile until they shove back. Demand laws be made equitable. Fight to restrict motoring. Question why taxpayers have to spend a half trillion dollars every year when nobody can afford gasoline to put improvements to use. Shouldn't they apply it to alternative transportation?

A boatload of data never gets integrated into urban planning. Everybody cites it to support some personal ambition. They urge "rural planning" to get bicyclists out of city, out of their way. All one has to do is go out at commute time and see for yourself how many bicyclists are riding. Like finding "Thickly Settled" signs, worth 50 points, in that game dreamt up to combat motoring inattentiveness. Trying to get people to ride to work, they'd tell him, "I tried it and was nearly killed!" Easy to say, "Educate bicyclists!" Many books for feeding fears, none on motorists sharing road, not even free on-line driver's education in 49 out of 50 states. Learning safe behaviors behind wheel is has become a commodity only rich can afford. If cities are where motorists want to go, they're also where bicyclists need to be. They do bad by forgetting 35% of taxpaying road users who happen to ride instead of drive.

He ran into a past nemesis, a joke against everything he held dear, no veneer of civility, a troglodyte closer to an ape than a human with low brow and thick eyebrows. Unable to escape, he asked, "Didn't you used to be Charlie Grimpen?" Chuck shook his hand coolly, a limp lump of momentarily microwaved lasagna, and

started prying immediately: "What are you up to these days?" He instinctively concocted an prevarication designed to be both self-preserving and vengeful, since he knew Chuck's question was aimed at getting dirt to be used later against him. "Semiretired now. Don't need to work. Doing advocacy, trying to improve local roads for bicycling." Chuck grew glum, and mumbled, to his shameless delight, "Wish I could say the same." They chitchatted about biking and golfing, swapping stories, while waiting in line, then parted. It was a good answer. Sounded like he *done good* instead of failed badly. Your best revenge is to thrive; really aggravates your enemies. Would have wanted to evade eye contact, but when you're stuck, you might as well make the best of it. So many times he'd put up with Chuck's back-stabbing and face-fronting insults, as a good friend of Supervisor Louie, payback was appealing. But it wasn't so malicious, just a way to wriggle out of another embarrassment. It beat incivility, maiming or murder as a response.

Just because others are jealous doesn't mean you have to deprive yourself. They need to deal with their own jealousy. You need to find ways not to flaunt your success, such as living within your means. Don't gravitate toward what's been made familiar by someone else, reeled in as if fish. Align yourself to what you really believe, what you know in your heart is just and true. Who's jealous of a public servant who spent all her time helping others? Nobody begrudes Mother Teresa. You can achieve success yet avoid animosity if you use your resources and skills for a greater good. You can't help but anger people if you selfishly deprive others, or sit on your apathetic ass after the way has been made clear.

Other cyclists aren't any more obligated to return your greetings than motorists are to other motorists. The only behavior you can legitimately regulate is your own. People can be kind despite circumstances, but, frankly, you can't be nice to some people. They take thoughtlessly, or was it simply coincidentally? His short lived advocacy column *Spin Cycle* later resurfaced as *Wash Cycle*, what they now call bike network in nation's capitol. Once, he waved a woman ahead at an intersection; car following cut him off and jammed intersection, so he caught light twice more than he would have had he simply cut off first woman. Didn't make him mad, just disappointed again by inhuman stupidity, more troglodytes living among decent folks. Since it is against the law, police should pull them over and inconvenience them for a change.

You can share and stay respectful, but you don't have to be a doormat. Righteous indignation is a suitable response when you have a clear conscience. Pride gets you nowhere. A wonderful

capacity to endure pain seemed practically man's only purpose. People are judged by pain they endure so others don't have to. With media saturated with award shows, you'd think recognition was the most important commodity of all. True, people are motivated almost as much by fame as fortune, but recognition pays no bills. Instead, why not mutual respect, shared responsibility, or smooth interaction? All were infinitely more practical.

At home you can do things to encourage your family. Works best if you vary these motivational games. Sometimes announce a) Chores you've accomplished that day, b) How they benefit everyone, and c) What you enjoyed about doing them. Ask each family member to describe an occurrence that made an impression or pleased them recently. Mona recalled two dowagers holding doors for her, and when she said, "Don't I feel special!" dowagers replied, "You *are* special! Never doubt it." These are very positive practices. Think they're too naïve? Try them among loved ones; watch their reactions. People gravitate from bored, silent indifference toward chattering joyous gratitude. If not, that's a good sign you need to separate. Who wants to be around those who never notice anything good? What are they doing wrong? Expecting others to enjoy themselves is edifying, healing, life affirming, a start toward putting your own life in order. This book could only have exposed darkness after having seen what light is like. You'd like it.

Most people don't relish domestic chores, but there's so much to recommend: a) Count among thing you do for your own benefit; b) Delight loved ones and those around you; c) Multitask with other important projects, like composing songs or exploring mindscapes; d) Rather than abstract, otherworldly phenomena done anonymously for strangers, concrete, local, personal satisfactions; e) Sometimes shamelessly sensuous, practically selfish. Consider crisp acidity of raking multicolored leaves, earthy fragrances while gardening, jiggling body parts while scrubbing, nimble dexterity while unloading a dishwasher, rippling strength of muscles while chopping wood or shoveling snow, smell of freshly laundered clothes (especially dried outside on a line), sparkle of pans, platters and pots after washing. Cooking? Read Esquivel's *Like Water for Chocolate*. To feel, hear, see, smell, taste and touch is what life's for; familiarity shouldn't matter if you're truly alive. Mystified how people pay others to avoid these privileges, or, even odder, pay others to teach them how, as if they're too incompetent to boil water or handle a broom. Doing for yourself might be frustrating or uncomfortable at first, but there are the spiritual rewards of teaching others including your children how to do it, too.

Your life is all about your attitudes, independent of the situation you find yourself in, which can be pretty horrific. Consider those displaced by hurricanes or tsunamis, or whose relationships are all servile or toxic, and count your blessings. Gilmore got it right, "All you touch and all you see, is all that you will ever be." You choose, to participate, to remain involved, or to run away or stop, and it forms you. The more you do for others, the more you're saved the bitterness of remorse. Otherwise, you're not much compensated for your pains. No time for sorrow; forge forward. The self-sufficient help themselves and whoever else needs it. They are the norm rather than exceptions who make life so miserable for the majority. Elbow grease is the glue that holds civilization together. Remember this while you're gathering and sorting.

The worst effect of doing good is an equal or greater evil retaliation. Citizens provide pleasant bikeways and muggers and rapists use them to victimize children and women. They give food stamps to feed children, but parents exchange them and gamble away money; only makes sense, since the only thing they can think to do is maximize their return by winning at games of chance using money they got by chance. Providing ways to earn money makes more sense than simply giving it away. Since nobody wins in a casino, welfare just hands money over to mob that controls gaming. What's happening, in effect, is that bigger richer states are *annexing* smaller, poorer neighbors without having to acquire their problems. Sweet! This means you have to do twice as much, never relent, redouble your efforts for ever diminishing returns. You can't afford to do good unless you defeat such evil. He considered gathering an "Army of me," like minded, right thinking folks, to stage an intervention for a society gone tilt, tottering like a spun coin as it loses momentum on green felt. Would be the ultimate charitable act.

Humankind is an interlinked community that has to learn how to live cooperatively or perish. Everyone's joined at the hip under threat of annihilation. "Now there's that fear again." That's what World has become, dangerously unstable on the verge of greatness. Have to accept individuals are different from one to next, each with something unique to add: Arabs, Americans, conservatives, Europeans, Jews, liberals, Moslems, and scary malcontents alike. How do they all contribute beneficially? Making sure that happens should be Man's mission moving forward into a new millennium.

