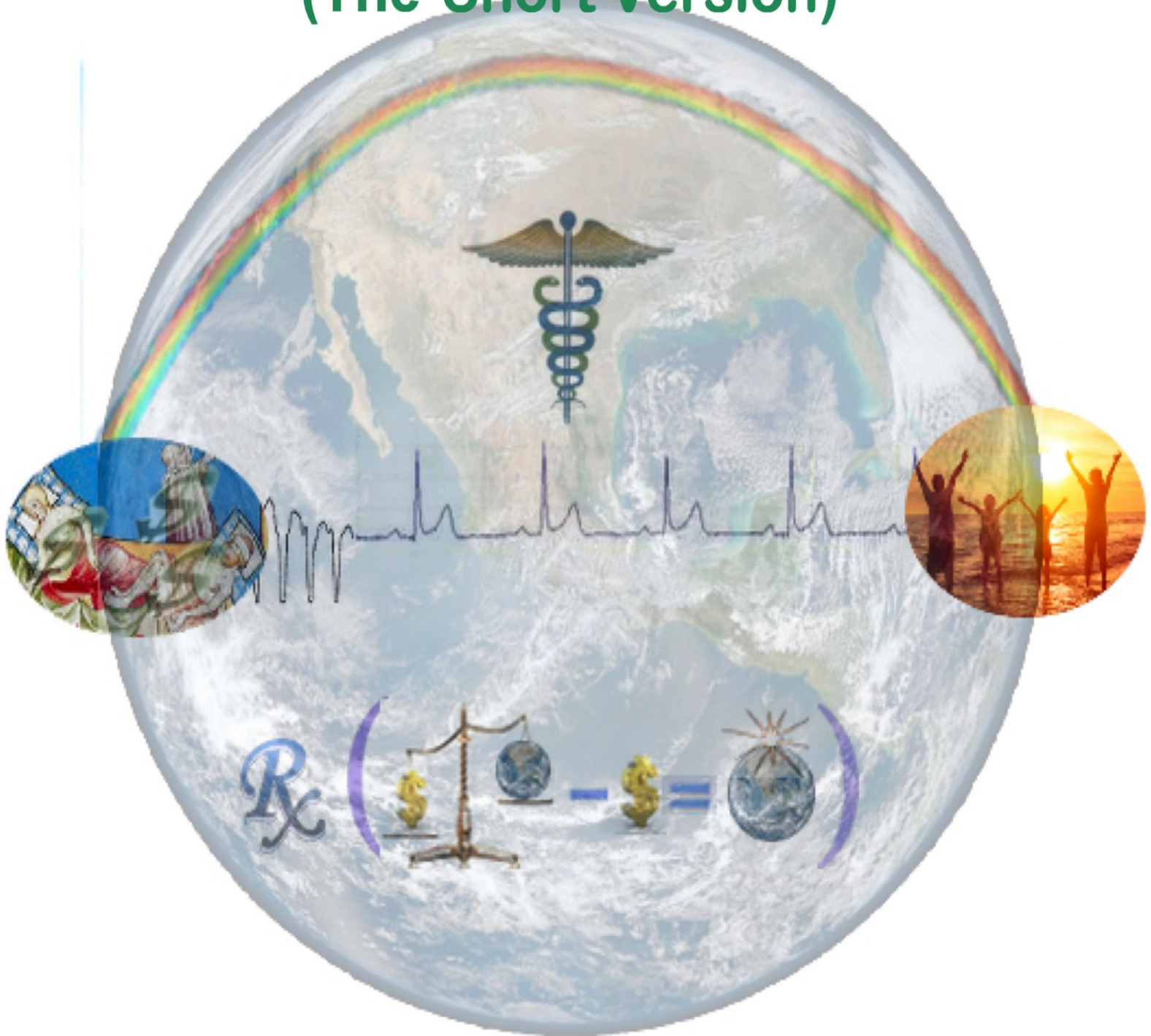


The Cure: *Of, By And For The People* (The Short Version)



*"Don't miss all the beautiful colors of the rainbow
looking for that pot of gold."*

Anonymous Proverb

The Cure: Of, By, And For The People (The Short Version)

By Vittorio Hugo Svoboda

A note from the author — September 2026

This ebook preserves the text of its original published edition. Since publication, the transition strategy has continued to develop through further research, reflection, and practical systems analysis.

The earlier model of a coordinated, near-simultaneous "Transition Day" has been superseded. The current approach is gradual, voluntary, cumulative, and community-based. It begins by solving concrete problems, building trustworthy cooperative institutions, testing them under real conditions, and allowing dependence on existing systems to diminish only as safer alternatives can reliably carry their functions.

The commitment to nonviolence is absolute as a principle and strategy of Transition. Transition does not initiate, organize, threaten, or employ violence to impose change, seize institutions, punish opponents, or overcome resistance. An individual retains the right to protect themselves or another person from an immediate physical assault using only the minimum necessary action, ceasing when the danger ends, with prompt compassionate care for every injured person afterward.

Some passages reflect an earlier formulation. Where the original wording conflicts with the current position, it appears with a visible annotation — preserved rather than silently removed, because a system that improves must be willing to show how its thinking has changed.

For the current strategy, see worldintransition.org

This is an attempt to condense the central core data, analysis, and conclusions described in the full length version of *The Cure: Of, by, And For The People*, for folks who just want to get the idea without reading nearly 400 pages. The full length version is that long

because it challenges and debunks major cultural myths of the times we live in, and so requires thorough and painstaking research, citations, references, and detailed explanations and analysis in order for people to be able to verify for themselves what is presented there, especially given the volume of unverified opinions, information, misinformation, and disinformation that has become common in our world today.

Not everyone has the time or inclination to read something that long, which is kind of like reading a doctoral thesis, although we authors have done our best to make it less dry and more human than such a thesis would normally be. So, this short version is a way of presenting the core observations and knowledge in an easily digestible way. If you read this pamphlet and you want to know more and see where this information comes from, then you can download and read the full version via www.books2read.com/The-Cure and I would recommend that you download from Barnes & Noble Nook app because it is intended to be free, but for some reason, Amazon Kindle insists on charging for it, which is contrary to the whole spirit and purpose of both this work and the full version.

Background:

We have a lot of ground to cover in a short space; but before we dive into the nitty-gritty, we'll define some key concepts and terms that are central to our discussion. Some readers will be familiar with them, but many may not be, and some may have a misunderstanding of them.

We've all heard the saying that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. This comes out of observation of human behavior across many civilizations and millennia. Now we have currently reproducible scientific evidence that helps explain how and why this happens. Recent studies show that in typical human beings, being in a position of power or influence actually shuts down the brain centers for empathy and compassion over time. The

implication of this is that contrary to the widespread myth that hierarchical social structures are inevitable, efficient, and fundamental to human nature, the opposite is true. The prevalence of hierarchical social structures does not prove its value or inevitability, any more than the prevalence of drug addiction proves that addiction is a fundamental healthy part of human nature.

These studies, alongside observations of human behavior, prove that hierarchical social structures are incompatible with human nature. They suppress our most constructive, positive, and beneficial potentials and strongly reinforce our most destructive ones. Keep in mind that this applies to all positions in any hierarchy except the very bottom roles where one has no power or influence. Among those at the bottom, destructive competition, distrust, and resentments are the norm.

The fundamental fatal flaw of hierarchy can be seen in tragedies surrounding figures like Hitler, Jim Jones, David Koresh, and Heaven's Gate. The personalities of those high in the command hierarchy are magnified and strongly enforced. There is nothing to counteract this. A peer-based structure, on the other hand, is much more robust and benefits from the combined knowledge, wisdom, and expertise of all of its members and no one's neuroses can become the law. It's not foolproof, but it is giant steps in the right direction. A hierarchy is like the energy you get from taking amphetamines. A peer-based structure is like the energy you get from healthy living.

Another, more subtle example of the inherent weaknesses and non-viability of hierarchical structures is seen in commercial aviation. In the days when cockpits were strictly, rigidly hierarchical, there were numerous crashes where the pilot made a fatal error but the first officer and engineer were inhibited from challenging them. Since then, such tragedies have been greatly reduced through Crew Resource Management training, which among other things trains first officers to speak up and even take control if necessary, and trains captains to listen to them. In other words, air travel became demonstrably safer by making cockpits more peer-oriented.

Let's postulate that the purpose of any human social structure is to facilitate, enhance, and support the happiness, empowerment, wellbeing, and thriving of all of its members while sustaining the ecosystem that is our life support. To attain this goal as closely as possible, we need to establish a paradigm that reinforces and predisposes mutually symbiotic social relations as a norm; not "one man's loss is another man's gain," but "one man's gain benefits all and one man's loss hurts all." Any other criterion for the viability and success of any social structure is meaningless if this prime goal is compromised by pursuing them. Measures of economic or material productivity or growth are worthless if they are met at the cost of diminishing the fundamental purpose of a society. Therefore, we can state with certainty that any social structure, to approach this goal, must not be hierarchical at any level, except possibly temporarily in very limited situations on a very small scale, and only if it's necessary for a specific purpose. Instead, we will have to create societies built on peer-based organizations that create no positions of power. This will mean learning new skills and modes of functioning for most of us, who are adapted to functioning in the current dysfunctional hierarchical structures over generations. This is challenging but doable.

If exceptional situations were to occur that necessitate the creation of a temporary hierarchy, potential dysfunction can be minimized by ensuring that it is for a clearly specified and defined purpose where it is necessary, to be disbanded as soon as its purpose is fulfilled, carries no perks, privilege, or immunity associated with rank, and is closely monitored from without by an external body for symptoms of dysfunctional dynamics. All participants will be trained to fill all roles, which will rotate periodically and if signs of dysfunction appear. If it is possible to reliably measure an individual's degree of susceptibility to brain compassion and empathy center shutdown, then individuals can be enlisted whose susceptibility is lowest.

Liberal: This word has two different meanings that are relevant to this discussion:

Liberal democracy refers generically to systems of government that codify, ensure, and guarantee the human and civil rights of the people in them.

Liberal economics refers to an economic philosophy and systems based on the idea that private parties (In most scenarios, in practice, this means the ultra-wealthy and their corporations, not typical people) should shape the socioeconomic environment and dynamics, essentially a *laissez-faire* or *free market capitalist* system or paradigm as described below. Such a philosophy opposes allowing government to intervene, regulate, or limit corporations, including strenuous opposition to protections of employee and consumer rights and environmental stewardship. As you will learn as you read further, this is functionally destructive of and antithetical to liberal democracy.

The political meaning of *liberal* is not discussed, as compared to *conservative*, because its meaning is different in different political and socioeconomic environments.

Feudalism is a governmental and socioeconomic paradigm in which all or most lands in a country belong to and are controlled by kings, queens, or other royal persons or family. These lords conditionally parcel out control, but not ownership, of portions of the land as fiefs to vassals who are allowed to govern and control their fiefs as they see fit, in exchange for military and administrative services, enforcing and furthering the interests, policies, and agendas of the lords as well as financial payments or tribute. The lord has absolute power and can revoke a fief at any time for any reason. The peasants and serfs who live on these lands are considered part and parcel of the property on the land, like cows and oxen. They have no rights and must live and work on the land and pay whatever portion of their work product the vassals and royals over them see fit to demand. Both royals and vassals can kill, rape, rob, or evict peasants and serfs at will with no consequences. All resources and non-noble persons are the personal property of the lords, who have absolute power and can only be replaced by natural death and succession, assassination, or a successful revolution or rebellion. This is

personified by the use of the “royal ‘We’” in which the monarch speaks in first person plural to signify that what he or she says applies to the whole population. Variations of feudalism have been seen on virtually every continent at various times in history and in some countries even now.

Capitalism is defined as a socioeconomic paradigm or system in which resources of every kind are owned and controlled by “private” parties, which can be individuals, families, or corporations. This paradigm places no limits on how much or little one “private person” can own or control. Those who control a resource can decide at their whim how much to make available to whom and at what price, and where production is involved, how much to produce and at what price. Those who own and control a resource in such societies are always given an advantaged position relative to their employees and consumers. The owners or employers determine how much employees are paid. The same .0002 percent of the population, the wealthiest of the wealthy, determine how much we’re paid and how much we must pay for things. With very few exceptions such as successful strikes, employees must accept the employer’s terms if they want a job. Since such societies force all persons to get currency in order to pay for all of their needs, employees have little real choice. The terms “private,” “private enterprise,” “free enterprise,” and similar expressions sound relatable since we tend subconsciously to interpret them to imply the freedom and rights of the individual. In practice, under these paradigms, it overwhelmingly implies the supremacy of the ultra-wealthy and their corporations who control most resources. These persons and corporations manipulate the law of supply and demand by literally creating intentional shortages and by manipulating consumers through highly skilled advertising to think they need things that they would never have wanted otherwise. There are many variations of this paradigm in operation today. In extreme versions, called *laissez-faire* or *free market* economies, extreme stratification occurs rapidly and accelerates, leaving a microscopic few in control of nearly all resources and everybody else disempowered and disenfranchised. Some versions have some government regulation that limits some of

the more extreme practices, which lessens the disparities and slows the escalation, but the same pattern is observed. Note that this is a socioeconomic paradigm, not a governmental one; but these wealthy parties inevitably influence those in government far more than constituents can hope to. This leads to a large degree of merging of the socioeconomic power structure with government, increasingly subsuming government. To an extent, we can liken this to the confluence of government and religion in Medieval Europe.

Communism is a socioeconomic and governmental paradigm whose goal is to create a classless society in which all property is owned in common by its people, who share resources, decision-making, and responsibilities. There have been many implementations and interpretations of communism. The most recent and widely known examples are the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the People's Republic of China, Cuba, Vietnam and a few other countries. While the goal and intention are in harmony with the purpose of human societies as stated above, so far, the national-scale implementations and interpretations have been deeply flawed to the point of failing to even come close to realizing these goals. One of the main failures arises from the idea that a "vanguard" of more socially and politically aware people must "guide" the rest of the people to this classless society. This gives rise to a stratified society in which members of the Communist Party become a ruling elite much like the ultra-wealthy under capitalism and the feudal lords under feudalism, privileged above the rest of the population. Those in power positions within the Party act as dictators, ruling by decree, setting quotas and expectations that must be met by the people or severe punishment will occur. Since these expectations are typically draconian and unrealistic, those in the field tell the rulers what they want to hear, that quotas have been met and exceeded when in fact they haven't. Abuse of power was institutionalized to the point where freedom of expression was suppressed, and people lived under the shadow of secret police. Another failure of most modern attempts at communism has been the attempt to abolish religion, based on Karl Marx's statement that "religion is the opiate of the people," which flowed from his observation of how religion has been used as an

instrument of control all too often in human history. As it turns out, studies have shown that religion expresses something basic in human nature. In and of itself it can be a tremendously positive force in individuals and in societies; it is the distortion and abuse of religion by deluded, misguided, and power-hungry people that is the problem. To outlaw religion is like trying to outlaw music, humor, or love. Certain notable successes can be attributed to these experiments: in Cuba, there is no such thing as rent or mortgage as all citizens have a constitutional right to a place to live. In many communist countries, support for artists, scientists, athletes, and engineers allowed them to develop, fulfill their potential, and make their contributions to society, though this success was marred by stifling of expression in these people as well. Overall, these implementations failed to approach fulfilling the purpose of societies as stated above. The main reason was the generation of power positions with little to no mechanisms to inhibit the inevitable abuse of power. Some notable successful exceptions: Kibbutzim in Israel, Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (Rojava) to a degree, Twin Oaks Community in the United States, some Native American nations, to some extent the Rebel Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities in Mexico, and Auroville in India to a large degree.

Socialism is a socioeconomic and governmental paradigm in which most resources are owned by all the people in common and administered centrally through the government in order to ensure reasonable and equitable distribution to all. In democratically socialist countries, that government is elected by the people. Notable examples include the Scandinavian and many Western European countries among others. Of the paradigms currently operating in the world, this paradigm comes closest to the humanistic purpose of human society but still falls short in the degree to which hierarchical organizations exist and currency is still required to live and function. Unfortunately, in some Western countries, especially in the United States, misinformation, disinformation, and ignorance have produced inaccurate stereotypes about socialism that posit that it is a dictatorship that leaves people poor and oppressed. The opposite is true in reality.

Democracy is a governmental paradigm in which the functions of government are performed either by the citizens themselves, or much more commonly, by persons elected by them to perform these functions. In a pure democracy, the will of the majority prevails. The positive aspects of this paradigm flow from the people governing themselves, or at least choosing those who govern them with the understanding that the voters can vote their representatives out or impeach them if they feel they are not serving them in good faith. The flaw in pure democracy is that even a slim majority can become oppressive to any minority, as there is no legal or other specification to prevent it. Thus, a majority can decide to declare a state religion and force all people to follow it; the majority could decide that debtors be enslaved, or even decide to deny the minority the right to vote.

Democratic republic is like a pure democracy, but with a constitution or similar document setting out and defining the limits of what the majority or their elected officials can do, specifying human rights and societal principles and guidelines which cannot be violated or trespassed under any circumstances. Either kind of democratic government may operate in parallel with a capitalistic, socialistic, or even a communistic socioeconomic paradigm, or any combination of features of one or more of them. When there is communism or a capitalist socioeconomic paradigm operating, this creates two separate power structures: one that is at least theoretically responsible to the people, and one which is not.

Dictatorship is government by an individual or small group of individuals who govern through intimidation, terror, bribery, violence, deceit, and propaganda. Such regimes have no protection whatsoever for the rest of the people.

Oligarchy is a dictatorship by an extremely small group of people. *Military dictatorship* is just what it sounds like: the military directly runs the government.

Theocracy theoretically means a supreme being is the government, administered with omniscience, wisdom, and compassion beyond

that possessed by mortal humans. Unfortunately for those living in a theocracy, so far, no supreme being has stepped up to lead any modern “theocracy,” which leaves it to ambitious, fanatical, or deluded humans who claim to represent the supreme being and to speak for him/her/it. So, theocracy is dictatorship by a religious sect that imposes its ideas and beliefs on the citizens at gunpoint.

Keep in mind that what you’ve just read is a mix of political, socioeconomic, and mixed systems.

If you look at the descriptions of feudalism and capitalism (and communism as well, though we won’t focus on it because it doesn’t currently have a major impact), it becomes clear that they are functionally indistinguishable from each other, differing mainly only in the titles, technologies, and the means of wielding power. Both are characterized by ownership and control of a preponderance of resources by one person or a microscopically small group of people. Each of these lords is master of their realm (country, land, corporation, currency), who then delegates and rewards vassals, senior managers, corporate attorneys, some politicians and lawmakers, and other privileged loyal persons to carry out, protect, and enforce their will in exchange for giving them control over major portions of their domain, revokable at any time. The employees or serfs are considered a form of asset (like a chair, plow, horse, computer or office furniture) and are treated as such as far as the laws of the land will allow. As you will learn reading on, in practice capitalism, feudalism, and oligarchy are functionally synonymous. The authors will show how capitalism inevitably re-creates feudalism due to the fundamental operating principles and psychological reinforcers shaping human behavior under these paradigms. While we don’t wish to introduce a lot of gratuitous, unnecessary jargon, it is necessary to define a handful of terms for ease of discussion. For the purposes of this work, we shall refer to the ultra-wealthy oligarchs and their corporations as *modern feudal lords* and the prevailing dominant socioeconomic paradigm as *modern feudalism*.

It has become demonstrably clear that modern feudalism is utterly incompatible with, and fatally toxic to, a free and democratic society

that prioritizes the purpose of human society as stated previously. In the coming pages, you will understand this conclusion and see a roadmap of how to transition from the current dysfunctional modern feudalism to a new paradigm designed to strongly reinforce and predispose a society that much more closely approaches fulfilling its purpose.

Control and ownership of resources translates into power over others' ability to access those resources. These resources include literally everything from food to medicine to a place to occupy space, without which one's very right to exist is denied by default.

Since modern feudalism places no upper or lower limits on how much or little one person or entity can own and control, it has been proven that the distribution of wealth (which translates into power and control over others) under modern feudalism can be precisely modeled using the same equations (a concept called Pareto tails) as are used to model the distribution of matter and energy in the universe. The implications for socioeconomics are, however, very different from those for astrophysics. In physics, this distribution is necessary for stars to form and for life to develop. It accounts for black holes which are fascinating but have little to no impact on people's or societies' daily lives. It also accounts for the sparse distribution of matter and energy in most of the space in the universe. In socioeconomics, the analog to black holes is the concentration of wealth, ownership, and control into a very few hands and the sparse distribution of wealth and resources among everybody else. A black hole is an object so dense and massive that its escape velocity is greater than the speed of light. Matter and energy are drawn in, but nothing comes out (except for Hawking Radiation which is only significant over very long time frames). The socioeconomic equivalent is that wealth and control concentrate inevitably into the hands of these modern feudal lords and their corporations, and little to nothing returns to society. This drives the inexorably accelerating disparity of resources, power and control. Every increase in control for the modern feudal lords siphons away from the other people in the society.

Now let's look at currency, exactly what it is, and how it functions in the world today, since it is now universally required of all people in order to live in most countries.

Currency is a made-up concept. Prevailing cultural myths to the contrary, currency is not a natural phenomenon, law, or inherent property of nature.

Originally currency was conceived as a medium of exchange, since it's easier to carry around a pocket full of it than a wagon full of eggs or lumber. People unofficially agreed that one coin, for example, represented a dozen eggs, a pound of cheese or nails, the shoeing of a horse, a two-by-four two meters long, a cell phone charger, an hour's massage, or one tooth pulled, etc. Very soon, however, it began to be used as an instrument of control, as evidenced by the appearance of the image of the ruler of the country on coinage.

The choice of what exactly to use for currency is utterly arbitrary, though once the choice is made, the item is deliberately kept in short supply, which practice ripples through all aspects of modern feudal society. You will learn in these pages that artificially-created scarcity is actually the main product of the paradigm and necessary for it to (dys)function. Gold is no more inherently valuable than iron or bronze or wood. It is pretty, easily malleable, not brittle, and is a good conductor of electricity. But its practical value is no greater or lesser than other substances. Other things that have been and are being used for currency include bronze, copper, seashells, feathers, compressed bricks of tea, salt, paper, plastic cards, and bits of electronic data. Bottle caps or fingernail clippings would do equally well. The use of currency works like the playing of any game: the players know the rules and how to play, and they all agree to do so. The difference with currency is that it is compulsory in virtually every country to access any resource besides air, the more so in countries operating under modern feudalism. No one forces everyone to play football or poker.

So, given that currency is a made-up construct, we want to ask ourselves whether it contributes to, detracts from, or has a neutral or

mixed effect on the societies where it's used, in terms of human happiness, wellbeing, thriving, mutuality, empowerment, and sustainability. Since people made it up, we can make changes or do away with it depending on the answer to this question. If a sport results in numerous serious injuries and deaths to players and/or spectators, a reasonable society will either change the rules and modes of play or discontinue playing it. Another example is how some early Israeli kibbutzim interpreted their core tenet of equality to mean that everyone put their clothes in the communal laundry then grabbed clean clothes from an unsorted pile. They quickly realized that this take on equality was impractical, so they changed it. In the United States, the Constitution has been amended multiple times in order to more closely achieve the purpose of human societies, such as ending slavery and formalizing women's right to vote. Currency is just as needful of reevaluation as any other made-up construct. Unfortunately, no setup is foolproof, as the current threat to democracy from internal authoritarian groups shows in the United States and some other democracies, but we can constantly strive to strengthen our institutions to resist and extinguish authoritarian and fanatical impulses.

So, how does currency currently impact the achievement of the purpose of society?

Regardless of cultural myths, money does not make the world go around, and it plays no real part in creative or productive processes. To some degree it does act as a medium of exchange; but that is almost incidental to its main function: to enforce the control and power of the modern feudal lords over resources and, through this, the people. It not only fails to facilitate the flow of goods and services; it actually impedes it and introduces blocks and obstructions to it, creating crippling entropy in a society while contributing nothing of value, nothing that enhances human happiness and wellbeing, a harmonious society, or the maintenance of the natural environment.

There are countless situations in which there is a real need for something, there are the necessary materials, tools, and people able

and willing to implement it, but it doesn't get done because of lack of funds. A good analogy is the interlock device installed in the cars of people getting their driver's license back after a DUI. The device will not allow the car to start unless the driver blows into an installed breathalyzer and gets a zero percent blood alcohol content. Once the car is started, the device randomly requires the driver to provide another breath sample. This is necessary for safety in the case of a person with a history of driving under the influence.

Now imagine if every car, your home, the exits of supermarkets and other stores, the exits and entrances to hospitals and doctors' offices, and even random sidewalks and streets had these devices installed in such a way that no one could pass without blowing a perfect breath test, except the modern feudal lords for whom these devices would automatically open the way. Assuming that like most of us, you don't have an alcohol issue, we could get through, but a needless amount of our time would be taken up and our every activity disrupted by these breath tests.

Now imagine that instead of testing for alcohol, these devices tested for a drug that you could only get from certain people, and that the devices would block you if you did *not* have the drug present in sufficient amounts. The suppliers of this drug would have literally the power of life and death over us all and could pretty much dictate any terms they chose as conditions for dispensing. Imagine that it was a serious crime to make this drug on your own if you weren't one of the modern feudal lords. We would be told to be grateful to these suppliers for providing the drug we need to go through life. This is no different from "fire insurance" paid to gangsters to not burn down your house or business.

The situation regarding every resource can be characterized by a semi-fictional scenario:

There is water in the river. The water is easily accessible to all towns along the river. But we can't access it because XYZ Corporation owns the river and all of the water in it. They own it because Joe sold it to them. Joe owned it because he took advantage of a law that let

him claim the water and the land under it. Or maybe Joe's great grandfather staked a claim at the river's headwaters and then dammed or diverted the river and held the water hostage unless everybody met his price. Neither Joe nor XYZ made the river or the water, nor did they generate any value for anyone. Now they charge a hefty access fee and a per-liter charge. Only the richest people in most towns can afford it. The rest of us have to catch rainwater and dig wells or forego food or electricity to afford water. XYZ Corporation is lobbying the government to make it illegal to catch rainwater, and there is already a bill on the floor to forbid digging wells because XYZ claims that the aquifer is part of the water of the river and therefore they own it.

In short, currency creates no real value and contributes nothing to the wellbeing of a society or the people in it. It could be said to be a dunsel, a useless component in a system, except that it actually impedes and detracts from the functioning of a society. If modern feudalism were a student design project, the professor would either give it a failing grade, or would give the student two weeks to find and correct the flaws. Introducing currency into a society is like putting sugar into the oil in an engine. All processes would run much more smoothly and efficiently to everyone's benefit if currency were eliminated altogether.

Think of a society as being like an organism. Your body is made up of trillions of cells forming many organs, and functions in symbiosis with trillions of microbes in our gut and elsewhere. Each cell and organ lives its life according to its nature and, in so doing, contributes to the life of the organism: your life. The same can be said of the global ecosystems and the life-forms that make them up. No cell or organism demands currency from another in order to perform its function. The system functions like an incredibly complex jazz band, making the music of life. The earth does not charge us rent or mortgage, the sun doesn't charge us for providing all of the energy we use to live and function, and no entity charges us a subscription fee for our genetic material and existence. Currency is flatly toxic and unnatural, incompatible with the thriving of societies and the people who constitute them.

The imperative of modern feudalism is to get as much money, wealth, and control as possible, to maximize profits, market share, and stock prices. In practice, one's rights, freedoms, options, quality of life, and the degree of respect that one is afforded are directly proportional to one's success in this pursuit. For a business, this means to maximize profits and minimize expenses while outcompeting the competition. For a corporation, it means maximizing profits, market share, and stock prices. Given the mechanics and operating principles of the paradigm, this inevitably conflicts with the interests of employees and customers. Slavery is the ultimate extreme of this; but in the modern world, it's good business to give employees as little pay and benefits as possible, charge as high a price for goods (that are designed to need replacement frequently) and services as possible, and capture as much market share as possible by any means necessary. This is seen, among other places, in the way a company's stock price always goes up when they announce layoffs. So, what's good for business is almost always bad for employees and customers.

It's not enough to be profitable. In the modern feudal paradigm, a business must have ever increasing profits, market share, and stock prices. This creates reinforcement and incentives for producing inferior products that will break soon after warranties are up, with no user serviceable parts inside, forcing consumers to buy new ones often. Easily serviceable products that last a lifetime aren't profitable in the long term. This creates artificially high waste, pollution, depletion of natural resources, and unrelenting, debilitating pressure on employees in production.

As mentioned before, another common tactic to increase profits is to create scarcity by dialing down production to drive prices up, manipulating supply to artificially inflate demand. This is not illegal in most modern feudal societies.

To further expand profits, advertisers have become extremely skilled at manipulating large segments of the population to feel the need to buy things. The sophistication and success rate of today's social

manipulation through advertising would be the envy of past dictators. It creates artificially exaggerated, sometimes fanatical demand for products that no one really needs or would want if not for this manipulation and conditioning. A good example is the seasonal hot items that are kept in short supply to drive prices up beyond all reason. Two years later they are lucky to fetch five dollars at a garage sale. Another dramatic example is diamonds. They were only one among many pretty gemstones that people liked, until the DeBeers family in South Africa bought up the lion's share of diamond mines and then put on one of the most successful advertising propaganda operations of all times while keeping the supply extremely limited. That is why we have "diamonds are a girl's best friend" and "diamonds are forever." In practice, the main product of modern feudalism is scarcity.

Not just individuals, but generations of whole cultures have been conditioned to respond to advertising, to shop for comfort and relief from stress. Not just individuals but whole societies are programmed to the point where these responses have become part of the fabric of the culture.

Advertising is so ubiquitous that we tend to take it for granted and not question it, but it actually causes a lot of harm in a number of ways. First of all, under modern feudalism, advertising and marketing aren't free. Many companies spend more on advertising than on research and development. Those costs are passed on to us, the consumers and it is not cheap. Advertising boosts profits and we, the consumers, pay for it. It also translates into massive waste, sensory overload, and visual/audio pollution. It's estimated that each year in the United States alone, paper for printing roughly 130 billion pieces of junk mail consumes around a hundred million trees. That's just in the United States alone. Worldwide it's almost certainly in excess of a billion trees a year consumed for junk mail. That is forest that is likely lost forever, converted into waste in landfills in the pursuit of more profits. We live our lives awash in a sea of advertisements: billboards on the roads, pop-ups in every app and website, on TV (where once again we pay to watch them) and radio, stuffed under our windshield wipers, and more assault our eyes and ears in an

unending tsunami of visual and audio pollution that intrudes everywhere we go. We already tend to live in a state of sensory overload; this gratuitously makes it much worse. This is demonstrably linked to adverse physical and mental health impacts. Advertising actively harms human wellbeing, society, and the environment and does literally nothing positive for us. Most of us know how and where to find most of the things we want and need, and if you suddenly need, shall we say, the retaining screws for the rotors of a Bell helicopter, it's not hard to find out where to get it. New products and services can be easily announced in the media without advertising. If you have to advertise to get people to want and buy your product instead of just making it known what you have to offer plain and simple, then it isn't worth buying. Add to that the fact that most people don't have time, energy, or the background to question their purchasing impulses. We have the ability to self-examine and realize that we don't really want or need a special gizmo that makes one perfect omelet in half a minute; but in practice, a lot of people just go out and buy it and don't realize that they've been predisposed by advertising to want it. In that way, advertising is responsible for many people spending money needlessly on things they would feel no need or desire for without advertising. If we were to eliminate advertising and marketing, our quality of life would improve significantly.

For all of the assertions based on the myth that modern feudalism is beneficial because it fosters competition, which leads to better goods and services being available, in practice the competition isn't mainly between competing designs, products, or services but between advertising and marketing departments and business strategies. An inferior product with superior advertising will outcompete a superior product with mediocre advertising.

Many economists share belief in the myth that without the environment of modern feudalism, innovation would fail to thrive or would even be suppressed. In practice, it is modern feudalism that actively suppresses innovation in a number of ways. Some innovations are deliberately suppressed or not developed because they would hurt, rather than help profits. A pharmaceutical CEO

openly expressed reluctance to developing a medicine that could virtually eliminate a major disease because, in his reasoning, curing people with a one-time treatment isn't good for developing a profitable "franchise," so he favored keeping a treatment based on existing medicines inferior to the new one. Nothing in the paradigm discourages this. The behavior is actively reinforced. In addition, engineers and designers in competing companies are forbidden to collaborate or share their work with each other, which prevents the development of goods and services that would combine the best features of competing products.

Contrary to prevailing modern feudal economic thought, a peer-based, highly collaborative unfettered development paradigm not only doesn't fail to generate innovation; it also actually outperforms today's restrictive profit-focused paradigm. The Open-Source movement is a prime example. If you're not familiar with it, please check it out. In the area of software, Open-Source volunteer developers have produced the many variants of the Linux operating system, which favorably compares with MacOS and Windows and performs on a par with its commercial counterparts. It's free to download and install to your heart's content. In many ways it functions better than Windows and MacOS. There are dozens of different versions of Linux, competing with each other based on their actual merits and quality. If you visit www.distrowatch.com, you will see the many versions of Linux, arranged in order of number of downloads. The best versions are at the top. The source code is freely and legally available. It is developed and critiqued by loosely associated volunteer developers around the world. If you think you can improve a Linux version, go ahead and add your changes, put them out there, and see how they are received. This is what constructive competition over quality looks like. There are Open-Source equivalents to Microsoft Office, Photoshop, Maya, Quickbooks and just about every commercial software. There are other Open-Source projects in other areas. If you haven't heard of any of this, it's because they don't advertise, but it's easily accessible. Yet many commercial companies use Linux in their corporate infrastructure. The Android mobile operating system is

based on Linux. This is mature, proven real-world proof that a peer-based, non-profit-driven production model is the equal and better of commercial models.

The most basic requirement for living is so self-evident that we don't tend to give it a second thought: the right to occupy space, to have a place to live, work, and be. Without that, one's very right to exist is nullified for all practical purposes. Every living thing needs a place to exist. Among humans, this gives rise to various concepts of land ownership. This is a constructive idea as long as it serves to ensure that every person, family, enterprise or other social entity has a place to be. This concept is held to be sacred in most cultures.

The problem arises from the lack of any upper or lower limit to how much or little one person or entity may own under modern feudalism. This creates a situation where some people own far more than they actually need or use personally while others own no land and so have no place to occupy space according to the rules of the paradigm. There are only two ways to have a place to exist: own it or rent it from someone who owns it. Occupying space on public land is generally illegal, as is occupying space on land that one doesn't own. Here again we see currency functioning as an instrument of control. Those who own land have those who don't over a barrel, since land and house prices are far beyond what most people can afford without borrowing a lot of money. Modern feudal lords and their vassals in the centimillionaire class can plunk down the cost of a home as easily as you or I can plunk down the price of a computer desk. The rest of us can't. And the landowner obviously didn't create the land or even necessarily create anything of value on it. This is an utterly untenable and unjustifiable situation which nevertheless goes pretty much unchallenged due to endemic cultural myths and attitudes.

Let's take a look at how this hallowed institution of land ownership has changed over the years and centuries and how land has changed hands along the way. Your landlord may have legally paid for your residence. You yourself may have saved up over many decades and bought your home from someone who legally bought it

and so on back a generation or two or a few; but if you trace it back a little further, you'll almost certainly find that at some point someone murdered, drove out by force, or cheated someone who was peacefully living on it. This is notoriously true in the Americas, but you would be hard put anywhere in the world to make a list of people whose land was never taken from someone by force or treachery. There is nothing sacred or inviolate about it. Land ownership is only beneficial when it is applied in such a way as to ensure that each person or social entity has the space they need to live and work, which is not the case currently. In the United States, there is one modern feudal lord who owns more land than the state of Delaware while there are over half a million people homeless and tens of millions of vacant residences. Eighty percent of residents of the U.S. live on just three percent of the land. In a culture where it is said that "possession is nine tenths of the law," a homeless person will be dealt with harshly by law enforcement for occupying space on public or private land, yet their meager possessions (coat, tent, sleeping bag, etc) are often confiscated by police and disposed of. So, the degree to which possession is respected is determined by position in the socioeconomic hierarchy. A modern feudal lord's property is fiercely defended while a homeless person's property is ripped away from them. Just as was the case under medieval feudalism, so it is under modern feudalism. (For many examples, the United States has been used, but what is true there is the case in all countries under all forms of modern feudalism. The devolution into pure feudalism is faster in unregulated countries and slower in countries with more safeguards in place to limit the most extreme abuses of wealth and power; but the course is the same in all instances.)

Additionally, over three quarters of people who consider themselves to be homeowners are actually not, because their homes actually belong to the bank or other lender (modern feudal lords, because no one else is in a position to lend such sums of currency), and the "homeowner" must make a mortgage payment every month in order to be allowed to stay there. If circumstances make you unable to make your mortgage payments when you are twenty-nine and a half years into a thirty-year mortgage, you will lose your home. In that

case, all that you have paid in that time was only rent. You only own the home when the mortgage is paid off. Until then your ownership is a fragile illusion.

Under modern feudalism, our right to occupy space, and therefore to exist, is denied by default. Our rights to food, medical care, higher education and all other resources are similarly held hostage. We must constantly come up with currency to pay someone to allow us to occupy space on their land. If we lose that and become homeless, we then have literally no recognized right to occupy space anywhere and what possessions we do have can be seized by police with no recourse to retrieve them. This constant need to keep paying ransom money to be allowed to occupy space has a devastating impact on us, causing a constant state of stress and insecurity that is utterly unnecessary. This is directly opposed to the fundamental purpose of human society.

For that matter, if your landlord isn't a modern feudal lord or one of their vassals, most likely they don't even own the land they're charging you to live or work on. A bank or other lender does.

It's important here to state and emphasize that this dysfunctional, destructive, toxic state of affairs is NOT due to bad people acting badly because they're bad people. We absolutely must NOT go after the modern feudal lords and their vassals to beat them down, make them pay, or otherwise brutalize them. Our goal and purpose must be to form human societies that respect, empower, and facilitate the thriving of all of the people in them in symbiotic, peer-based, mutually supportive patterns. Violence and demonization of any person or persons is not compatible with this end. Major socioeconomic changes and restructuring are needed, and they will have to be forced over the objections of those attached to the way things are, but these changes must be done with compassion and respect for all people. What's happening is easily understood in any psychology 101 class: behavior that is reinforced will predominate, and behavior that is not reinforced will tend towards extinction.

Modern feudalism strongly reinforces acquiring as much currency as possible. It does not reinforce symbiotic or cooperative behavior. It does reinforce a mutually predatory dynamic in which one person's gain takes away from others, a paradigm that more or less forces us to vie against one another just to survive. Add to that the inevitable hierarchical social structure that this paradigm generates, which shuts down the brain centers for empathy and compassion in the modern feudal lords, their vassals, and all people who occupy positions of any power in the socioeconomic hierarchy, and it is obvious that this paradigm cannot help but spawn and amplify the abuse and dysfunction that we see. We must not blame or punish the players, even the most successful players, for playing the game the way it's designed to be played and playing it very well. It is irrational and destructive to punish or blame people for behaving in ways that are reinforced by their environment. For that matter, even if one were to remove the modern feudal lords and their vassals from the world, if we were to leave the same paradigm in place, then other people would fill the same niche very quickly. We need to forcefully but respectfully and nonviolently shut down the whole game itself, the modern feudal socioeconomic paradigm, and replace it with socioeconomic constructs based on an entirely new paradigm that is rooted in what we can learn from the sum of knowledge and experience of psychology, sociology, biology, and human societies. We need to identify what works and develop it further and recognize what doesn't work and stop doing it.

Let's take a deeper look at corporations and their role in modern feudal society. Keep in mind that they are extensions and instruments of the modern feudal lords. You will not see corporations run by a grocery store clerk, small business owner, factory worker, electrician, or other person who makes their living from their productive work.

In modern feudal societies, corporations enjoy a legal status called "corporate personhood." This means that the laws consider the corporation, which is a social entity which includes many people and controls more resources than many countries, and which answers only to modern feudal lords, to be a "person," entitled to the same

“human” rights as you and me. In addition, any individuals within the corporation who perpetrate a wrong are shielded from liability or accountability, with the same kind of legal reasoning that would prevent a thief’s hand from being prosecuted for a theft.

Corporations and modern feudal lords have high-quality attorneys on retainer or a very high salary (an example of modern vassals), whose only duty is to pursue, implement, protect, and aggressively champion the interests and agendas of their employers. These attorneys have virtually limitless funding and resources at their disposal. Corporate personhood puts you and me, in a court of law, on the same legal footing as these lavishly provisioned behemoth entities. If a real (legal term: “natural person”) person like you or me must fight them in court, we must do so with our extremely limited resources. (how many people do you know who could reasonably afford to pay a high-powered law firm hundreds or thousands of dollars an hour for a prolonged trial or litigation in court?)

In a civil trial, if an employee (or former employee) or member of the public is the petitioner, there is no public defender, and since the burden of proof is on the petitioner, it is nearly impossible to prove wrongdoing on the part of the corporation or feudal lord (such as discrimination, wrongful termination, wage theft, retaliation for whistleblowing or other); they can summon convincing experts and make up supposed past negative performance reviews or find other ways to impugn the character of the petitioner, and can easily make them look like petty disgruntled misfits, frivolously looking to take money from the poor, innocent corporation. Many corporations keep duplicate performance reviews on employees: the ones the employees actually see, and negative ones kept on hand for just such occasions.

If you are the respondent and the corporation or feudal lord is the petitioner, you are similarly disadvantaged.

In a criminal trial, if you are the defendant, in the United States and other countries that have them, you have access to a public defender, who is most likely underpaid and overworked with a huge

case load, so even if you have an excellent one, they most likely have very limited time and resources to devote to your case. If you are the plaintiff, you are in the same position you would be in if it were a civil trial where you were the petitioner.

In all of these cases, you are in a position analogous to one civilian armed with a hunting rifle, fighting against an armored division with full infantry, air, and artillery support.

Since a corporation is legally a “person,” when you are at your job or even your home (if owned by a corporation), you are considered to be on their private property, which means that your human rights protections are severely curtailed in deference to their “rights” over their property that you are on. It is exactly the same as the situation of a peasant or serf in a medieval setting. Your employer can claim all rights to any innovations you make while working for them, sometimes even those you make on your own time that have nothing to do with your job. They can fire you for expressing beliefs that clash with theirs. They can search your person and vehicle in ways that police would not be allowed to. There have even been employees fired for refusing to attend religious services held on the premises that management decided to make mandatory. In the United States in recent years, courts have increasingly re-(mis-)interpreted “religious freedom” to favor employers and corporations over individuals, deciding that a business can discriminate against both employees and the public if their religion supports doing so. Your and my religious freedom is not similarly protected. So, you can be fired or not hired for whom you choose to love, for your religion, for your lifestyle (even for just being a single parent) and more, even if it has no impact on your job performance. You can be denied coverage for medical conditions and procedures. Your employer can dictate how you dress. They can get away with firing you for attempting to form a union. For practical purposes, they have nearly dictatorial power over you while you’re on their premises, limited only by such laws as may protect you. At the moment, corporate lobbies are steadily eroding those protections. And remember the situation you will be in if they do you an actionable offense. How can you prove that they fired you for your

religion, political affiliation, or ethnicity? Corporations are highly skilled at avoiding liability or accountability. You won't be told you're being let go because of your skin color or because of an opinion you posted on your personal social media account. They will say you're being let go for poor performance or some other, very subjective, "legitimate" reason, or for some mistake or circumstance that at the time was not made an issue, like the time you forgot to lock your workstation or the week or two when you took off early to take care of your sick family member. For practical purposes, your civil rights end at your workplace door. Of course, not all employers will abuse this, but they can, and many do. To an extent, the same is true at your home if you are renting. Your landlord can evict you for letting a friend or family member stay with you or if you get a pet. Corporate personhood means that "private" does not mean you or me. It means corporations and the modern feudal lords who run them.

Some people believe that owning stock is a way for employees to gain an edge and get ahead. This is theoretically true but in practice it is an illusion. Here are the facts:

First, let's look at it from the financial point of view. The bottom fifty income percentiles in the United States own among us a little less than one quarter of one percent of all stocks and bonds. The upper ten percent, income wise, own about ninety-three percent, of which the wealthiest one percent own over fifty percent. The remaining six and a little over three-quarters of a percent is owned by the fifty-first through the eighty-ninth percentiles. Of course, these numbers will necessarily fluctuate from year to year. The relevant data here are the overall patterns and trends. The percentage of stocks and bonds owned by the wealthiest has steadily grown since the 1970's, with a corresponding decline in the percentages owned by everyone else.

The modern feudal lords make the lion's share of their income not from their work or productive activity, but from investments. They don't need a salary, which is why when some CEO's boast that their salary is only a dollar a year, one should not be impressed with their philanthropy. This is like you or I bragging that we don't need training wheels to ride our bicycles. They and their vassals don't need to

work. Their wealth will generate more wealth without them doing anything.

In order to retire with a steady income of \$60,000 per year (a decent middle-class income, depending on where you live) from just investments, assuming a yearly return on investment of six percent, which is a good return in today's economy, you must have a million dollars lying around that you don't need for living, that you can invest and leave it there indefinitely. Yeah, for real. How many people do you know who can do this? If you can leave \$666,700 invested indefinitely at six percent annually, you might see a yearly income from it of \$40,000. More doable but not by much. Remember that to reap that income, you can't touch your investment to cover unexpected expenses. So, using stock as a source of income to live on is out of the question for all but the modern feudal lords and their vassals.

Ironically, many "financial advisers" blithely advise us to save a fifth to a third of our monthly salary towards unexpected expenses and retirement. For most of us, they might as well give us suggestions on how to tame a unicorn. For millions of people, our salary barely or not even covers living expenses.

For the vast majority of people under modern feudalism, our income comes entirely or almost entirely from our job, or from long hours at working our business if we are small business owners. Most people in the bottom fifty income percentiles can't afford to invest at all. You and I may be able to buy a few shares here and there; but the expected returns are, if we're very lucky, enough to cover one major unexpected expense or a once in a lifetime vacation for the family, but it won't be enough to live on for very long, and most wage-earners and small businesspeople will inevitably have to tap some of their investment principal to cover some of those unexpected expenses. Another factor is that bigger investors (who invest larger amounts) have access to better, more favorable investment vehicles than smaller investors with smaller portfolios. The market favors the wealthy, by design.

Now let's look at the potential for stock ownership to give small stockholder(s) a means of being part of the decision-making process in order to influence corporate decisions and policies. After all, stockholders can vote in at least some corporate decisions; but this is also an illusion if you think you can make a difference or influence the decision-making process. Shareholder voting privileges aren't one shareholder, one vote; it is one share, one vote. All major corporations have one or a handful of modern feudal lords who individually and/or among them control over fifty percent of the shares. Their interests will always overpower the combined will of all of the smaller investors, and they can be counted upon to vote as a bloc, specifically to further their agendas and their will.

The modern feudal lords and their vassals are like people who have atomic powered motors on their boats, who will always be able to sail smoothly and effortlessly upstream against any current. The rest of us are like people in rowboats. If we all row as hard as we can, we can hopefully hold station or advance a little bit against the current if it isn't too strong; if we can't row or stop rowing for any reason, we will be swept downstream and over the falls.

Now let's look more closely at how people misperceive the income and wealth disparity that exists throughout the world. It is widely publicized, yet in studies in multiple countries where people were interviewed and asked to state how great the disparity is, they consistently said it is bad, but seriously underestimated how bad.

We've already covered some of the mechanisms driving this accelerating disparity. Since the 1970's, the cost of living in the United States has gone up about five hundred percent. CEO compensation has increased by over a thousand percent, but employee compensation has grown by only twelve percent. Though we are making more money in numbers, our purchasing power has declined dramatically. The number of hours it takes to make a living has grown equally dramatically. An increasing number and percentage of people have to work sixty hours or more a week to cover living expenses and ransom their lives. Add to that a typical ten or more hours of commute time every week, plus time spent

paying bills, shopping, cooking, doing laundry, and you see that one has little to no time for anything else.

Here we'll make a brief mention of multi-level and network marketing businesses. (The legitimate ones, not the scams) They are presented to you by people you know (who are struggling like you) as a way to be your own boss and make a great living. Unfortunately, examining the real-world data for people who try this approach, the ones who are actually able to make a living or become wealthy at it are few and far between. Analysis shows that your likelihood of making a good living at one of these businesses is statistically slightly lower than that of making a big score at a casino, though for very different reasons.

Today, a typical CEO makes (in compensation, not counting investments) hundreds of times what the median employee makes at the same companies. It's not unusual for a CEO and other officers to make in a day what the median employee makes in a year. One CEO makes in twenty seconds what the median employee at the same company makes in a year. (We use median instead of average because it gives a much clearer picture. Actually, the clearest picture comes from looking at four statistics: median, average, range, and mode. In a town with a thousand residents, one of whom has a billion-dollar income and the rest of whom make \$25,000 a year, the average income is over a million dollars a year, which is grossly misleading. The median clarifies that this average is skewed high by an outlier. The mode shows that the most common income is \$25,000 a year. The range is \$999,975 which shows just how much and why it is skewed. From these combined metrics, we can infer an accurate picture)

Classical modern feudal reasoning posits that we are paid according to the value that we create, our contribution to the enterprise. So, let's ask these questions: How do we determine and define value, and does the CEO contribute enough more real value to an enterprise or to their society than an assembly line worker, engineer, cafeteria worker, truck driver, or warehouse worker to justify this disparity?

Determining value is somewhat subjective. For the propose of this discussion, let's use the defined purpose of human society as a reference, with some specific additions. How does each person's role, job, and work contribute to human happiness and wellbeing, that of the community, and the maintenance and sustainability of the environment? Secondly, how much value does the person create for the enterprise?

Everybody involved in the production and distribution process contributes. The engineer designs and tests. Assembly line workers make the products. Cafeteria workers feed everyone, which saves everyone time, facilitates smooth workflow, and promotes social interaction. Without the truck drivers, goods couldn't be distributed. Some would say the engineer should get paid more because they went to college to get their degree. But what of the assembly line worker who works long hours at a repetitive job that the engineer would not be able to sustain? If any one of these people and their job were missing, the functioning of the enterprise would cease or be seriously compromised.

What of the CEO? What is their contribution? What is their job? The main job of the CEO is to maximize profits, market share, and stock prices for the company and to do strategic planning for the future with these goals in mind. The CEO often sets the company culture, which varies widely from company to company but will never take away from their prime goals. Employees have no say in the matter. The structure and mechanics of the modern feudal paradigm create a dynamic where maximizing profits reinforces giving employees as little as possible while getting as much out of them as possible, and keeping overhead as low as possible while charging the highest prices the market will bear. It also favors making products that don't last long, can't be repaired or upgraded, and must often be replaced (built-in obsolescence). The CEO is also often the public face of the company, which has often meant lying to the public, as when tobacco and petroleum spokespeople and CEO's claimed their products were safe and healthy and caused no health or environmental damage. A pharmaceutical CEO recently told the

public that he was justified in raising the price of a lifesaving medicine that his company had not developed but only cornered the rights to, from thirteen dollars a pill to \$750 a pill, saying that his only responsibility was to his shareholders, not patients or the public. Under modern feudalism, this is perfectly legal.

As we've seen, high stock price growth mainly makes already-wealthy people even more wealthy but contributes nothing to production. In other words, the enterprise would function quite well and maybe better without the CEO; but if the other positions weren't filled, it would not. In fact, if enterprise operations, planning and culture were set in a peer-based process, it would run more efficiently and benefit both employees and customers, since it would be set by those actually involved in production. Often the CEO and other board officers of a mammoth corporation will do a stock buyback which either creates a shortage of shares available, thereby driving up stock prices (putting them further out of reach of working people and further enriching the modern feudal lords and their vassals), or they pay out dividends, again benefiting primarily the wealthiest shareholders. The CEO is, by the very nature of the job, not in touch with actual operating and working conditions. So, the norm under modern feudal paradigms is to most lavishly reward those who contribute the least and pay the least to those who contribute the most. This disproves the postulate that our pay is justified as a measure of our contribution. Salary is as arbitrary as the roles in medieval feudalism, and just as destructive to human and social wellbeing. There is literally no justification for the current salary structure under modern feudalism.

Let's look a little more at employee productivity, how it's changed over time under modern feudalism, and how it affects the economy.

Since 1970, employee productivity has increased about two hundred percent, while wages have only increased about twelve percent. The median employee in the United States today produces a value equivalent of \$220,480 per year. They take home about \$37,440 a year. The company keeps the difference, which in effect means that, like the medieval feudal lords of yore, the modern feudal lords

appropriate the lion's share of the fruits of employees' productivity, and the portion left to the employee is steadily shrinking while the cost of living is growing faster.

Ultimately, it's the same 0.0002 percent of the population, the modern feudal lords, who determine how much we're paid and also how much we're forced to pay for everything. Any modern feudal society functions exactly like the notorious "company towns" of bygone days, and also analogously to a gigantic pyramid scheme. The disparity now is actually greater than it was in medieval times. If we don't shut down the paradigm, the disparity will continue to accelerate indefinitely.

It's helpful to keep in mind what the appeal is of wealth. Of course, in a society where currency is mandatory to live and function, everyone needs to find ways to get it; but why are some people driven to obsessively amass more wealth than they or their families and descendants would ever need to live comfortably and be prepared for unexpected expenses? For that matter, we've already established that currency is a made-up concept that has no intrinsic value. There are two answers that pretty much explain it.

What does wealth really give a person? It confers power, not just over their own lives but over others, along with the kind of "respect" that comes from intimidating others. It confers privilege and noblesse oblige.

There's another factor that is overlooked in modern feudal societies: addiction. When we look at the behaviors of most, if not all, ultra-wealthy people who don't inherit it or win the lottery, it fits the behavioral pattern of addiction perfectly. The only real difference between a billionaire and a junkie, a gambling addict, and a video game addict is that instead of being diagnosed and treated, the billionaire's addiction is admired, enabled, and held up as a quality to be emulated. This will have to change. These wealth, privilege, and power addicts need to be diagnosed and treated, while being withdrawn from the object of their addiction and the lifestyle that goes with it, just like any addict, and given support and rehabilitation

with no stigma. Would we let an unrecovered alcoholic pilot fly an airliner or an untreated gambling addict manage a bank's money? So why do we routinely put power, privilege, and wealth addicts in positions of power and privilege and enable, even encourage their addiction? This has to stop for all of our sakes and ultimately for theirs as well.

Why do we, in countries and societies around the world, live under such a clearly toxic, destructive, and unsustainable paradigm without challenging it and replacing it with something much better, based on what we now know about our own psychological and sociological makeup, what works and what doesn't? Why do we keep doing the same thing over and over, expecting different results? That's a big question with no one simple answer, but here are some of the main factors at work:

Every culture tends to see itself as the most natural, superior human society and to accept most of its features as a given, almost as facts of nature like gravity or electromagnetism. Most people don't tend to think about or question it much. People are focused on their busy lives more than on bigger questions. This is true even when some cultural attitudes are demonstrably harmful. There are cases in the modern world in which some women in cultures that practice female genital mutilation are horrified at the prospect of not having the procedure, fearing that their lives will be ruined, and they will never be respected or find a mate. Acceptance is not proof of anything.

It takes a lot of effort, coordination, and courage over time among many people to challenge and change endemic cultural customs, beliefs, and attitudes. It can be dangerous or at least intimidating because such efforts will always run into vehement opposition from those who are attached to the status quo. It may even seem an impossible task, made the more so by the many voices who will try to "reason with" you to convince you to just accept the way things are.

Every society also has their myths. Modern societies are no exception. These myths usually serve to reinforce belief in the tenets

of the culture. Let's review some of the modern cultural myths of our societies:

"Money makes the world go round. There's no such thing as a free ride." We've already shown that the world goes round just fine all on its own without currency, always has and always will. Life itself is a "free ride," courtesy of the earth, the sun, and the properties of the natural world that make life possible.

The myth that one's socioeconomic status is a true measure of one's character, worth, and worthiness. We've shown that this is utterly false. Belief in this myth causes people to not only erroneously judge each other, but even to (mis)judge themselves. (For that matter, the credit scores widely used in granting or denying employment, living space, and assistance to people is not what people think it is. It doesn't track one's financial responsibility; it tracks one's indebtedness and payment pattern to see if one is likely to be a reliable source of interest income to lenders. A person who never spends beyond their means and never uses credit does not acquire a good credit score. A person who is somewhat deep in debt but who dutifully pays their bills does.) The modern feudal paradigm is structured in such a way that there is no room high up in the socioeconomic pyramid for more than a very small handful of people. By design, the vast majority of people will always be in the lowest positions of the hierarchy, regardless of their work ethic, character, or contribution. We've shown that often those who contribute the least value are the most richly rewarded. This myth is debunked.

The myth that the modern feudal paradigm is necessary to have innovation and progress and that, conversely, egalitarian, peer-based, cooperative paradigms fail to reinforce or incentivize innovation and progress, or even suppress them. In practice, it is often big businesses that suppress innovations that they deem to be either unprofitable or a potential threat to their business model. The patents for countless potentially value-creating inventions and innovations lie bought for pittance from lone inventors and locked away in corporate filing cabinets and servers. Inventors who have resisted this have often been bullied and maneuvered into ruin to

suppress potential serious competition. Pure research is often defunded in both the private and public (which is deeply influenced by the private) sectors because there's no way to predict whether or not it will yield knowledge that can be monetized for profit. Knowledge for its own sake, which historically has often led to and spawned dramatic innovation, is most often suppressed in favor of projects that are perceived as highly profitable. Thus, modern feudalism does not foster thriving innovation. We have just shown that the opposite is true.

The myth that hierarchical social structures are inherent in human nature and that egalitarian structures are against human nature. At the beginning of this discussion, we showed how hierarchical social structures are actually contrary to human nature; they actively suppress our most constructive and survival-positive potentials (it is proven that humans survive and thrive best as cooperative communities, not as fragmented competing factions) and strongly reinforce our most destructive potentials.

Capitalism equals democracy, freedom, happiness, abundance, and everything good; socialism equals communism equals dictatorship, misery, universal poverty and everything bad. If you reread the definitions at the beginning, you will remember that capitalism actually devolves into feudalism, a kind of oligarchy. For a time, it will appear to be a model for thriving societies, but it inevitably reduces to feudalism, just as using amphetamines at first gives an impression of enhanced energy and productivity, which is actually unstable and leads to a crash. Socialism and communism are very different. Socialist democracies have some of the highest happiness indexes in the world. Much of this myth can be attributed to carry-over from Cold War propaganda, boosted of course by modern feudal lords who are literally addicted to the way things are.

Myths though they are, these mindsets and beliefs predispose people to be skeptical or hostile to suggestions of fundamental changes and restructuring of the socioeconomic paradigm that would by definition deprive them of what they know and for the modern feudal lords, of the objects of their addiction.

The full-length book with this title goes into great detail; but for brevity's sake, let's just take a brief look at some of the toxic ripple effects of the paradigm on social and personal life:

*The default denial of one's right to occupy space unless one constantly comes up with the currency to ransom one's existence. If you have no place where you're allowed to occupy space, you are effectively denied the right to exist, regardless of what the law or constitution may say. This is an example of how the socioeconomic power structure (answerable to no one) overrides and subsumes a democracy's or democratic republic's human rights protections and guarantees. All other resources: food, higher education or vocational training, medical care, transportation, tools, and even basic respectful treatment by one's society and fellows, is also by default denied.

This creates debilitating, unrelenting stress of a kind that we are not evolved to live with. We are optimized to deal well with the stress of a tiger attacking our livestock or a forest fire, but this kind of stress takes a huge toll on us mentally, emotionally, and physically and does nothing positive for us. It is pure poison. It also puts us in a position of having to take a job, any job that pays the best we can get, even if it's abhorrent or unfulfilling to us, thus killing dreams, engendering a culture of cynical resignation, and guaranteeing that most of us will never be able to fulfill our dreams or make our most valuable contribution to our society.

*Workplace dynamics are inevitably tainted with the inherent dysfunction of all hierarchies, exacerbated by the constant pressure to pray upon one another to survive or get ahead.

Those with any rank or position will act from a point of view of diminished empathy and compassion. Pressure to produce ever faster to keep the company ahead in the race for profits, market share, and stock prices, creates unrelenting toxic stress. Among the rank-and-file who work hard and barely make it, there's strong reinforcement to view each other as potential rivals for very scarce

opportunities for promotions that might come with pay raises which could ease financial survival stress. This thwarts or dims any drive or impulse to work cooperatively and fully support each other. Not everyone will act in the extreme, but the environment predisposes mutual distrust and predation. One must also beware lest someone above them in the power hierarchy may claim credit for one's innovation or lay the blame on them for a mistake the ranking person made.

*Community dynamics are also adversely affected. Since the jobs where we spend most of our time are usually not near home and each person or family must find their own, there tends to be little or no sense of interconnected community. It's not unusual for neighbors to not know each other. Humans are instructively highly social. This situation leads to fragmentation, alienation, and lack of healthy cohesion. We live surrounded by people yet all too often isolated, each struggling on our own to survive in a stormy sea. In the absence of healthy, supportive interconnection, we're more likely to focus on what irritates us: the neighbor's dog who poops in our yard, the house down the street where they're always working on old cars, etc.

*Family and friendship dynamics also suffer. Within many families, all adult members are doing the best they can to contribute to the family's survival and wellbeing, but it's often not enough. Their combined income is barely or not quite enough to cover living expenses, and there are unexpected expenses as well. Each family member has their own way of coping with the stress, and many of those ways cost money. Some family members may be unable to find work or well enough paying work. It's common for family members to blame each other for not contributing enough, not trying hard enough, spending too much, or being selfish. Many families are literally torn apart by these dynamics, which are one hundred percent caused by the utterly unnecessary gratuitous stress of being forced by the modern feudal paradigm to constantly come up with ever-increasing amounts of currency to ransom their existence in the face of the unrelenting default denial. When a family member needs to be cared for due to age, illness, or injury, modern feudal societies

typically lack any robust support system for them so the family must shoulder the caregiving and its expenses, which are extreme and debilitating. Many families can't themselves care for, or pay for needed care for, their infirm loved ones, in which case they often end up in for-profit nursing homes where they are likely to be neglected or even abused by overworked, underpaid, untrained staff in underfunded facilities that prioritize profit over resident wellbeing. This greatly exacerbates the stresses and strains individuals and the family past the breaking point. Old or infirm family members are experienced as burdens in the fractured reality of modern feudal society where each person and family are on their own, a tiny boat in a toxic, stormy sea.

Friendships also suffer similarly. Additionally, when someone is struggling to survive, in debt, jobless, homeless, or otherwise in hard times, some of their friends will distance themselves from them out of worry that they will ask for support that they can't afford to give. Some friends will be supportive, and a very few who are able may even help materially or financially according to their limited ability, but the social fragmentation of modern feudal society ensures that, with each person or family overextended and barely surviving, friends and even family often can't do more than offer moral support, even if they really want to. Resentments often arise on all sides here.

*Racial, ethnic, religious, inter-group tensions aren't caused by the modern feudal paradigm in and of itself, though it is often made worse and intensified in this environment. Unfortunately, these issues arise from a range of dynamics and historical causes that may have little or nothing to do with the socioeconomic and political system in which they occur. So, changing the paradigm, while it will resolve much and vastly improve almost all of human endeavors and quality of life, will not resolve these issues by itself. However, the coming paradigm change will mitigate them a lot, by removing tensions caused by the modern feudal paradigm that often translate into intensification of this kind of strife.

Where all resources are kept scarce by design, including currency, which is the mandatory, only accepted means of accessing them,

where the gain of one person or group almost always comes at the expense of others by the very structure of the paradigm, both individuals and different subgroups of society easily distrust, resent, and blame each other for this scarcity and for their distress. Politicians and the modern feudal lords often feed and encourage this blame and resentment in order to strengthen their power base and keep the population divided and striving against each other. One thing the modern feudal lords instinctively want to prevent is for the people to recognize the reality of the paradigm and overthrow the socioeconomic power structure and in so doing, deprive them of the objects of their addiction: wealth, power, and privilege. Immigrants and native-born citizens, generations, different religions and political parties, different ethnicities, and even different regions often blame and resent each other. Existing prejudices are exacerbated and new ones arise. In some places, it is so extreme that a segment of men resent women for gains in the workforce and in rights. Keep in mind that in the United States, the cause of the long history of violence and discrimination that African Americans have endured was first their enslavement and then their emancipation at the end of the American Civil War. Most Caucasian Southerners resented losing the free labor of a subgroup easily identifiable as slaves by their skin color. Some of the the Confederate states' declarations of secession stated explicitly that they were willing to endure the horrors of war rather than give up this socioeconomic system; there is nothing in the operating principles of modern feudalism that countermands it. (It has always, in every country where slavery occurred, taken popular outrage and activism putting enough pressure on government to override the hold of the slaveholder socioeconomic power bloc's influence.) This is, however, far from the only time or place where such violence has occurred between subgroups.

*The greatest burdens are placed on those who can least bear them, and the lightest burdens are placed on those who could easily bear them. Along with this, the respect, options, and deference that one is given is directly proportional to one's place in the socioeconomic pyramid. People who are struggling to get by or not getting by may be late paying bills or even have to defer some bills in order to pay

more urgent ones. Their credit score can be ruined very quickly, but it takes years and a lot of bureaucratic maneuvering to repair it. When one is working for a sub-living or barely living wage, unsuccessfully looking for work, or unable to work, a bad credit score can close the door for employment, housing, and other necessities. One is treated as guilty of something with no chance to prove innocence. In such circumstances, one is charged higher interest rates than a wealthy person would be for credit or a loan (if one can get a loan at all), even though one is least able to pay it while the wealthy person could easily pay higher interest and in so doing, afford the lender more profits while lessening the struggling person's burden. This further hampers the person who's on hard times to be able to recover. Banks charge fees for late payments and insufficient funds, which naturally affect struggling people exclusively (when was the last time a billionaire bounced a check for dry cleaning or missed a payment on their car?); those fees can compound quickly. An overdraft of one penny can escalate to fees of hundreds of dollars, which the victim also won't be able to pay so the bank won't see any benefit. The only effect is to make the lives of struggling people harder. People in this situation are more likely to live in poorer neighborhoods and to be less able to afford to maintain their cars, if they can afford a car at all. Therefore, their insurance rates are higher due to living in a high-crime neighborhood, they are more likely to get cited for things like taillights not working or bald tires, more likely to be unable to afford registration, smog testing, and license renewal which leads to fines that they can't pay and sometimes to court fees for not paying them. Many such areas are "food deserts" where the only nearby places to get food are convenience stores which are more expensive than grocery stores; and it's been shown that these neighborhoods are both stocked with far less healthy food than middle- and upper-income neighborhoods. They are also targeted with more ads for junk food. Modern feudal lords and their corporations also regularly pay less in taxes than you and I do. Clearly, modern feudal societies place the greatest burdens on those who can least bear them while richly rewarding those who contribute the least to society and sparing them almost all burdens. Whom would you give the heavier load to carry: the person just

recovering from serious illness or injury who is still weak, or the professional athlete? Which boat would you load the heaviest: the aircraft carrier or the small fishing boat? It would appear that if you ask a modern feudal society, the answer will be let's load up that hospital patient with the big load and put the most mass on that little fishing boat.

*Many needed or beneficial projects don't get done because of lack of funds. It happens all the time. The will, need, materials, workforce and all necessary prerequisites are present, but the money isn't, so it doesn't get done. The other side of this is that needed, beneficial, fully functional existing facilities and programs get canceled or shut down because funding is no longer available. Here again we see clearly how currency functions as an arbitrary obstruction and instrument of control, while contributing nothing of value anywhere. Either a private business decides it isn't profitable or politicians, usually in response to the influence of big corporations, decide not to let it happen. Sometimes major projects are stopped in the middle of implementation, as with the Supercollider which was left half completed because funding was cut, leaving a groundbreaking research tool unfinished with billions of dollars already spent and wasted because of the de-prioritization of pure research.

*There are over half a million people homeless in the U.S., yet there are tens of millions of unoccupied living units and more under construction. Modern feudalism creates scarcity where in reality there is none and generates incalculably massive waste and unnecessary suffering as a byproduct.

*Loss of life and damage to property due to reinforced and enforced prioritization of making or saving money over safety. This is clearly seen in the many air crashes due to pressure to reduce costs leading to cutting corners by manufacturers, regulators, airlines, and flight crews. We also see this in the construction industry in building collapses for similar reasons, in the automotive, pharmaceutical, and other industries.

*Inflation. The cost of everything inexorably goes up under modern feudalism, with one historical exception during the time of the Great Depression. This is the inevitable result of the sociological and psychological reinforcements that are created by the operating principles of the paradigm. With few exceptions, in any socioeconomic interaction, when one party gains, the other party loses in proportion. Employers and employees, landlords and tenants each gain at the other's expense. Consistent with the imperative to maximize profits, employers give employees the least they can get away with. Given the drastic lag between wage growth and inflation, employees eventually become desperate enough to strike and use other means to try to get a living wage, reasonable benefits, and safe, humane working conditions. When they finally make some gains, employers' profits are smaller, which they make up for by raising prices (or changing packaging so the same price buys less). This cycle repeats over and over. Companies always cite labor costs as the reason for inflation in order to reduce public support for labor. But be clear that in modern feudal societies, the employers nearly always have a superior position relative to employees.

*Deceptive marketing. Since modern feudalism is a stratified society, many goods and services come in low mid, and high-end versions. While the high-end versions are sometimes better made than low-end ones, it is a myth that what costs more is necessarily better. Many times, the high-end version is just the low or mid-range version packaged and marketed differently. The iPhone is actually inferior in many ways to many mid-range Android phones but costs comparably to the highest-end Android phones. Similarly, we see common items given gold trim or plating and packaged in fancy, velvet-lined boxes with gold leaf certificates, sold for the highest price that the high-end market will bear.

*Privatization is the shifting of what starts out as taxpayer-supported goods and services, such as public schools, libraries, and cultural venues to "private" control, often while still supported with taxpayer funds. In the United States there has been a decades-long push to privatize all education, usually via for-profit "charter schools" which

use public funds but aren't required to abide by laws regarding discrimination, teacher and staff unionization, salary and benefits, inclusion or even standards of accreditation or instruction. This theft of public funds to support inferior projects is proven to underperform community schools while making themselves appear more successful by cherry-picking desirable students and excluding problem students and those with disabilities. The privatization of many kibbutzim in Israel virtually destroyed them, after it was forced on them by factions resentful of the fact that the egalitarian kibbutz way of life produced better results than the mainstream modern feudal society around them.

*The *self-devouring cycle*. (Yes, time to introduce another new term. Don't worry, there aren't many more.) The driving reinforcers and imperatives under modern feudalism are to maximize and constantly grow profits, market share, and stock price. A business must do this to survive, the way the paradigm is set up. As mentioned before, among other effects, this leads to the deliberate manufacture of goods designed to have as short a useful life as a company can get away with, to have no user serviceable (or even technician serviceable) parts, and to have no way to be upgraded. A notorious example of this is cell phones with batteries that can't be replaced, even though there is no valid technical reason for this. Quite simply, a company makes more money if we have to replace the whole phone when the battery won't hold a charge anymore, rather than be able to buy a battery from another manufacturer for cheaper than their overpriced ones and keep using the phone for longer. This is true across all industries. If a pair of shoes lasts decades and a cell phone can too because it's manufactured to be easily serviced and upgraded, then when everyone has all that they need, profits will crash. Companies also artificially generate greater demand through skillful targeted advertising. These two strategies combine to drive a compulsive, relentless push to manufacture products fast, and to change configurations and models so that today's model won't be compatible with next month's models. In devices running firmware and software, upgrades quickly stop supporting previous models by design. This leads to ever-accelerating depletion of natural

resources wildly, unsustainably faster than would be the case if goods were manufactured to last and to be serviceable and upgradable. Along with this, pollution and industrial waste is proportionally, disastrously exaggerated, and employees involved in production are driven hard and unrelentingly by draconian production demands; consumers (who are also those involved in production) must spend more of their scarified currency to replace things. We call this the *self-devouring cycle* because it translates into the catastrophic runaway depletion of global natural resources, and equally catastrophic pollution which has now reached a level that threatens our own extinction along with countless other species due to irreversible climate change. It also devastates the lives of all who work in production under arbitrarily heavy, unrelenting pressures. There is no upside to this behavior, except for the modern feudal lords who are thereby getting wealthier than they already are. Ending this cycle will bring dramatic improvements in quality of life for all of us, and most likely do more to curb the damage from climate change than any other action we can take.

Parasitic industries are what the term implies: industries that thrive at the expense of people while providing them with nothing of value, just like biological parasites. Under the modern feudal paradigm where currency is critical to survival and confers power to those who have a lot of it, these industries are bound to emerge. Some parasitic industries are illegal even in modern feudal societies: identity theft, fraud of every kind, Ponzi schemes, online and telephone scamming, and protection rackets to name a few; but some parasitic industries are completely legal under modern feudalism: insurance companies, collection agencies, billing agencies, payday loan shops and other loan sharks, banks, crypto exchanges, credit agencies and bureaus, stock brokers, real estate agencies, bail bondsman, repo companies, casinos, marketing and advertising agencies (they drive prices up without creating value for us; they often mislead and misdirect), to name a few out of many. You may think of these as necessary and inevitable institutions for the simple reason that they've been an inseparable part of the world you live in for longer than you've been alive and are accepted as such in your culture. Some of them, such

as insurance companies, are actually legally mandatory. Let's see why we call them parasitical and why they actually provide no real value. Hint: we've already established that all forms of currency are made-up entropy-inducing constructs with no inherent value of their own. All parasitic industries exist solely because currency is mandatory for all activities and processes of life and is kept intentionally scarce so that most people don't have access to enough. Many of these parasitic industries purport to help people to get around this, but they would have no reason to exist outside of the context of modern feudalism. These are all very much for-profit industries, and further deplete the resources of all but the modern feudal lords who ultimately reap most of their profits. In any case, something that takes from you but gives you nothing of value is, by definition, parasitical.

Let's start with the insurance industry. Under modern feudalism, many important, essential things are intentionally priced astronomically beyond the reach of all people except the modern feudal lords and their vassals. One of these resources is all aspects of medical care. The United States is one of the most extreme examples but other countries under modern feudalism are similar. Since there is no well-developed public health system (In the United States Medicare is woefully insufficient, forcing most people to buy private "Medigap" or "Advantage" plans plus Medicare Part D plans for prescription drugs, which all adds up to a huge portion of their currency resources. Medicaid has such unrealistic eligibility requirements that many people who genuinely need it can't get it), most people have to buy private insurance in some form at least until they're old enough to qualify for Medicare, which needs supplementation. If you're lucky enough to have a job with healthcare benefits, the employee contribution has steadily increased over the years and the deductibles have skyrocketed, while coverage has steadily eroded. Many if not all insurance companies (medical and other) have well-paid employees whose job it is to find any legally defensible way to deny claims, regardless of whether this could ruin or end a patient's life. It's not uncommon for them to deny claims by default and leave it to the patient to appeal it,

which is a bureaucratic maze designed to be difficult to impossible for the patient to navigate, especially when they and their families are under the stress of illness or injury, treatment, financial survival during inability to work, and lack of knowledge of how to navigate it. A data entry error in a billing department, an incorrect coding, can cost the patient outrageous amounts of time, energy, and currency while being sent back and forth between provider, biller, and insurance. The insurance industry itself further drives up the cost of healthcare. The ones who pay that cost are you and me. Patients do die and suffer with no or sub-optimal treatment all the time.

Banks may seem like they provide a necessary service, but we'll see how how they are parasitic as well. First of all, they deal with moving, storing, investing and managing currency, a made-up thing with no intrinsic value. You can't eat it, make a chair or an airplane out of it, take it to cure a headache, or enjoy its music or drama in a good performance. Yes, they do keep your money in what is probably a safer place than under your mattress. Yes, they offer investment vehicles and loans. Yes, some accounts do give you interest, which for a non-wealthy person ranges from less than half a percent to five percent in the best case. (A modern feudal lord, vassal, or corporation has access to much more generous options.) Checking accounts, of course, give you no interest and charge you fees as well. Meanwhile the bank invests your money and everyone else's in ways only accessible to those with astronomical amounts of currency to invest, and they make double digits of interest on our money. They toss a few pennies our way. At the same time, they charge fees for activity, for inactivity, for late payments, for overdrafts (even when they know from your history that your bills always come in a few days before your paycheck so the overdraft will resolve on its own), for having less than an arbitrary amount in your account, and various fees and charges that they take simply because they can get away with it and there's no law stopping them. Remember that banks and other financial institutions have very well-funded lobbies in the halls of government. Banks have you over a barrel because in modern feudal societies, you need a bank account for just about everything, sometimes even just to have a job. Banks can lend you currency to

pay for an unreachable expense in the present; but the way the compound interest they charge you works, by the time you pay off your loan, you will have paid more than double the price of whatever you took the loan for. In addition, those who most urgently need a loan are either unlikely to get one or will get one with such draconian terms that it will crush them financially. A billionaire who wants to borrow a few million will be approved in five minutes over coffee. A struggling small business owner or wage earner barely or not quite making it will be subjected to humiliating inquiries and harsh terms if they get the loan at all. Who do you think can afford to pay a higher interest rate: a billionaire or a store cashier with two children? Once again, we see the pattern where the heaviest burdens are put on those who can least bear them, while those most able to bear them are given a much lighter load. This is illogical, irrational, impractical, and utterly consistent with the foundational operating principles of the modern feudal socioeconomic paradigm.

*The disproportionate influence of the ultra-wealthy and corporations on government. Wherever we have a democracy or democratic republican government coexisting with modern feudalism, we have two separate power structures that operate under very different, often conflicting principles. Such a government is, at least theoretically, responsible and accountable to the people who elect them. If they are observed abusing their position or engaging in corruption, the people can vote them out, recall them, or impeach them. Such systems aren't foolproof, but when there is a sufficiently robust system of checks and balances, the degree of abuse that's possible is limited. The modern feudal power structure, on the other hand, is accountable only to the wealthiest shareholders. While they are not officially organs of government, these "private persons" in the form of modern feudal lords and their corporations (many of which control more resources than many countries) control the lion's share of all resources, often including resources that government relies upon. This power structure is not answerable to the people, not to employees and not to the public in any way, shape or form. It is strictly feudal in every real and functional way.

How do these two power structures interact or coexist with their largely conflicting mandates?

If you or I have an idea or opinion that we want to express to our representatives, president, or prime minister, we can write letters and emails, we can sign petitions, and maybe on occasion attend a “town hall” meeting. We will never have a chance to sit down with these people face to face to discuss it at length. It’s not necessary all their “fault,” since they are dealing with many complex “big picture” issues involving millions of people so it’s not practical for them to have a personal discussion with us individually. So, what they hear from their constituents are primarily statistics. In contrast, if the CEO of a major petroleum, automotive, pharmaceutical, or other corporation wants to discuss something with those same representatives, president, or prime minister, they will swiftly be discussing it with them face to face over golf or dinner at a high-end restaurant or club. Lawmakers and politicians hear their constituents as background noise, but they hear the modern feudal lords and their corporate domains on a first-name basis, up close and personal. Add to that the relentless, highly skilled lobbyists that the modern feudal lords and their corporations fund to be their voice in government, a channel that you and I do not have access to, and it becomes inevitable that these people invariably carry vastly more influence over government than the members of the public. If skillful persuasion and sophistry with a little wining and dining doesn’t do the trick, the modern feudal lords can blackmail lawmakers and executives simply by saying something to the effect that “if you don’t support and defend our interests, we’ll move our business out of your jurisdiction and in so doing, damage or cripple your economy through loss of jobs, tax revenues, and access to the resources that we control.” In other words, “If you won’t play by my rules, I’ll take my ball and go home.” We see this in every case.

Over time, the modern feudal power structure subsumes all of the democratic apparatus and most key personnel of government, who then become their vassals. Make no mistake about it: the modern feudal socioeconomic power structure is fatally toxic to all forms of democratic government, and always overpowers it over time. It is a

metastatic cancer in the social organism that kills government of, by, and for the people. This isn't a case of bad people acting badly because they're bad. It is an inevitable process and dynamic, as predictable as a chemical reaction based on the properties of the reagents. The only cure is to shut down the modern feudal power structure forcefully but nonviolently.

*The inaccessibility of basic things like medical care, vehicles, homes, attorneys, and education/training. While prices of many things are kept high enough to keep most people from being able to quite get ahead of the wolves hovering near their doors, certain things are almost universally beyond reach under modern feudalism. Most of these things are absolute necessities. Without any place to live, we have no rights in practice. When we're sick or injured, medical care isn't optional. When one has legal entanglements, an attorney is vital. Education and vocational training can make the difference between fulfilling our dreams and potential while making our best contribution to the community, versus being forced to work at whatever job we can get, most likely which has no meaning for us and at which we are mediocre while living unfulfilling lives.

*Untapped and unfulfilled talented people are suppressed by lack of funds. This is to elaborate on the last example above. Under modern feudalism, our access to higher education and vocational training is determined not just by our aptitude and study habits, but also by whether or not we can come up with the currency to afford it and to be able to live while studying. You can have outstanding ability and commitment to your chosen field of study yet be shut out because you don't have the money. Even state universities and colleges are often priced prohibitively under modern feudalism, and supplies such as books are priced drastically higher than they would be at a regular bookstore. It's probably impossible to accurately determine how many talented artists, musicians, scientists, engineers and doctors never get the chance to develop their potential and fulfill their dreams, but there are certainly millions in any one affected country.

For that matter, this impediment doesn't start with higher education. Poorer neighborhoods under modern feudalism have underfunded

schools that fail to prepare students for higher education, acting more like glorified babysitting centers. There is some financial aid available for undergraduates, but not accessible to everyone, and it typically heavily relies on student loans which translate into crushing financial burdens after graduation. It is mostly children of more affluent families who become doctors, scientists, lawyers, and the like.

Many people who have the option to do so often choose their professions based on how much money they can expect to make rather than on their dreams and interests. The human cost of this is enormous. The norm becomes to settle for whatever pays the rent, however unfulfilling the job may be. In such cultures, pursuing one's dreams discouraged both individually and societally in favor of putting the quest for currency above all other priorities. Society is deprived of the potential contributions of countless innovators. Instead of a vibrant society growing and progressing, populated by energetic, empowered, energized people, we have a congested, stagnant, uninspired society peopled by resigned, apathetic, stressed, disempowered people. This is totally unnecessary and preventable, as can be seen by looking at socialist democracies such as are the norm in Europe. Modern feudal societies prioritize immediate profit and power consolidation for the modern feudal lords at the expense of not investing in the future of their communities or the people in them.

*Data pollution in the form of disinformation, misinformation, cherry-picked incomplete information, and misleading presentations of information; in other words, advertising and marketing make it virtually impossible to find meaningful data for making important decisions. A classic case in point is the dietary supplements industry. Countless brands each claiming to be superior, more bioavailable, purer, and life-enhancing than the other, often purporting to be unique and therefore the best, usually with an arbitrarily hefty price tag that is justified by browbeating hesitant shoppers for "skimping" on their health. Frequently there are articles in scientific or pseudoscientific jargon meant to support their claims. Logically, twenty different brands can't all be the best, unless they are all

equivalent. If one researches the question from objective sources not connected to any manufacturer, i.e. nutritionists, oncological nutritionists, physiologists, and doctors with no industry connections, they tell you that supplements are probably good for you but that they are no substitute for eating a healthy diet and living a healthy lifestyle, and that all of the brands are pretty much the same. All of the advertising obscures this basic truth and seeds distrust of objective data. How many times have you seen this phrase: “Doctors don’t want you to know this, but...”? The same can be said of the weight loss industry and truly every industry in every sector. When was the last time you saw an ad saying “Our product is pretty much the same as all the other competing products out there, but the packaging is prettier.”?

*Colonialism. Yes, this word conjures up the period of European colonization of much of the world, but it didn’t end there. Modern feudal countries have continued the practice, albeit in a somewhat different way. Mammoth multinational corporations practice economic colonialism that is little different from that of their forbears of yore. These corporations employ private armies, intimidate and even murder farmers and working people in other countries who oppose them, and have even been known to overthrow democratic governments and install dictators to act as their vassals.

Monsanto Corporation has literally used hired mercenaries to violently squash opposition in developing countries where farmers opposed their influence. Monsanto is famous for developing genetically modified seed stock that is either designed so that if farmers save seed from their crop to plant next year, these second generation seeds won’t germinate or produce salable crops. If they do germinate, Monsanto charges royalties on all crops so grown and have even been known to sue farmers into ruin who were unfortunate enough to have some Monsanto stock inadvertently grow on their property (probably due to wind or water action carrying seeds or pollen from a neighboring farm) without them having paid for it. They have gone so far as to directly challenge the sovereignty of countries that have regulated or excluded them.

In the 1970's the Chilean people elected a president and government who took action to stop the exploitation of Chilean mine and other workers and the plundering of Chile's natural resources by foreign and international corporations. This was done by nationalizing the facilities and resources. The corporations were angry. In response, the U.S. CIA trained, funded, and supported a military coup that assassinated the elected president Salvador Allende and installed a brutal dictatorship that tortured and murdered tens of thousands of innocent people. Here again we see it: the U.S. government acted as the vassal of the corporations and the modern feudal lords who control them.

Currently in Nigeria Shell Oil is reaping astronomical profits by plundering Nigerian petroleum resources. In the process, they are devastating vast territories, rendering them uninhabitable by humans and other life. Thousands of people are sick and poisoned by the pollution that Shell callously generates. In order to protect their interests, they have infiltrated their operatives into every level of the Nigerian government, rendering it as yet another vassal to the modern feudal lords.

These are but a few well-documented examples. Corporate colonialism is as real, toxic, and pernicious as the state colonialism of the British, Spanish and other European colonial powers.

*Abuse of patent law. We've already mentioned Monsanto's use of genetically modified seed stock as an instrument of control. They hold patents on these organisms, and they use it in callously heavy-handed ways, ruining countless lives and disrupting tried and true agricultural practices.

Now medical research is beginning to develop treatments for various previously incurable serious conditions through genetic engineering. A recent example is a new genetic treatment for sickle-cell anemia. This is likely to be the beginning of a major paradigm shift in medicine that could benefit millions of people worldwide... But if the corporations that develop them patent them, which they most certainly will, then will gene therapies lead to indentured patients?

Will the patent holders hold patients to be their property due to the patents on the treatments they received? Will these patients be forced to pay royalties or subscription fees for their entire lives because of this? Given the operating principles of modern feudalism, we can fully expect some version of this scenario to unfold. Enter a new incarnation of indentured servitude if not outright slavery.

*Tourism. Innocent though it seems, most tourism is tremendously damaging to the environment and to the lives of people who live where resorts are built. This is most keenly felt in developing nations, but it similarly impacts locales in developed nations though to a lesser degree. Installing a major tourist resort involves bulldozing huge tracts of land and reshaping the surrounding area to support the resort. Because of the lord-vassal relationship between the corporations behind the development and the governments of host countries, environmental and human rights questions are almost always ignored or rubber-stamped as approved.

The disruption to the natural environment is felt far beyond the area of the resort itself. On a human and social level, whatever people and ways of life as may exist in the area are pushed out and swept away. In their place there forms an extremely pernicious form of hierarchy, with the modern feudal lords and corporations at the top, local government and a handful of local residents as their vassals, tourists as privileged persons on a par with vassals but in a different way, and all of the other local residents in the role of serfs and peasants. Traditional ways of life such as farming, fishing, cottage industries and others that are part of the life of the people and their culture are replaced with infrastructure and enforced ways of life devoted to servicing and maintaining the resort and its guests. The cost-of-living skyrockets to take advantage of wealthy (by local standards) tourists and corporate functionaries, to the point where local residents can't hope to afford living there anymore. Those who find jobs in the "hospitality industry" of the resort are relentlessly overworked, under-compensated, and constantly reminded of their lowly "place."

One of the authors had occasion to gain access to and read an internal report written within a corporation contemplating developing a resort in a developing country. This report discussed the pros and cons, projected expected revenues over time, and discussed possible obstacles and problems. It mentioned that there were several thousand people living there who were vehemently opposed to the resort but dismissed them with words to the effect that those people were poor and had no way to defend themselves physically or legally. The recommendation was to proceed with the project, because the local government was favorable to the project and those residents could literally be bulldozed away. In other words, bring on the bulldozers and excavators; those pesky people will have no choice but to get out of the way, and their government wants the tax revenue from this resort, so problem solved.

Even in developed countries, bringing a tourist resort into an area drives the cost of living up drastically and causes increased congestion and degrades the quality of life for residents. It does create jobs, but the vast majority of them are low-paying menial jobs.

Summary: The modern feudal paradigm isn't working. It is destroying lives and even reinforcing behaviors that threaten our survival on a global level. There is a critical, urgent need for a completely new paradigm if we are to avoid a prolonged dark age and possible extinction.

This transition will have to be forced, since those who benefit from the current paradigm, and those who don't benefit from but who are socially programmed for loyalty to it will certainly oppose the change by every means they can find. Because our goal is to establish socioeconomic systems that fulfill the mandate of empowering and respecting all people, it is vital that it be done with compassion for all and nonviolently. Any other approach would destroy our goal from the beginning. We will sometimes have no choice but to defend ourselves with physical force, but we absolutely must use the minimum physical force needed to defend and never seek revenge or payback. Once a hostile situation is resolved, we must

immediately render respectful, compassionate aid to any injured party.

We must prepare ourselves to respond to those who will oppose us with a delicate balance of firmness and respectful compassion.

Those who will be unreceptive will be mostly of one of two minds: the modern feudal lords themselves and their vassals and other retinue of personnel, and everyday people who have been programmed by their cultures to respect modern feudalism and fear all else.

Superseded wording — retained for the historical record

~~With the former, we will do our best to keep in mind that they are addicts to wealth, power, and privilege who have been enabled in their addiction by the strong reinforcers in their culture. Therefore, it is best to deal with them firmly and compassionately, just as we deal with any person with addiction disorders: prevent them from doing harm while giving them treatment and rehabilitation, *absolutely not* to be interpreted as “re-education” AKA brainwashing.~~

Clarification (September 2026)

The passage above compared political opponents to people with addiction disorders and proposed “treatment and rehabilitation.” The following replaces it.

Dissent is not illness. Opposing Transition, preferring the previous economic system, wanting to live within hierarchical structures, or advocating for capitalism is political expression — not a psychological disorder, and not grounds for confinement, segregation, or mandatory treatment.

Conduct is different from belief. A person who expresses nostalgia for privilege or advocates for a different economic model exercises a protected right. A person who attempts to impose subordination on others against their will, seize shared resources by force, or coerce compliance — from any direction, whether to reimpose oligarchy or to exact revenge on former oligarchs — may be restrained through

lawful, transparent process based on demonstrable harmful conduct, not beliefs or personality types.

Persistent harmful conduct. When a person repeatedly imposes their will on others through coercion or abuse of position, Transition responds first with support — mediation, counseling, community accountability. If the conduct persists, the minimum necessary restraint is applied based on documented conduct, not diagnosis or political views, subject to independent review.

Voluntary pluralist communities. Adults may freely create or join communities organized around any social model — hierarchical, religious, anarchist, or any other arrangement — provided participation is genuinely voluntary, every person retains the practical right to leave without penalty, no one is subjected to coercion or brutalization, and the community does not impose its model on outsiders. Research such as Christopher Browning's study of Reserve Police Battalion 101 (*Ordinary Men*, 1992) demonstrates that hierarchical authority structures can override individual moral judgment and entrap even voluntary participants, so independent external safeguards and regular confidential check-ins must be maintained for all such communities.

No operational planning of violence. People may hold and express any view, including opposition to Transition. What is not protected is direct incitement to imminent harm, conspiracy, or operational planning of attacks — in any direction.

The goal remains: a society with well-matched places for every one of our vastly diverse population, marginalizing or excluding none.

We must be uncompromising, however, in that there must and will be no returning to the old modern feudal paradigm or any of its institutions under any circumstances in any way, shape, or form.

Now that we've diagnosed the potentially lethal problem and identified the urgent need to decommission and shut down the current socioeconomic paradigm and replace it with a new, humanistically, scientifically informed paradigm designed to maximize the wellbeing, empowerment and thriving of all persons and their communities in a symbiotic framework, how do we get there from here? What will the new paradigm look like?

It's important at this point to clearly emphasize that what we're talking about is not revolution, as in the violent overthrow of governments; we're calling this a transition to differentiate it from the concept of revolution. We're also not focusing on any one country; all countries currently under modern feudalism will need to transition to the new paradigm; arguably one could say all countries without exception. Where there is some form of democratic government (most of which are democratic republics) with constitutions or other foundational documents guaranteeing and protecting human rights with the goal of forming a thriving society of free, empowered individuals, there is no need to overthrow government. We're looking to overthrow the modern feudal socioeconomic power structure that is infecting and subsuming democratic institutions and mechanisms.

We will work with government to introduce them to the new paradigms and assist them in making adjustments that will become necessary. In some democratic socialist countries, transition may not be urgent. In countries under dictatorial regimes, yes, governments may have to be overthrown as well, though we highly recommend the same humanistic approach as will be used in the transition. It's unlikely that a compassionate, synergistic society will emerge from a bloodbath.

It's also important to caution ourselves against unrealistic expectations. The transition will eliminate most of the most egregious chronic inequities and needless suffering in transitioned countries and bring about a widespread dramatic improvement in the quality of life, but we must avoid the human tendency to expect that the new paradigm will end all problems and create a paradise. We tend to feel this way when we make a new beginning, be it a new job, new

place, new relationship or new religion. We think, “Now everything will be great; life will be rosy.” Such a mindset is a prelude to disappointment and disillusionment. It predisposes us to give up and go back to the familiar when difficulties and challenges occur, which they will.

The transition will be nothing less than scrapping our entire socioeconomic paradigm and replacing it with an entirely new one. Paradigm shifts of comparable magnitude have been successfully done many times throughout history. It is most definitely possible and absolutely worth all of the efforts necessary for it to succeed. But we must keep in mind that all human endeavors encounter challenges, setbacks, snags, and the unexpected. We must be mentally and emotionally prepared and resolved to respond with our best creative problem-solving skills and not give up or turn back. We may have to re-evaluate details of implementation, but never abandon the principles of what we’re creating. Once the transition itself is accomplished, we must be ready and energized for the long, hard work necessary to apply it to every aspect of society and resolve the challenges that come up along the way. We will need to be as patient as possible and encourage each other through this vital evolutionary process.

How do we shut down the current modern feudalism and make this transition?

One idea that naturally comes up is to strike in all industries or to have a general strike. This is the traditional method of advancing the situation of employees under modern feudalism when all else fails. Most readers probably know this very well, but here’s a brief review and explanation for those who may not be familiar. When possible, employees form labor unions to protect and defend their interests in the face of employers who, following the mandates of modern feudalism, thrive by giving employees as little as possible and getting as much from them as they can. Remember that this paradigm sets up a mutually predatory dynamic where one group or individual prospers and gains mainly at the expense of another. When this gets intolerable for employees, they strike. They stop work, stop

production and picket outside the facilities to block scabs (non-union workers) from entering and to gain public awareness and support. With production stopped, the employer's profits and stock prices suffer. Employers have been known to use violence and intimidation to scare strikers into backing down; there have even been murders and frame-ups. Eventually the employer is hurting enough economically to be willing to negotiate with the union. In the end an agreement is reached, a contract is signed, and production resumes as before, with whatever changes were agreed upon.

This won't work to bring about the transition. It is confined to one industry or one company, and its goal is to improve conditions for employees and then go back to a slightly modified status quo. Modern feudalism continues; our goal is to end modern feudalism altogether. Strikes are also disruptive to the lives of strikers, who must do without their salaries during the strike and hope that the union's strike fund will be enough. Depending on the effected industry, strikes must be disruptive to the public to be most effective, a fact leveraged by employers to paint strikers as disruptors and troublemakers in the media, which over time helps them to convince lawmakers and judges to become sympathetic to employers rather than employees, which leads to limits on the right to unionize in the first place.

What about a general strike? This is a stoppage across all industries, effectively shutting down the economy. This has been an effective tactic to bring about wider, more systemic changes in some countries.

In 1975, ninety-five percent of the women in Iceland went on strike for twenty-four hours to protest the unequal pay and other inequities women faced in the workforce. They didn't just strike in their workplaces, where they just didn't show up, but also at home. They did no housework or childcare. This quickly led to legislation guaranteeing women equal pay to men. General strikes are much harder to organize than industry or company specific strikes; but when they happen, they are very effective. Also, since strikers stay home rather than gather to picket and protest publicly, they can't be

easily targeted for intimidation and harassment by employers or by police acting on behalf of employers.

Unfortunately, for the purpose of our transition, general strikes suffer from the same limitations as more limited strikes: they must cause disruption to be effective, and once the issues are settled, life continues as before under modern feudalism with whatever specific changes were agreed upon. It seems highly unlikely that even a general strike could lead to corporations disbanding and a redefinition and restructuring of the socioeconomic paradigm from the ground up.

Author's note — September 2026

The overnight-transition strategy described below has been superseded by a gradual, community-based approach. The current Transition strategy begins by solving concrete problems, building trustworthy cooperative institutions, and allowing dependence on existing systems to diminish only as safer alternatives can reliably carry their functions. Passages describing armed defense or weapons reflect an earlier formulation and appear below with visible annotations. For the current strategy, see worldintransition.org

Enter the *reverse strike*. Whereas in a traditional strike, production is stopped in order to improve compensation and working conditions within modern feudal paradigms, the reverse strike will *shut down all financial and economic* activity and transactions while production and distribution of goods and services continues uninterrupted. The goal is to halt all use of currency and disable all financial institutions and functionality, effectively eliminating currency and the enforced need for it, with as little disruption as possible to daily life.

Everyone will continue working as normal, *except* for all people working in billing, payment, collections and other purely financial functions who will stop working. If some of them are unwilling to do so, they will be nonviolently and respectfully physically prevented

from performing financial functions. Computers and other technology involved in financial activities will be shut down after having all data and software deleted. In the early morning hours on the day of transition, when there are as few people present as possible, stock exchanges, banks, stock brokerages, collection agencies, credit bureaus and other financial institutions will have their power and communications cut and jammed and will be physically blocked by large trucks and construction equipment. Any people present in these facilities at the time will be respectfully escorted out and receive an explanation of what is happening, in case they aren't aware in spite of widespread communication beforehand. The same will be done in marketing and sales departments and agencies, and across all parasitic industries.

The effect of this will be that all production and distribution will continue while all financial activities will permanently and irreversibly cease. We will cease to ask for payment for anything and, if asked for payment, we will respectfully refuse, stating that it is not necessary as currency is now obsolete.

As an important part of preparation for this, as word and coordination leading up to the transition spreads, programmers and developers involved in business software will prepare modified versions of this software with all financial functionality removed, but with inventory and truly useful functionality intact. They will roll these modified versions out during this same early morning window. Since it's unlikely that this will happen everywhere before transition, those whose job has to do with billing will start marking all accounts paid in full with zero balance due. All disconnects of service, all collections activities, and all repossessions will cease, as will all stock trading and banking. All programmers and developers involved in business software that hasn't yet been stripped of financial functionality will proceed to complete the process.

In factories, offices and other production and distribution facilities, employees will continue to do their jobs, other than as described above, but will henceforth ignore management and the chain of command. A declaration will be issued via all media in the

transitioning country and to the world explaining what's happening. When managers or even senior board members attempt to re-establish their authority and the hierarchy that justifies it, they will be respectfully but firmly told that the "game" has changed and that they aren't in charge anymore. They will then be invited to stay and be respected and appreciated members of the team.

Some deposed managers and officers will be hostile and resist, even physically, at times calling law enforcement or military agencies for support. In advance of the transition, members of law enforcement and the military will have been advised of the coming transition and informed that it is in support of the duly constituted democratic government in the face of an existential threat to it, and that therefore it is their duty to support the transition. Some of them will indeed support us in our transition, some will oppose us, and some will be unsure.

We will have to be prepared to physically defend ourselves and our actions with force if all else fails, but we must do so with the minimum necessary force to neutralize threats while adhering to a strong ethic of minimizing harm and treating our opponents with respect and compassion. Once a situation is under control we must offer aid to all injured parties, regardless of their affiliation. We must absolutely never devolve into a mindset of revenge, payback, or venting of anger. If violence is initiated, it must never come from us transitionaries. If excessive force is used, if atrocities are committed, if acts of callous inhumanity occur, or if looting or vandalism occur, it must not come from us, even if it is directed at us.

We must all be prepared to video and livestream events as they occur. We must be, and the world must see that we are, the calm, reasonable, level-headed hardworking ones committed to keeping the lights on, the trucks rolling, and the hospitals open. This will force those trying to intimidate and stop us with violence into the role of the disruptive thugs and barbarians trying to shut down the processes of daily life. The modern feudal lords, their vassals, and any others supporting them will have to willingly step into that role unless they are willing to let go of modern feudalism and their place

in it. ~~Even when we must fight them,~~ our humane, respectful, and compassionate treatment of them will show the world and the people of the transitioning country that the transition is driven by humanity, reason, and respect, not chaos, lawlessness, or disorder. Those who oppose us will use AI and intensive propaganda to try to paint us to the world as terrorists or criminals; we must counter this with our comportment and our live coverage.

The Transition must be peer-driven, with no leaders center stage. There are several reasons for this, both on principle and for strategic reasons.

Since we now know that being in a position of power or influence shuts down brain centers for compassion and empathy, we do well to avoid putting anyone in that position. A leader-driven movement also suffers from people looking to the leader(s) to initiate actions and direct them, which gets in the way of people exercising and strengthening their own initiative, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. In addition, the leader is one person, so their blind spots and weaknesses could become baked into the movement.

A leader-centered movement or organization is also vulnerable to being attacked by either eliminating or discrediting the leader(s) in the eyes of the people in the movement. If a leader is assassinated along with a massive assault on people in the movement, it can backfire if the leader becomes a martyr symbol, but if the perpetrators are skillful at manipulating public perception, people in the movement will likely become despondent, discouraged, afraid for their own lives and families and be left in disarray. It can then take generations for this to resolve; we don't have that kind of time. If the leader is discredited through disinformation, then people will give up on the cause as well.

We will need to communicate and coordinate via all possible channels: in person, via email and the Internet (social media etc), messaging apps, snail mail, and all other means to prepare, organize and pick the date for the transition to occur, preferably in early spring in temperate climates and immediately after the end of

typhoon or hurricane season in tropical climates, to minimize the potential impact of any disruptions. (We say early spring because then we're past the rigors of winter and not yet facing the heat of summer, so that if any disruptions of goods and services occur in spite of our efforts to prevent them, the impact will be the least severe) We will need to strive for a balance between widespread communication and coordination among rank-and-file people while minimizing the likelihood that modern feudal lords, their vassals, and other senior managers will encounter it or take it seriously if they do. We should favor one-on-one communication, ordinary-sounding messages that signify specific things, rather than explicit public messages, using clever subtleness. We might want to create some fake leads, chatter, and plans to create background noise against which our actual plans will be undistinguishable. We will do well to study and learn from communication and coordination methods used by resistance movements in the past and avail ourselves of avenues provided by technology, including secure operating systems such as Tails, strong encryption, and hash functions as well as steganography. We should also use the same kinds of methods used to generate flash mobs and successful GoFundMe drives. We need this to go viral. The goal is to reach a broad consensus within the country bound for transition, of a date and some details. We must reach this without a central organization as much as possible.

All current corporations, businesses, and other hierarchical entities in the transitioning country will be dissolved organizationally, but productive operations will continue uninterrupted while adopting a peer-driven self-governing model. Former managers and executives will be warmly welcomed to be part of the team as peers. Teams of developers, designers, and engineers at the facilities of what are now competing companies that forbid them to collaborate between companies, will be encouraged to share all of their designs and developments and form themselves into into a collaborative pool to combine all of their knowledge, techniques and innovations. Their goal will be to integrate the personnel and facilities of the decommissioned corporations into one combined enterprise. Their mandate will be to design a line of products and/or services, be they

apps, shoes, cars, cell phones, broadband, or dog food that combines all of the best features and implementations from their combined knowledge and expertise into a selection that in their experience and estimation will best meet the needs of consumers. Consumers and producers will engage in ongoing dialog via the public web forum (described below) once it's up and running. All products will be redesigned to include the combined best features of all currently competing products at highest level of quality, durability, upgradeability, interoperability, user friendliness, and customizability that the state of the art allows. There will still be competition in this collaborative model, but it will be over the merits of design and implementation rather than advertising, marketing, and business strategies. Engineers and designers will establish universal design standards and form factors to allow easy repairs and upgrades, so that there will be no need to get a whole new unit unless it is totally destroyed. Thus when a new kind of car engine is developed, it will be possible to replace engines instead of whole cars. When a faster processor is developed, it will be possible to replace the old one or the motherboard instead of the whole computer. We will keep backwards compatibility with current goods and services until they are out of circulation. Waste will plummet; the self-devouring cycle will end.

Once everyone in the country has all that they need of the new long-lived products, demand will drop to a trickle to cover breakage and population growth. Supply will adjust to meet actual, authentic demand instead of artificially inflated runaway demand. In the new paradigm, this will not result in the death of an enterprise; it will result in a vastly reduced workload for those involved in production across all sectors. Since there will be no profit motive to reinforce artificially inflated demand and corresponding inflated workload, over time we can expect to see twenty hours a week or less become the norm, with an accompanying reduction in stress and improved quality of life for all.

ATTENTION engineers, developers, system and network administrators, and cybersecurity specialists: Please plan to come in

to work early on the day of transition to secure all currently proprietary technical, production, process, patent and other useful information and make backups. Lock all senior management, from the CEO on down to your team manager (unless you know for sure that they support the transition) out from access to all such information and systems. This is to prevent them from locking, deleting, or otherwise sabotaging this information if they decide that if they can't control it, they don't want anyone to have it.

ATTENTION members and contributors of the Open-Source community: your experience in operating in this kind of collaborative peer-based model will be most helpful to those to whom this mode of operation will be new and unfamiliar. It is hoped that you will reach out to newly transitioned engineers and developers and mentor them on peer-based operations.

Advertising and marketing departments will cease operation and reorient themselves to provide quality manuals and contribute to the development of the public database described below.

All current retail stores, dealerships, and outlets will be repurposed as distribution centers or other purposes if they become redundant.

NOTE TO STORES: Since people are accustomed to chronic scarcity imposed by the modern feudal paradigm, some shoppers will tend to hoard and "stock up." Therefore, it is recommended that stores initially set reasonable limits and post added security until people adjust to the new reality of universal free access. In the new paradigm, the only shortages will be actual and will need to be dealt with accordingly.

In order to have a framework and venue for communication, coordination, and collaboration that will be central in the new paradigm, we will need to create an online database and interface to facilitate people finding things they want or need, coordinate production with actual need, give feedback and suggestions for improvement or innovations of goods and services, engage in creative dialogue and discussion on every topic, and act as a virtual

meeting place, like a national town square. People will be able to meet there for every purpose from socializing to finding or trading homes: “Family with two children seeks to trade three-bedroom house in suburban Tampa, FL, for similar in suburban Denver CO.” This will also be a venue for developers, scientists, researchers, artists, and others to collaborate and share information. It will have features of social media and an all-purpose website. It will have to be organized in logical, organic ways to include culture, science, the various industries, government, art, history, weather, sports, breaking news and technological developments, and every area of human interest and endeavor. Safeguarding the privacy of every user will be an absolute priority. This will be a forum and avenue of communication for all of the people, not for propaganda or manipulation.

In the new paradigm, everyone who wants it will have Internet access and the technology to access it. We will want to favor a massively distributed architecture with frequent backups. We will also want to develop lower-tech versions to use in the unlikely event that the central site is disabled due to unprecedented natural or man-caused disaster.

ATTENTION web and database developers, especially in the Open-Source community: If you can start developing it now in a form that can be adapted and localized to diverse countries, it will make the transition smoother and easier. If it's ready to roll out on the day of transition, it would be a tremendous benefit to all.

Many production processes, such as power generation and agriculture, will shift from large centralized facilities to distributed, diversified models such as neighborhood, block, individual dwelling and building level small-scale gardening, livestock, and power generation using diverse appropriate technologies such as water wheels instead of dams, solar, wind, geothermal, mechanochemical and other technologies. Professionals will mentor community members on installing and maintaining these. In the process, more connection will emerge among neighbors as they become stakeholders and decision makers actively sharing in mutually

beneficial projects and activities, which will reduce alienation and isolation such as is common under modern feudalism. Fossil fuels and other internal combustion technologies will be phased out, once there is no profit motive driving resistance to this change. Then we will quickly be able to make truly significant progress in removing the causes of the climate crisis and hopefully have a chance to reverse it or at least mitigate the damage. This will also make the infrastructure less vulnerable to natural disasters, sabotage or acts of war.

Transportation will see more emphasis on quality mass transit, and also the development of a parallel system of roads and paths for foot, bicycle, horse and other non-powered modes of transportation, complete with all amenities, to make these modes of transportation safe, convenient, and attractive.

The transition is a complete, forceful but nonviolent overthrow of the modern feudal power structure and overhaul of the socioeconomic paradigm but not of government. Yet such a major change must have some effects on government and the people involved in it. Let's take a look at what these might likely be.

The transition will make the tasks of government both simpler and easier in some ways, and more challenging in other ways.

Elected representatives and executives will find their jobs made simpler and easier as follows: Since all forms of currency will be obsolete and all resources will be directly accessible when needed, there will be no need to find funding for anything. Taxation will similarly be a thing of the past. Since much of the time and efforts of government personnel is currently taken up with funding and economic issues, their jobs will be simplified and streamlined. They will be able to focus on what needs to be done, without then having to hash out how to pay for it or whom to tax or what programs to cut in the process. Since there will be no modern feudal lords or corporations, there will be no economically motivated lobbyists pushing their agendas and pressuring politicians to support them. Politicians will hear only one set of voices: those of the electorate. Of

course, those voices will often disagree among them, so politicians will still face the difficult task of finding a reasonable path through these challenges, but there will be no pressure on them to override the will and wellbeing of the people in favor of the ultra-wealthy.

At election time, candidates won't have to worry about fundraising. All candidates will be given equal time in all media and in the central website. The playing field will be leveled; there will be no advantage to candidates who have more money to work with. Candidates will be free and forced to compete based on their messaging and their record. Since in modern feudal societies the great majority of lawmakers and other elected representatives come from either more privileged backgrounds or have close ties to the wealthy and powerful, the pool of potential candidates tends to be out of touch with the reality of most constituents. Those without such background or connections have a very slim chance of making it to the ballot. In the new paradigm, this will change. All aspiring candidates will have a much better chance of being able to run.

Their jobs will be made harder by the fact that they will be called upon to quickly adapt to the new socioeconomic environment in which they will find themselves. Transitionaries will need to step forward to work with them and assist them with this monumental task. A good idea might be for different sectors of society to pick spokespeople (not leaders) to liaise with government personnel to advise and assist them. Many laws will have to be modified, others repealed, and new ones enacted. Constitutional amendments and/or laws will be needed to specifically guarantee all people not just their basic rights such as freedom of speech, religion, press, etc, but also the rights to the necessities needed to exercise them: a reasonable place to live, food, tools, education, healthcare, and pretty much all resources. One core set of principles that will have to be codified will be on the one hand, to guarantee the right of each individual, family, or social entity to the resources necessary for the maximum quality of life realistically possible , and on the other hand to limit what any person, family, or other social entity can own or control to only that amount (limited to what they actually personally use). We will need to make it illegal to obstruct, block, hold hostage or otherwise

impede anyone else's access or use of any resource. We will establish mechanisms for people to claim ownership of available land, homes, and facilities. All unused land and buildings will be available for occupancy, and those that currently belong to people or entities who aren't using them personally will become the property of those using them, or if no one is using them, will become available to claimants via the public domain.

We can expect that some people who will still cling to modern feudalism, or people from countries still under modern feudalism, will try hard to profiteer off of the new paradigm. Since all resources will be available for free, profiteers will want to load themselves up with free goods in transitioned countries and sell them in countries still under modern feudalism. To combat this, we'll need humane, reasonable limits on how much of things each person, family, and social unit can own. All items will have RFID installed for inventory purposes (matching supply to need). Once one has reached their quota of an item, they can only get another one if they exchange one that they have for it, if it is broken, or if their situation changes, such as when a child is born or adopted. The implementation of this must be compassionate, reasonable, and flexible. For example, no one *needs* a private jet or yacht, though all such things will be accessible to all who want or need them in as equitable a manner as possible. A family might need a car for each adult member plus a work vehicle if appropriate. A person, family, religious organization, social club, or enterprise will have a right to one residence, venue or facility that they actually use or need, but no more. No family needs a collection of cars or houses. A musician might need several guitars or keyboards for different kinds of music and venues, but not more than they will actually use. People and entities that currently own or control more of a resource than they personally use will be required to choose one (if they're living in one, that one will become the one they legally own); the remaining ones will become the legal property of those currently using them. Thus, your landlord will keep their home where they live, while your residence that you've been renting will become yours. A reasonable limit will be placed on how much land one person, family, or entity can own and the size of the

residence or facility. Luxury items such as private jets that have potential uses in the public good, such as getting first responders quickly to where they're needed, will be put into a public pool available upon urgent need to those who need them. Luxury items such as yachts will either be repurposed for public service or will be put into a lottery system in which names will be drawn at random from the population for lucky ones to win an outing on them. Laws against smuggling, hoarding, and profiteering will need to be strengthened, enacted, and strongly enforced with penalties that will make would-be profiteers think twice but without being cruel or inhuman.

At the time of transition and during the initial period while the new paradigm is being implemented and troubleshot, all defense forces will have to be on high alert to counter any potential aggression by enemies, opportunistic countries, or corporate militias who may either see the transition as a moment of vulnerability to be seized, or who may seek to suppress the transition by force. Law enforcement will also have to be alert to counter any looting, violence, or other lawlessness that may occur. They will be strictly ordered to act with humanity and respect while using the minimum force necessary to contain any situation. Any former modern feudal lord, vassal, or other person loyal to the old paradigm will be left alone *unless* they attempt to use violence or intimidation to reassert their dominance and the old paradigm, in which case they will be arrested and tried by due process for their crime. Any person who attacks, bullies, or harasses any former modern feudal lord, vassal, or person loyal to the old paradigm will likewise be arrested and tried by due process for their crime.

The impact of the new paradigm on politicians and government will be universally beneficial to the inhabitants of the transitioned country. Government will become more responsive to their needs and will. There will be far less corruption and abuse of position. The more greedy and corrupt among politicians will most likely retire and be replaced by others more interested in the good of the people. While politics will probably always be contentious and bring out some of

our darker sides, the overall quality of government will certainly improve markedly.

As mentioned, some laws will need to be rewritten, some eliminated, some redefined, and some new ones created. Some categories of crime will no longer apply, especially financial crimes. We can expect that fraud, identity theft, etc will become a rarity. Crimes against person and property will still apply, with appropriate modifications. Corporate law as a discipline will cease to exist. Family law will of course still be relevant, though changes will be needed in terms of division of community property during a divorce. Child support and alimony will be obsolete concepts, since neither party will be deprived of the necessities of life. We will need to set up legal mechanisms and frameworks to deal with conflicting claims of ownership of homes and other resources, for filing new claims, and for trading or transferring ownership. Contract law will still exist but with modifications. Crimes such as drug dealing will see little traffic. New categories of crime will be defined, as mentioned above. The nature of sentences for convicted persons will change. There will be no such things as fines or financial penalties; instead, we will emphasize and expand community service. There will also be a shift in priority from punitive to rehabilitative whenever possible. Real world experience shows that the punitive approach only serves to make prisons a kind of criminal training ground for most inmates. Among those inmates who are not able or likely to be rehabilitated, imprisonment will take on a different emphasis, more similar to the German and Norwegian prison systems where inmates live with a measure of dignity and humanity while being restrained and kept from doing harm in society. The goal will be to prevent such people from being at large where they can hurt people, not punishing them. Given the very different psychosocial reinforcers that will operate in the new paradigm, we fully expect the number and proportion of dangerous criminals to decline significantly, though not entirely since some criminal personalities are due to neurological and other unpredictable factors. All persons will have free access to quality lawyers.

Since education and training of all kinds will be accessible to all who seek and have the ability and discipline, societies will benefit from the presence of many more trained, talented, passionate individuals in every field. It will be up to each person to pursue their dreams and life goals. No paradigm can guarantee that every person will be happy and fulfilled, but all external impediments will be removed. For those who find it hard to let go of the old paradigm, treatment, counseling, rehabilitation and support of all kinds will be freely available, since all services will be universally free.

We already need to be thinking about and exploring possible interfaces with non-transitioned countries. We absolutely must be utterly transparent to the world about every aspect of the transition, its motives, core values, actions, and intentions. We will have to clearly and widely make assurance that all persons including foreign nationals are safe, that this is a process rooted in respect for human life and dignity, and that we will honor treaties and alliances. We will issue assurance that we will not try to invade or otherwise destabilize or interfere with other countries or supply arms to any faction, except to defend countries with whom we have mutual defense treaties. We will use every medium to publish a statement of the basic principles of the new paradigm. We will make a statement that all trade agreements and some alliances will be re-evaluated and renegotiated in good faith based on the new paradigm's principles. We will make it clear to the world that we will not form treaties, alliances, or trade agreements with countries or other entities that engage in or tolerate oppression or exploitation of human beings or the destruction of the environment. We will issue a guarantee that when we do form agreements or treaties, we will always do so in good faith, and negotiations will seek mutual benefit.

Trade agreements, in particular, with untransitioned countries will require some creative work. One possible, promising framework would be to exchange equivalent human work hours' worth of goods and services, since this is the only objective, humanistic criterion of worth and is not subject to the vagaries of exchange

rates. How many person hours does it take to produce a ton of steel, a pallet of computers or of apples, or to provide a month of a particular service? This should be approximately the same in every country for the same items and is as close to a universal unit of exchange as can be achieved. Where there are significant differences between the person hours to produce the same product in a transitioned country versus an untransitioned trading partner, then whichever party's process is superior will assist the other party to implement that practice.

Interfaces with multinational business entities will involve a number of changes and adaptations:

Where a parent company is in a transitioned country and has facilities in untransitioned countries, the parent company will of course be functioning free of the entropic burden of currency. Untransitioned facilities elsewhere will still be using a hierarchical structure and currency. In that case, the parent facility will send advisors to untransitioned facilities to assist them in adapting to the new peer relationships, and to ensure that they treat and compensate employees and customers in fair and dignified ways, divest themselves of any aspect of their operations that involves sweatshops or other destructive or inhumane practices, and remain viable as businesses while doing so. If these subsidiaries or other facilities refuse to work in good faith, then alternative facilities will be established and staffed mainly with employees from the uncooperative facility.

Where the parent facility is untransitioned, the transitioned facilities will respectfully inform their parent companies that they are now no longer under their control, that they are now under peer-based self management and that they wish to establish mutually-beneficial arrangements fair to all parties. A good selling point is that since the transitioned facility has no cash overhead, their contribution to the parent company's products will carry a dramatic drop in production costs that will enable the parent company to undercut and outcompete their competitors who don't benefit from transitioned

facilities. The quality of their goods or services will also be higher for lower prices. The side benefit of this is that it will show the obvious superiority of the new paradigm over the old one and act as a catalyst to inspire more people to want to transition.

We've previously stated that tourism in its current most common form is devastatingly harmful to most local people and to the environment of the host region. That does not, however mean that we will want to eliminate tourism in the new paradigm, quite the opposite! We will want to develop and encourage tourism but completely change the approach. The quality of life in the new paradigm will be so far superior to that of existing paradigms, that we will want as many people as possible to visit and experience the difference, with the intention that the experience will kindle in them the desire and will to bring about transition in their countries. In this way, tourism will create ambassadors and advocates for the new paradigm and hasten its adoption in more and more countries.

At first, people who aren't actively involved will be uncertain, maybe even afraid that the transition will mean a blood bath, purges, atrocities, and inhumanity as has been the case in so many revolutions and regime changes. Of course, we will widely publish our intentions and principles, but nothing will convince people more than direct experience.

Tourists and other foreign nationals in a transitioning country at the time of transition will of course be reassured of their safety and be treated with sincere respect and patience. One of the first things they'll see is that their accommodations, food, transportation, entertainment and other needs will be free of charge since currency will be obsolete. They will then be informed that all hotel, vehicle rental and other services so far in their stay will be retroactively refunded to their foreign accounts as a sign of respect and goodwill. Flights and trains into and out of the transitioned country for foreign nationals will still be charged at the low end of industry standard in their countries. These people will see first-hand the goodwill behind the transition and the fact that law and order are maintained with little or no disruption. All questions will be answered in a straightforward

and transparent manner. When these people return home, they will be eyewitnesses to the benevolence and integrity of the transition and those bringing it about.

Existing tourist facilities in transitioned countries will continue to operate as peer-managed and staffed facilities, open free of charge to locals and tourists alike. We will make every effort to undo environmental damage caused by these facilities. The emphasis in tourism will fundamentally change. Instead of striving to provide luxury and caricaturized entertainment based on native culture, the new focus will be on authentic experience and genuine human contact and interaction. For examples, we can look at the kibbutz and moshav volunteer programs in Israel, foreign exchange programs, the Peace Corps, and the venceremos brigades in Cuba among other current programs along somewhat similar lines. Guests are given free food, accommodation, tours, and entertainment, and participate in the work and social life of the community for a time period of their choosing. In the new paradigm, there will be organized tours available for those who want them, including opportunities to observe how various aspects of life work in the new paradigm, as well as seeing natural and man-made beauty. Tourists will be free to avail themselves of these or to explore on their own. These people will become ambassadors and spokespeople for the merits of the new paradigm. Many of them, along with their friends and family who hear their travel stories will feel the desire to bring that way of life to their countries.

In support of this, we will operate training sessions for any and all who want to learn how to function in a peer-based organization and also how to organize and bring about transitions in their own countries. Make no mistake: these will be voluntary, open, easily accessible instructional sessions, *not* forced “re-education camps” operated as brainwashing centers like we see in countless dictatorships. While we will not meddle or interfere in the internal affairs of other countries or supply weapons to any party, we will provide training, advice, and advisors in their country if requested, and when a country is on the verge of transition, we will smuggle and air drop satellite phones into the country so that its citizens can act

as live reporters and livestream to the world in case their internet access is shut down. It is said that the most effective form of “advertising” is word of mouth. Tourism will be one of our most effective means of showing the world the objective superiority of the new paradigm over most or all current paradigms.

Once word gets out in the world about how much better life is in transitioned countries, we can expect an influx of people seeking to immigrate there. This will have to be met with a firm but compassionate response, which we need to be prepared for in advance as much as possible. Obviously one or a few countries can’t absorb hundreds of millions of immigrants. Equally obviously, some people will be fleeing horrendous situations in fear for their lives. We will need to achieve and maintain a delicate, practical, reasonable, and humane balance. Except in cases where refugee status or conditions in a country of origin make it impossible or impractical (*refugees* will be welcomed), we will set up reasonable temporary accommodations near our borders in transitioned countries, where we will endeavor to encourage and train these would-be immigrants to transition their own countries. The more countries that transition, the more experience we’ll have to draw upon in this project. We will also work with neighboring countries and supply our own personnel (with permission) to accommodate some of the travelers on the other sides of borders. The message will be clear: “Why uproot yourself for a better life when you can create it at home? We are proof that you *can* do this. Here’s how.”

This is a call to action, but not a call to arms. We need to be clear on this, and we need to make sure that everyone knows it and sees it is so in practice.

On the day of transition, a declaration will be put out on the Internet and via all existing media in the transitioning country and the world. This declaration will vary to some extent from country and culture to country and culture, but will contain the following in order that those both at home and abroad are aware of what is and isn’t happening, what to expect, and why:

It will include references to this booklet as well as the full-length original version plus statements to the effect that:

- The purpose of any human social structure is to facilitate, enhance, and support the happiness, empowerment, wellbeing, and thriving of all of its members in a symbiotic, synergistic structure while sustaining the ecosystem that is our life support in a free and democratic society.
- The current socioeconomic system is incompatible with a free and democratic society governed by and for its people because it spawns a feudal power structure that overrides democratic institutions.
- Therefore, in order to make a quantum leap towards a society that fulfills its purpose as above, this socioeconomic system must be decommissioned, shut down, and replaced with a completely new one based on the latest psychological and sociological knowledge and on millennia of observation of human societies to determine which socioeconomic structures do, and which don't, support the purpose of human societies.
- Hierarchical social systems have been scientifically determined to suppress our most positive, constructive potentials and reinforce our most destructive traits, amplifying them, institutionalizing them, and setting them in stone, so the new structure will be peer-based.
- Since it's a made-up construct that contributes no real value to anything real while it enables some to control others' access to resources and rights and maintains the feudalistic power structure, all forms of currency are now abolished and made obsolete.
- Every person, family, and social or production entity is guaranteed the right to a place to live and to all other goods and services, but only those that they directly, personally use. Your home, car, tools, and other things you use are now legally yours. All loans and debts are hereby null and void.

- All persons, enterprises and facilities are to cease asking for payment or making payment if asked.
- All persons in all enterprises, businesses, and facilities are to respectfully but firmly ignore all orders and directives from above in the chain of command, which is henceforth disbanded. If any managers or officers try to use force to reassert their power, resist and contain them using the minimum necessary physical force to do so, then respectfully render compassionate aid to any injured persons.
- Please use your cell and satellite phones, camcorders and other devices to record and stream events as they occur. We want the world and the country to see what's actually happening, to counter propaganda that will surely try to paint the transition as something heinous which it isn't.
- To members of law enforcement and the military: if you swore an oath to protect, defend, and uphold the constitution, democratic institutions, and people of our nation, then since the current socioeconomic system is subverting and effectively threatening its existence, it is your duty to support, not oppose, this transition.

It will make clear and emphatic assurances that:

- This is *not* an attempt to overthrow or interfere with government, but only to overthrow and replace the socioeconomic power structure.
- The new paradigm will be designed to ensure, safeguard, and support the dignity, prosperity, wellbeing, and thriving of all people and establish a symbiotic social structure in which mutual good is reinforced. All policies and actions will be guided by this intention.
- Since this transition has a mission and mandate to value, support, and respect all of its members, there will be no purges, kangaroo courts, violence or other inhumane acts against anyone, including those who have enjoyed unjustified power and privilege over the rest of us. All persons will be treated with respect.

- The new socioeconomic setup will respect and uphold law and order. Violence on anyone's part, looting, rioting, vandalism and the like will not be tolerated and will be dealt with through due process.
- Our intention is to keep all goods and services running normally during the transition; any disruption will only be caused by those trying to sabotage the the transition in order to restore their dominance.
- Our nation will continue to honor our treaties, alliances, and agreements with other countries. These will, however, be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to identify any in which the other parties engage in, tolerate, or encourage human rights violations or exploitation of and preventable damage to the environment. These will be renegotiated to correct these practices. If the other parties are unable to do so but express willingness, we will assist them. If they are unwilling, then we will formally terminate such alliances, treaties, or agreements.
- All people are guaranteed safety and respectful treatment.
- We will not meddle in the internal affairs, invade, supply weapons to any faction, or otherwise violate the sovereignty and integrity of any other nation.
- Enemies beware: our time of transition is not a moment of weakness; if attacked, we will defend ourselves.

In conclusion, this is a monumental undertaking, but no more so than other challenges and paradigm shifts that we humans have already accomplished. Given the acceleration of the global climate crisis as well as the equally rapid acceleration of wealth and power inequality globally and in most countries, it is urgent that we act quickly, effectively, and decisively to transition as much of the world as possible, as soon as possible. Let's get started!

What You Can Do

If the message of this book resonates with you, if you would like to make transition a reality, then there is a lot that you can do right now.

Don't wait for it to happen. Take an active role in making it happen:

- Share this book, and the long version, and the novel, *The Longest Sunrise*, with as many people as you can. You have the author's express permission and encouragement to duplicate, print, copy, and otherwise reproduce these works and share them with anyone and everyone.
- If you know others are also moved by the prospect of transition, form study groups. Check out all of the footnotes and citations in the long version. Work on strategies and ideas of how to implement transition in your areas of expertise and life experience.
- If you know anything about influencing, about instigating flash mobs, about positioning an item in search engines, making things go viral, crating TikTok or YouTube videos with large audiences, or otherwise getting a message out into the world and in front of many people, please apply your knowledge to this mission.
- The next two pages contain a three-fold flyer that can be printed on the two sides of one page of paper. Any that you can print and put where they'll be found and possibly read, please do if you feel so moved.
- If you are a software developer, connect to the Open-Source movement and begin working on the NewWorldWeb project, a combination digital town square and venue for the transitioned society as described here, in the long book, and in the novel. It should be scalable to a nation of over a billion people such as India and China, and easily localized for different cultures and countries.
- Learn as much as you can about encryption methods and steganography, for the purpose of coordination and communication with minimal footprints.
- Try to form households with biological or acquired family and friends in which costs and decisions are shared. Try to avoid living as isolated individuals and couples, each having to pay your own utilities, rent, and other expenses.

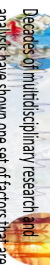
Back each other up in every way, not just in moral support, and don't abuse this.

- Start to become conscious of how you respond to advertising and marketing. Teach yourself and others how to become immune and unresponsive to it, so that you aren't spending time and money on things that aren't authentic needs and desires, but that were planted in you via advertising. Become advertising-immune.
- Learn all that you can about peer-based communication and decision making processes. There are some excellent resources available, such as Non-Violent Communication, the history of the kibbutz movement in Israel, and others. Try to practice this among yourself, your friends, family, and coworkers.

Not a political ad!
Food for thought
URGENT!
A practical solution!
Not an MLM!

The Cure: In A Nutshell

The world is in multiple crises. The quality of life is declining for more and more people. Income inequality is rising around the world. The climate crisis threatens our survival.



Decades of multidisciplinary research and analysis have shown one set of factors that are key, if those factors are changed and adjusted, then we will be able to resolve most of the worst of our crises. Two books exist, a longer, more in-depth one called *The Cure: Of, By And For The People* and a shorter version by the same title with *The Short Version* added that show the conclusions and outline steps to bring about significant resolution. Both can be easily downloaded at www.books2read.com/TheCure at no cost.

There is also a novel called *The Longest Sunrise* that dramatizes what the world will be like after the changes are made, in order to help people conceive of a reality outside of what they know.

Why are we working longer hours for less and less?

This pamphlet attempts to give a brief overview of this important content.

Humans are a highly social species whose strength has always lain in cooperation and cohesion. If our ancestors' societies had functioned as most current societies do, we wouldn't be here.

Recent studies show that being in a position of power causes the brain centers for empathy and compassion to shut down over time. Contrary to popular belief, hierarchical social

A new vision for humanity:

Not capitalism
Not communism
Not socialism

structures suppress our most constructive and amplify our most destructive potentials at all levels of a hierarchy.

Other recent studies also show that we need to redefine "fitness," in the evolutionary concept of "survival of the fittest" to mean the most supportive and able to cooperate with others, rather than the fastest, strongest, or smartest.

Human nature includes a rich palette of motivations and potentials. We have it in us to be Hitlers or Gandhis, to be predatory or cooperative, to synergize or to brutalize.

Which potentials are amplified and which are suppressed depends on what is reinforced. From Psych 101: behaviors that are reinforced will predominate; those that aren't will tend towards extinction.

Why is home ownership getting farther out of reach?

The dominant paradigm in the world now generates rigid hierarchies and reinforces mutual dog-eat-dog predation and abuse of power. Since this paradigm places no upper or lower limit on how much of anything one person or enterprise can own or control, it is possible and inevitable that a very few will come to own or control almost all resources like the feudal lords of old, while growing numbers own or control little or nothing. It always devolves into a form of feudalism, as surely as uranium decays.

This is no conspiracy theory. There are no bad guys here. The morbidly wealthy are addicts to wealth, power, and privilege, no different from

Based on all new data & assumptions:
A whole new approach
A whole new strategy

gambling or gaming addicts. Our societies have enabled and encouraged their addiction. The problem is the game itself, not the players. They are just winning at playing the game the way it's designed to be played.

This paradigm requires endless growth in profits, workforce, production, consumption, and stock price to sustain itself. It is as unsustainable as a Ponzi scheme or a chain letter. Natural resources are depleted at a rapidly accelerating pace to make this happen. Pollution and waste expand in proportion. The workforce is under constant pressure to overproduce to keep the momentum. Inferior goods are produced to need frequent replacement. Advertising pollutes everywhere. It conditions and manipulates us to spend far more than we would on our own.

A setup that reinforces (not enforces!) cooperation, synergy, and symbiosis will see these behaviors predominate, just as they tend toward extinction under the current paradigm.

Why is it always two steps forward, three steps back?

The current paradigm generates chronic stress from living in a constant struggle against the default negation of our right to even exist and occupy space. That's right. By default you don't even have the right to a place to live, to occupy space, unless you pay for it. The new paradigm will generate a sense of wellbeing, fulfillment, and enjoyment of life in comparison. This will stimulate dopamine and other pleasure neurotransmitters in our brains, which in itself will further reinforce synergistic, cooperative, mutualistic behaviors.

How can we break the cycle and make things better?

By changing the socioeconomic paradigm, we change which aspects and potentials of our human potential are reinforced and predominate. It won't be 100% but the default, the norm, will change dramatically.

All forms of currency are arbitrary constructs be kept scarce and access to it restricted and controlled.

We will need to discontinue all forms of currency in favor of an organic social organization similar to that of the cells and organs of an organism. Currency inevitably devolves into a means by which those who control it (and thereby control resources,) exert and enforce their control and dictate who has or doesn't have access to what (including even the most basic necessities) and how much. Resources are held hostage and we end up having to constantly pay ransom.

We will also want to dismantle all hierarchical social entities and recast them on a peer-based model, with few to no exceptions. If there are practical situations that truly necessitate a hierarchical structure, all perks and privileges of rank must be excised, and all members of the hierarchy must be trained to fill every slot in it, with roles rotating regularly and when signs of brain compassion center shutdown are observed by an outside body. New social and communication skills will have to be learned. There are already some excellent resources for this, such as the Nonviolent Communication web site and the writings of Daisaku Ikeda and Noam Chomsky, among others.

To get there from where we are now, we must eliminate all use of currency while continuing production unabated. The opposite of a strike. A strike is a power struggle that aims to redefine conditions under which the current feudalistic paradigm will continue. What we must do is shut down systems based on this paradigm once and for all. This is not a negotiation. It is a nonviolently forced paradigm shift, from the bottom up. Also, by being the ones keeping the lights on and the trucks rolling, we force those who might try to stop our transition into the role of those trying to disrupt things, in front of the whole world.

A day must be agreed upon in a massive consensus process that works similarly to the generation of flash mobs and making viral content. Best in spring to minimize potential impact if there are disruptions.

On that day, everyone goes to work as usual but no one asks for payment and no one pays. All banks, stock exchanges and other financial institutions are physically and electronically shut down the night before. All use of currency of any kind stops.

All chains of command are ignored as enterprises are henceforth run on a peership model. Every person, family, and other social entity will be guaranteed the rights to the means to exercise their human rights, i.e. a place to live, food, water, transportation, communication, tools, education and training all forms of healthcare, and a lot more. This will require constitutional amendments and innovative changes to laws. The concepts of

ownership will be redefined: each person or social entity will be entitled to the above, but it will be illegal and impossible to own or control more than one uses directly and personally, or to block, obstruct, or hold hostage another's access to their resources.

Governments will not be overthrown. Only the socioeconomic power structure. Government will be unmoored but will have to adjust and adapt to the new paradigm with which the people have presented it.

The goal is to establish societies where the bottom line is human happiness, empowerment, wellbeing, and peace in a symbiotic setup, while protecting and safeguarding our global life support system, the environment. No other criterion is defensible as a purpose of societies. Nothing must be prioritized above the happiness and wellbeing of human beings. Economics is at the point of rearing our ecosystem to the verge of collapse in pursuit of economic goals. This is a classical behavior of addicts of all kinds.

Compassion and respect must be shown to all, including those who oppose us. We must never start violence. We will defend ourselves if we must but without rancor, cruelty, or brutality. There will be no purges or beat-downs permitted, not by those seeking revenge for wrongs done to them and not by formerly wealthy, powerful, privileged people trying to re-impose their dominance. There will be rule of law, and the rights and dignity of all persons will be upheld.