



World Business Academy

VIEWPOINT

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REKINDLING THE HUMAN SPIRIT IN BUSINESS

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Editor's Note: Academy Fellow Deepak Chopra shares his personal experience with the tragic events associated with last week's terrorist attacks. He probes, as do we all, for the root causes of this (and other) evil. "Is there a deep wound at the heart of humanity? Can tribal warfare be brought to an end?" he asks. We ask these same questions. And we know the answers: It is time to heal the deep wounds, end tribal warfare and advance our civilization.

What Is the Root Cause of This Evil?

By Deepak Chopra

In this time let us open our minds and hearts to cause and effect. Our futures and our children's futures are at stake. Our choices now manifest our future as humanity. In light of this, I submit the following:

As fate would have it, I was leaving New York on a jet flight that took off 45 minutes before the unthinkable happened. By the time we landed in Detroit, chaos had broken out. When I grasped the fact that American security had broken down so tragically, I couldn't respond at first.

My wife and son were also in the air on separate flights, one to Los Angeles, one to San Diego. My body went absolutely rigid with fear. All I could think about was their safety, and it took several hours before I found out that their flights had been diverted and both were safe.

Strangely, when the good news came, my body still felt that it had been hit by a truck. Of its own accord, it seemed to feel a far greater trauma that reached out to the thousands who would not survive and the tens of thousands who would survive, only to live through months and years of hell.

And I asked myself, why didn't I feel this way last week? Why didn't my body go stiff during the bombing of Iraq or Bosnia? Around the world my horror and worry are experienced every day. Mothers weep over horrendous loss, civilians are bombed mercilessly, refugees are ripped from any sense of home or homeland.

Why did I not feel their anguish enough to call a halt to it? As we hear the calls for tightened American security and a fierce military response to terrorism, it is obvious that none of us has any answers. However, we feel compelled to ask some questions.

Everything has a cause, so we have to ask what was the root cause of this evil? We must find out, not superficially, but at the deepest level. There is no doubt that such evil is alive all around the world and is even celebrated. Does this evil grow from the suffering and anguish felt by people we don't know and therefore ignore? Have they lived in this condition for a long time?

One assumes that whoever did this attack feels implacable hatred for America. Why were we selected to be the focus of suffering around the world?

All this hatred and anguish seems to have religion at its basis. Isn't something terribly wrong when jihads and wars develop in the name of God?

Isn't God invoked with hatred in Ireland, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Israel, Palestine and even among the intolerant sects of America? Can any military response make the slightest difference in the underlying cause? Is there not a deep wound at the heart of humanity?

If there is a deep wound, doesn't it affect everyone? When generations of suffering respond with bombs, suicidal attacks and biological warfare, who first developed these weapons? Who sells them? Who gave birth to the satanic technologies now being turned against us?

If all of us are wounded, will revenge work? Will punishment in any form toward anyone solve the wound or aggravate it? Will an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a limb for a limb, leave us all blind, toothless and crippled?

Tribal warfare has been going on for two thousand years and has now been magnified globally. Can tribal warfare be brought to an end? Is patriotism and nationalism even relevant anymore, or is this another form of tribalism?

What are you and I as persons going to do about what is happening? Can we afford to let the deeper wound fester any longer? Everyone is calling this an attack on America, but is it not a rift in our collective soul? Isn't this an attack on civilization from without that is also from within?

When we have secured our safety once more and cared for the wounded, after the period of shock and mourning is over, it will be time for soul searching. I only hope that these questions are confronted with the deepest spiritual intent. None of us will feel safe again behind the shield of military might and stockpiled arsenals. There can be no safety until the root cause is faced. In this moment of shock I don't think anyone of us has the answers. It is imperative that we pray and offer solace and help to each other. But if you and I are having a single thought of violence or hatred against anyone in the world at this moment, we are contributing to the wounding of the world.

Love,

Deepak