



Earthrise Aims Higher

Global MindChange
Forum discovers
new players who raise
the bar on the 100-year
vision.

by Jim Channon

Editors' Note: Here's a game you can play:

Repeat the phrase "wishful thinking" in your head five times.

What happens to the phrase's meaning? In this brief essay, Academy Fellow Jim Channon, the torchbearer for the 100-year positive vision of our planet we call Project Earthrise, shares the inspiration he took from the Global MindChange Forum in September.

What changes must each of us make, from the inside-out, to participate fully, effectively, and joyously in the Global MindChange that surely must come?





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A classic element in any robust strategic vision statement is the higher purpose. This is often an end state that will never actually be reached. It is so potent and audacious that it just continues to pull the rest of the vision into an increasing and accelerating state of excellence. It is the altar piece. It is the ultimate prize. It is followed by a dozen or so more objective elements that tend to push the effort forward in more realizable and immediate terms.

So, when we think about a higher purpose for our whole planet, one that meets those criteria... what strikes you as potent enough to fill the role of that ultimate end state? Well, Robert Muller is not confused about the matter. He says it is simply ... Paradise!

We all know Robert as a man who has grown up in the UN and has toiled in the fields of a world that suffers from many kinds of problems. If you read the [United Nations Challenges](#) you will find predominantly a maintenance checklist of all the things that need fixing. It is not unlike [Bill Clinton's recent initiative](#) to gather world leaders together and have them each pick a problem to solve. These are problem/solution-based scenarios and approaches. They are not visionary. They have no pull; it's all push.

But achieving Paradise is a game everyone can be recruited to play! And I think that if we have learned any lesson in our new and nearly united world it is that it is up to all of us! Natural disasters and social unrest are revealing the inability of our institutional centers like governments to cope. We can't squeeze much more out of these social inventions; they were never meant to carry the load of excellence we now require.

So, as the man with the marker in his hand and the EARTHRISE chart board nearby, I shall rough in the word Paradise at the far edge of the horizon. If you care to nudge me about that or a preferred way to indicate such a higher purpose, please do so on the Academy's forthcoming revamped web site with its interactive features.

Another feature of a master vision is often called the super-ordinate goal. When complete, this goal enables or boosts to a large degree all the other strategic vision goals on the table. Now, in many ways I think Willis Harman had the edge on this one when he came up with the phrase GLOBAL MINDCHANGE. We are all waiting for that moment when the citizens of this planet wake up to our collective responsibility to make this world work at the highest level of excellence possible, ultimately to become a Paradise. We know that moment we might call a tipping point is now emerging.

New Academy Fellows Jerry Jampolski and Diane Cirincione have just handily reminded us all that some positive discipline in our attitudes can make all the difference in both how the Universe participates with us, but also in turn how our own feelings about life are shaped in the process. So, PROACTIVE GLOBAL MINDCHANGE might be the way to understand what seminal activity must occur to get us all on the road to our collective destiny. Robert Muller might offer that just "plain happiness" fits in here as a modifier.

But MINDCHANGE *per se* is not the actual desired act; it is the precursor to the desired act which might be the point where we know we are all in this together but must then decide to cooperate to get the show on the road. In that sense



an [Academy paper written earlier](#) offered a simple meme ...GLOBAL VOICE. So, at this writing anyway, I shall pen in Global Voice as the super-ordinate goal. It presumes Global MindChange has occurred.

Now, if you imagine a bowling alley in your mind, GLOBAL VOICE is where we put the ball in play, and way down at the end of the alley is the place called PARADISE. For those who may not know, we have six years remaining to get these Project Earthrise ideas in shape. So when we say this is a draft, we mean it in the sense of still being able to see the skeleton on a boat we might be building. That state of incompleteness, by the way, shouldn't keep us from having informed opinions about where the azimuth of our approach lies, with the ship under construction in drydock three-plus years.

For those of you who might think of Paradise or happiness as wishful thinking, I would hasten to add that visions are by definition wishful thinking. We all have suffered from growing up in a world where "no" was the word most often heard in our early lives. We have been pounded by global bad news ad nauseum. We adopted risk-averse and super-sober behavior in business to seem more responsible and grown-up to others. All too often the nod was given to a leader who talked slowly and had reservations about almost everything. Certainly, we could trust a person like that! Yes, you can if you want to have a cautious, low-grade experience of life on the *Angst* trail. It has been a constant struggle to keep the vision elements out of the "We have a problem world" and into the "We have a dream world." I assure you the motivational octane that comes as a result of a focus on faith is worth the risk.

HAVING FAITH IN FAITH

I'd like to report on a project I have been working on for four years now. It is a social architecture experiment to see if the physical and social environment designed around people can significantly raise their state of being to a very high level of joy and excellence. You have no doubt experienced a Renaissance Faire. That is a good picture with which to begin.

At the edge of my property I created an amphitheatre that seats 200 people in grass swales or little bowls big enough for a family or small group of friends. Each equinox and solstice we develop and offer a theme-based gathering so people can come in costume and exercise their unseasoned talents in front of others. We say we are staging the genius of others. The place is called Artesia.

After performance number 11, something called "The Goddess and Ra," where a very spontaneous and divinely inspired series of performances from amateurs ensued, it seems we had created just the environment for which we had hoped. We attended to some two dozen dimensions, like sound, lights, sequence, fires, flags, color, costumes and the like. But, the feedback we got was very insightful.

One man said he had been in Golden Gate Park during the "summer of love" in the sixties, and he had not felt that level of innocence since then.

I believe that key phrase is at the heart of pure faith and trust. When all about you is serenely safe and loving and will accept your performance no matter

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how it turns out, you can be called an innocent. Of course, if the whole group is switched on, what happens next is that all the performances -- singing, dancing, storytelling, stand-up comedy, fire juggling and the like are simply impeccable -- and all performed by amateurs in an energy field that has the potency of pure faith in it. This energy field can be assembled as surely as you can make any meal with a dozen ingredients in it. We are so numbed by the assembly line that we have lost the sense of combining the parts and stirring them up all in one space. I wanted to signal here that the code-breaking human state in our experiment was innocence.

GET A LIFE

Have you ever experienced someone who operates almost continuously in the positive? How about someone who remains in a state of innocence about the positive? How about someone who deliberately imagines every part of their life in the most positive way possible? I am sure that there are almost no young people in the world that are schooled in this way. The exceptions are some home-schooled kids. We train kids to be grown-ups filled with abstract and largely outdated ideas as if that particular state of being had been thoughtfully examined. It's a formula for a mediocre and cautious existence.

If you combine what I just mentioned:

- the continuous positive focus
- a state of innocence and openness
- categorical positive imagining

...then you would be getting close to what I mean when I say EXTREME optimism. A recent book on the subject of [PRONOIA](#) was written by [astrologer Rob Breznay](#).

In our last Global MindChange Forum Robert Muller gave us a very real example of the need for humanity to focus on paradise as a higher purpose and the selection of happiness as a super-ordinate goal.

Now, in most business circles, those kinds of ideas would fall into the category of wishful thinking. But, it is important to understand that any vision-based approach is by definition wishful thinking. The sober grown-up, risk averse corporate mindset that continues to be accepted as the norm is a serious block to wishful thinking. I think most of us recognize that. What we don't recognize as a consequence is just how far we need to kick ourselves out of the box to get anywhere near wishful thinking. I often hear the vision called that big hairy audacious idea just to give it a little macho push, but the fact remains that seeing the optimum in each part of our lives takes some time and a serious shift in our daily mindset. The same is true for global mind change.

While composing the thinking of the Fellows for the 100-year vision of the planet for PROJECT EARTHRISE, I am continually tricked into lowering all the high-minded vision ideas to practical and more solution-based phrases. Because that's the way I keep hearing things expressed!



It is so important to hear someone like Robert Muller, who has rowed the boat for so many years with the planet's foremost problem-solving institution, the United Nations, say that paradise is a real objective opportunity and happiness is no less important as a target. This is just the right centerpiece we need to keep the majority of our focus on the real prize. By the way, Robert continues to practice the collection of [positive options](#) for the planet. This is the skill I just mentioned above, that keeps us alert for the best possible options. His list now numbers in the thousands. So, if happiness and paradise-on-earth are the two things he now chooses to focus on as possible and important, that is great news for the centerpiece in our positive global vision for the next 100 years.

Recently, I decided to look for grant money so I could take the EARTHRISE ideas further into fully animated future projections. To my shock I found that few of the great granting institutions had a positive visionary focus on the planet we want. Then when I did the math on how many institutions we pay to guard us from the future we don't want or are afraid we will get, the figures went into the trillions. Just start with the defense departments of most nations and go from there to every kind of insurance you can imagine, on your home, your car, your life, etc. We are investing in the future we are afraid we are going to get. Wow! This is global psychosis writ large!

When I try to put myself in Robert's shoes, I understand what a paradox it is to remain in a state of wonder and innocence and, at the same time, try to urge others to get on the train! Try being urgent and innocent at the same time.

Can you appreciate the exclusive investment we have in the promise of failure in our future? Do you see the value of PROJECT EARTHRISE? Thank you so much, Jerry, Diane, and Robert.

I can [hear Robert's harmonica going strong now](#). *Ode to Joy* is ringing in my ears. Go planet!

About the author: Recognized worldwide as the original pioneer of the corporate visioning process, Jim Channon has been a trusted strategic designer for ten of the world's hundred largest companies. He was the lead futurist and educational technologist for the U.S. Army. Jim has been described as a cross between Buckminster Fuller and Walt Disney. He created advanced visual language (AVL) and the virtual reality exercise (VRX). He has done cultural voyaging with tribal groups worldwide. Currently his social architecture looks toward a new Pacific renaissance. Jim recently produced a 30-hour theatrical outdoor adventure for 300 business people in the great central desert in Western Australia. He is a lover of life, the fastest magic marker on the planet, and a spell-binding story teller.

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