



# Business as the Premier Evolutionary Agent

by Barbara Marx Hubbard

***Editor's Note:***

*At the Global MindChange Forum in Santa Barbara in September 2005, Academy Fellow **Barbara Marx Hubbard** offered her interpretation of the role of business from an evolutionary and ontological perspective. She outlined four major trends with which we can make sense of the currently chaotic times, and suggested a tactic for social convergence as a method for dealing with the serious challenges we face.*

## We have gained powers we attributed to gods.

Everybody here is moving toward collaboration, oneness, and co-creation. This group today is already animated by Spirit, and since our theme is "Spirit in the Workplace," I wanted to broaden the context. I would like us to think of spirit in the 14 billion years of evolution that got us here.

That's not usually the way we talk about Spirit. Nonetheless, I would first like to put forward a very deep and emergent experience of the dynamism of Spirit. It has completely moved me from being a Jewish agnostic Episcopalian [laughter] to an evolutionary soul who feels within herself that her own urge to express, to create, to participate and connect is actually the localized impulse of evolution.

I would like to give you a very brief view of this, as it comes from the great sage [Aurabindo](#). He thought there were two forms of consciousness. The first is pure awareness: changeless, eternal, a unified field out of which everything arises.

The second he called Consciousness Force. Consciousness Force is dynamic, intentional, and creative of everything that was, is, and will be. It's not an externalized deity. It's not accident and natural laws alone. It's the imminent intelligence of the universe manifested in the exquisite intelligence of atoms, molecules, and cells. Those entities are exquisitely intelligent, but they do not know how intelligent they are. Over these billions of years, as that Consciousness emerged in ever more complex organisms, finally a human being arose. Let's say it was about 40,000 years ago that *homo sapiens* stepped forward with self-reflective consciousness. That was a huge step in evolution. Here is what I think has happened....

In the 40,000 years since we gained self-reflective consciousness, we have actually learned to individuate. The pain and the glory of the 40,000 years have played out in the tremendous breakthroughs our species has made, from Paleolithic artists, and then cultures, and religions.... Suddenly that Spirit broke through into the consciousness of individual beings. They transcended self-consciousness and the result was religion. These people founded all the religions of the world. In founding these faiths, these people had a direct experience of what I am calling Spirit in its many versions. When we get to the present day, we see Spirit in creativity, co-creation, and connectivity. This will hold true until we can become co-creators with the Divine.

Through history we follow the growth of religions, through the development of democracy, and the development of science, when the mind begins to penetrate deep into the processes of nature – the atom, the gene, the brain. We perform an act of separation. We say here is matter, and spirit is somewhere else.

We have gained powers that we used to attribute to gods. It started in 1945 when the United States dropped the atomic bombs on Japan. We were separated from that power. We used those powers for destruction and force, and we thought we could get away with it. In the '60s we went up into space. We looked back from space and saw the Earth as one living body. And we actually fell in love with ourselves as a whole. I cried at the lunar landing because we had seen ourselves as a physical species becoming physically universal, and we had seen ourselves as one living body. The lunar landing in 1969, Earth Day 1970, the whole environmental movement woke up, women woke up, the whole body started to wake up to something internal. And the problems increased. The en-

environmental problems increased. The military problems increased. The terrorist problems increased. It's so interesting because we had thought in the '60s that we would be a global village by now. Do you remember the '60s? What happened? We thought we would have the shorter work week, everybody would be free, understanding would be growing.

Instead we have had this uprising of separation, of pain, of terrorism, and the even deeper threat of total environmental disaster. It's not just these few hurricanes; if you listen to the warnings of global warming itself, the human species is about to face its own crises for which self-conscious humans with all this power in a closed-system Earth cannot handle.

Here is what I think is happening for the wise of spirit in the workplace, very broadly defined. If you think of planet earth as one living system, you think of all of us as living members of a living planetary body. The body is going through what they call a macroshift. The entire system is now far from equilibrium, and that includes every sector of it. As it gets further from equilibrium, it forms small islands of coherence. When it is this far from balance, a system can jump into a higher order, or into a disaster.

Over the last four or five years I think we have been seeing things as getting worse. This is the effect of that macroshift. If you start at the core of the evolutionary spiral, we find that [it is] Consciousness Force that's been creating everything that was, is, and will be. It has been breaking through into human minds, through its very special avatars, religions, mystical experiences. Millions of us experience this as our own internalized connection with Spirit.

I envision this as a sort of graphical image: Earth, life, animal life, and human life now are going around the next turn in the spiral. Here is the Consciousness Force driving through every one of these turns on the spiral. Here is where we are. And I call this Spirit. Here are all the organized religions of the world that came from Spirit. This is the living body of earth upon which we place all kinds of demands if we actually are going to be agents of creativity, agents of evolution.

We have here business. We have here health. We have here education... here environment. We who are motivated by Spirit are being activated from within by intentionality, creativity, life purpose, and the desire to express and create in oneness with that which is motivating us. We are called to different sectors of the social body. That call has to do with the unique genius code of each person. When you get anywhere near aligning with the impulse of creativity within yourself, as I am sure most people in this room have, you experience what I call "vocational arousal." [Laughter]. You get turned on! You get awakened. Instead of wanting to join your genes to have a baby, you want to join your genius to give birth to the greater self, and to the work.

And so, the desire for connectivity and co-creativity that is arising everywhere – and certainly within the workplace – is as powerful, I believe, as the drive for self-reproduction. It is the drive for self-evolution. Particularly in women, as we are living longer lives and having fewer children. When vocational arousal strikes a post-menopausal woman, look out!

Diane Cirincione and I are working on a book called *Regenopause*. Regenopause

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## Nature takes quantum jumps.

is the awakening from a pause in the life cycle of the feminine, which gets turned on.

The main point is that Consciousness Force, arising up through the atomic, the molecular, the earth, the animals, the early humans, and the great religions, is now breaking through the life of creating a world that is actually sustainable and viable. Alternatively, we will witness the self-destruction of our species.

In evolution, this is a very common realization. Nature provides three or four lessons that we can learn and apply, and we can open this up for conversation.

First of all, Nature takes quantum jumps. Quantum jumps are nature's tradition. There was no earth, and there was earth. There was no life, and there was life. There were no humans and no animals, and then there were animals and no humans. And then we appeared, so we can imagine that whatever is coming around this turn of the spiral is going to be a quantum jump. The nature of the quantum jump is higher consciousness and greater freedom through more connectivity and complex order. That's from Teilhard de Chardin.

This is very good news. We are heading into a quantum jump. It's the first time in the history of this planet that a conscious species was evolving by its own action, or could destroy itself or transform itself. I think that is the evolution of evolution....from unconscious to conscious choice. As far as Planet Earth goes, this is the history of the universe and it is the greatest event since the origin of life. This is life becoming conscious of the processes that create life, and recognizing that it has to guard that power, or it will self-destruct.

At the time of quantum transformation, there is another lesson which you will see at every time of those jumps: crises precede transformation. Problems are evolutionary drives. This gives you a whole different way of looking at the crisis as it deepens, as it becomes apparent that we cannot solve these problems by applying more of the same bureaucratic-dominated structure (whether it be Republican or Democrat, for example, in this country). We have recently learned we really can't look to the other party. We can't look to local or state government alone to handle this because their structure makes it almost impossible for them to do it. The connectivity, the transparency, the courage, and the willingness are structured out of government. So, crisis precedes transformation.

Here is the next lesson. Nature takes greater jumps to synergy. Atoms make molecules. Molecules make cells. Cells make multi-cellular creatures. We are over a hundred trillion cells organized as bodies. Planet Earth is becoming extremely complex. It is integrating at every step of the way, not because we have been getting along. It's because this integration is in our *nature*.

Nature takes these jumps toward greater synergy when it is pressed; separate parts come together to form whole new systems; and out of that synergy comes something unpredictable and unknown by the sum of the parts. At this moment I would say this is a normal event.

I am the mother of five children. I have often thought, if I were heading to the delivery room and never heard of birth, that I would have believed I was dying. When I saw the baby I would really be horrified! If we don't have any sense that we may be pressed by the very difficulty of these challenges, to take a jump towards something, I don't think we can make it through to the other side. I just

want to say briefly that if crisis precedes transformation, and if we take jumps to greater synergy, let's take one moment to look at this and then come back and see how we can do it now. How can we facilitate greater synergies?

I want to enter Jim Channon's field for a moment. He's a dear friend of mine. I am going to make a quantum leap and imagine we made it through, so that I can have my strange attractor out there. Here is the way I put it in one sentence: *Planet Earth is giving birth to a universal species capable of co-evolving with nature and co-creating the spirit.*

The phrase "co-creating the Spirit" would mean that the spiritual impulse in you and me, which is our localized and personalized expression of the Divine process of creation, expresses itself so clearly *as* us – not even *in* us anymore – that your word, your gesture, your deed, your work, *is* you. It is Spirit incarnate. This is the way the universe shows up as a person. I call that a universal human. Within this possibility of the next turn of the spiral as a universal humanity, in every culture, every faith, every discipline, in every place, there now are emerging beings who feel innately connected to the heart and the whole of life.

We don't have to be told to be connected in that sense. We want to be connected. We are awakened from within by the passion to create and express and participate and give our gift. Is that true of most people in the room? These are people who are cosmic in their consciousness, who realize the universe is living, and that we are more than just physical substance. I believe that we are "specified." Why? *Homo erectus? Homo habilis? Homo Neanderthal? Homo sapiens? Homo sapiens sapiens? Homo universalis.* Every one of us who is being turned on is being pressed forward by the planetary factor we call the macroshift. We cannot look to any existing bureaucracy to do this for us. This is actually a good thing, because we would depend on them immediately and we are so used to giving in to authority. But there is no authority other than the emerging consciousness, the emerging person. I would like to conclude with this thought... social synergy.

We are all structured for competitive separation as part of our journey. I have something to share with you that actually is vital and could make a difference right now.

I would like to imagine the following, which is actually in process as we speak. I call this the Wheel of Co-creation. On the Internet it exists in an almost complete form. Let's imagine that here's the business group. Here's the health group. Here's education. Here's government. We're identifying the exact kind of people who are in this room. This is exactly what Willis Harman and Rinaldo are calling for: people within the field of business who are emerging universal humans. Imagine that there are already projects that are demonstrating the emerging world. This is true in every field. It's shocking to me that in this entire evolutionary, transformational spiritual movement, the teams don't know what each other is doing. The people who are more Fundamentalist know what each other is doing. We have a lot of order. We have chaos, but we could be chaordic. I am suggesting we move from chaos to chaord. Imagine that we are going to build an Internet, a way for those leaders to be noticed.

Take Hazel Henderson, for example. In the field of economics I have seen her Rolodex. It is an incredible network of thousands of people. Not just people!

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*Groups!* They are already doing these various things. You talk to Andrew Weil in health. [He] networks thousands and thousands of people in health who are already successfully doing it. So the vision here is that we would on the Internet and in person begin to put this wheel together.

I ran for Vice President of the United States in 1984. I proposed that there be in the Office of the Vice President a Peace Room as sophisticated as a war room. In this room you could scan maps that displayed and provided communications links with everything that's working in the world. Two hundred delegates signed a petition to place my name in nomination. I mention that only because it's popular to say we are going to connect what works. I actually cannot imagine why we haven't done it yet. But let's just assume we're doing that and the innovations that work are in here, and let's assume that all those people who want to participate are invited to state their dream and their vision. And the computer helps to network it. We could, easily, within the next five years connect that which is creative, emergent, compassionate, and loving; and as we say in evolution: we could have a non-linear, exponential interaction of innovating elements.

How did we get up the chain of life? This is Ilya Prigogine with his theory of [dissipative structure](#) against this entropy or disorder. How do we manage? Well, when a system becomes dysfunctional it can get into novel interactions. That is an innate tendency. It's in our *nature*.

If anybody says to me, "Barbara, you're really idealistic," I respond, "How idealistic do you think it is that we got from subatomic particles to you and me? Who did that? How did that happen?" I believe that we have the possibility of becoming a universal species. All the great mystics, the great seers and visionaries have had glimpses of it, but they were all pre-scientific. This will not occur until you get the combination of spiritual attunement, social synergy, and scientific evolution geared toward the quantum capacity of humanity to co-evolve with nature – meaning restore the Earth, free the people, and deal with the immediate problems. Paradise was a pre-scientific, pre-evolutionary vision of the next stage of evolution.

If you read the Bible you see things like, "The former things are passed away. You will do the works that I did and greater works than these will you do. Behold I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep. We shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound." (1 Corinthians) Oh my God! As a Jewish agnostic Episcopal person I read that and said, "That's coded evolution! Maybe Jesus was a universal human!" I hope I am not offending anyone, but I actually think he was a quantum jump.

Buddha was a quantum jump. Back then, the rest of us weren't jumping. Now, my point is, we are. The crisis is ripe and we are in late transition on Planet Earth. Everybody here is a leader of transition. Transition is now accelerating so rapidly that if we don't go into a non-linear activity it won't work.

In Washington I started out at the Department of Peace. Sen. Dennis Kucinich is proposing legislation for a Department of Peace. There were 400 people all going to go to their members of Congress to get them to agree to pass this legislation, which we're told doesn't have a chance. We're all excited about this legislation. It's wonderful. It's obvious. But I suggested, for example, why don't

the people who are for the Department of Peace meet in their congressional districts and bring their community together to look for the goals, needs, and resources and *be* the peace? Gandhi said "Be the change you want to see in the world." I think if crisis precedes evolution, and synergy is the response, why not cultivate synergy among the movement, and [then] bring the bureaucrats in? If you try to go into a bureaucracy and change it, you can get lost in there.

Ed Mitchell, the astronaut, was at one of our [syncons](#)<sup>1</sup>, and we actually took down walls between sectors. People were attracted to each other: black power leaders and white Southerners and nuclear physicists and Oregonian environmentalists, people who really didn't like each other. Something happened. I began to see that the word "synergy" at the social level is love. The nature of spirit that would attract atoms to atoms, molecules to molecules, and cells to cells will work on us if we take down the walls that divide us structurally.

The business sector of the wheel may have the greatest power to be an agency of evolution, for many reasons. Let's have a dialogue about what you see about this model, and how business could be empowering and empowered to serve at whatever scale you think is possible.

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## About the Author:

Dr. Barbara Marx Hubbard has been a pioneer in positive options for the future for the past 35 years. A public speaker, author, social innovator and evolutionary teacher, she is President and Executive Director of the Foundation for Conscious Evolution.

She has been instrumental in the founding of many important organizations and initiatives including the World Future Society, New Dimensions Radio, Global Family, Women of Vision in Action, the Foundation for the Future, the Association for Global New Thought and The Alliance for the Advancement of Conscious Evolution. She was awarded the first Doctorate in Conscious Evolution by Emerson Institute.

Barbara has authored five books: *The Hunger of Eve: One Woman's Odyssey toward the Future*; *The Evolutionary Journey: Your Guide to a Positive Future*; *Revelation: Our Crisis is a Birth*; *Conscious Evolution: Awakening the Power of Our Social Potential*; *Emergence: The Shift from Ego to Essence: 10 Steps to the Universal Human*.

Her [EVOLVE website \(www.evolve.org\)](http://www.evolve.org) (a Global Community Center for Conscious Evolution) serves as an education, resource and communication hub to foster synergy and cooperation among organizations and communities worldwide. She has launched the first on-line evolutionary educational program (available within EVOLVE) called Gateway to Conscious Evolution. It offers a new developmental path to the next stage of human evolution, linking global participants with key ideas and innovators now building a positive future.

1. SYnergistic CONvergence: A meeting format designed to help stakeholders shape the future of their community. It is divided by functional areas of concern – health, business, economics, education, government, environment, science and technology, arts and media, etc. – in order to discover common goals, identify community needs, and match those needs with known and required resources.