PLANETARY PHILOSOPHY:
An Essay

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PLANETARY PHILOSOPHY

I have undertaken a life-long quest to find a philosophy that I can believe in and that I can trust to guide me in my experiences, my thinking, and my actions. It’s been a long and windy road, but, in the end, I have finally succeeded in finding this philosophy. One of the points of writing this essay is to formulate and clarify it for myself. The other point is to share it with you in the hope that it’s helpful for you as well.

If you are already clear on your philosophy, then we can compare notes. If you haven’t found your philosophy yet, then you may find mine of some assistance to you in creating your own. I encourage you to try out the three principles of Planetary Philosophy, as I’ve formulated them, to see how they work for you. Also, I’ve found some mental tools that are being very useful to me and they may be helpful to you as well.

Although I’m now at peace with this philosophy in a way that I’ve never been before, I’m clear that where I’ve gotten is just a way station on a much longer and more difficult journey that we all are taking. We have much farther to go and we all need each other’s help to get to the next stage of our travels.

In this essay, I’m going to begin by presenting the three principles of Planetary Philosophy. Then I’m going to step back and discuss philosophy and the philosophy of science. With that basis laid, I’ll go on to explore a philosophy of consciousness and a philosophy of capitalism with you. I’ll conclude with some thoughts on the evolving Planetary Movement. So, to begin with, here is my formulation of Planetary Philosophy, which, I believe, can be a philosophy for our times.
PART ONE: A Philosophy for our Times

It appears that the Earth is in a transition that could lead to a new, higher level of organization and, in Pierre de Chardin’s sense, “interiorization”, producing a new emergent consciousness. This transition is like what happened when cells evolved to form individual insects and plants and animals and, eventually, humans. And, these individuals came to have a coherent consciousness that could guide the – now unified – collection of cells.

It appears that humanity is a key vehicle for this new higher level of organization for the Earth. However, the Earth is at a very unstable point in its evolution. In a systems theory context it will either evolve or devolve now.

So, in order to survive, individual humans have to evolve to the next level of consciousness and connect to form the emergent Earth’s next level of organization and coherence. Let’s call that “Planetary Consciousness.” (We’ll come back to Planetary Consciousness in detail in Part Three of this essay.)

To succeed, this Planetary Consciousness needs to be expressed in a straightforward unifying philosophy – a Planetary Philosophy – with a set of simple, self-evident, powerful core principles (assumptions) that are so clear and so self-evident that it is virtually impossible for anyone to deny them. And these principles need to provide clear guidance so that anyone and everyone can immediately understand whether an action contributes to evolution or devolution. What are these principles? I’ve found three.
One Planet

The first principle of Planetary Philosophy is One Planet. We all need to realize that we are One Planet.

Each human being has a body that is made of the Earth. We are made up of the elements of the Earth. We are not something outside of the Earth. Our bones, our blood, our muscles, all of our cells are composed of portions of the Earth. These elements from the Earth are still part of the Earth even as they are composing our bodies.

Where is the boundary between our little portion of the Earth that is our body and the rest of the Earth? We are continually breathing in air from the Earth and breathing out air into the Earth. We are continually eating and drinking parts of the Earth and then giving back feces and urine to the Earth. We are continually seeing and hearing and smelling and tasting and touching parts of the Earth and we are continually taking actions that affect the Earth, picking something up, opening a door, digging in a garden, or driving a car.
There is no place where it is possible to draw a line and say that is where I begin and the Earth stops – that is where the Earth begins and I stop. Intellectually, we know this is true. According to relativity physics, we know that everything is connected and an action any place affects every place, at least a little bit. Also, according to ecology, any action affects the whole ecology, at least a little bit. And, it is certainly clear that the Earth is one ecology.

So, we are a part of the Earth and the Earth is a part of us. What we experience is something that the Earth is experiencing. Our experience is the Earth experiencing other aspects of itself. Each of us lives a life that is one strand woven together to form the fabric made up of all of the strands of all of the lives of everything alive on Earth.

We cannot, we must not deny that everything that we do to the Earth we do to ourselves. Everything that everyone does to the Earth they do to us. If we humans disrupt the very narrow and very fragile tolerances that permit human life on Earth, then the result will be that the part of the Earth that is humanity will cease to exist. If we disrupt the narrow and fragile tolerances that permit organic life on Earth, then the result will be that the part of the Earth that is organic life will cease to exist.

And humans now certainly are forces for disruption. Climate change, massive pollution, forest destruction, and species extinction are all symptoms of this disruption. It is almost as if we are at war with the Earth, which means we are at war with ourselves.

What we do to the Earth, we do to ourselves. There is no separation. We need to make peace with the planet. Let’s call this aspect of Planetary Philosophy “One Planet.”
One People

The second principle of Planetary Philosophy is One People. In addition to understanding that we are One Planet, we also need to realize that we are One People.

Without question the fact that we are one species, one people, has to be true, because we are all part of the one Earth. Since the body of each human being is made of the one Earth, we are all intimately linked together.

Since anything that any member of the human species does affects the Earth; and, since the Earth forms the body of every member of the human species; and, since anything that affects a part of the Earth affects all of the Earth; therefore, anything that any member of the human species does affects every other member of the human species.

But we are one people much more intimately than that. We are one people because we come from common ancestors and, as members of the human species, we share 99.9% of our DNA – 99.9% of our genetic make-up unites us and only 00.09% divides us. At any moment any cell or any virus in the body of any human being could mutate to become a virulent disease that could become a pandemic that could potentially kill every other member of the human species. In this sense, we live or die as One People.

Inventions, like the telephone, the light bulb, and the internet rapidly diffuse throughout the human species. One terrorist with nuclear weapons could destroy an awful lot of us. A few of us in political leadership can make peace or start a war. A few of us in economic leadership can create prosperity or poverty for the rest of us.
The health and wellbeing of each individual in the human species profoundly affects the health and wellbeing of the whole species. The human species is going to survive as a whole – not just some dominant part of the species.

What we do to each other we do to us all, to the whole species. Let’s call this aspect of Planetary Philosophy “One People.”
One Purpose

The third principle of Planetary Philosophy is One Purpose. It is the responsibility of each individual human alive right now to be part of the solution or else he or she is part of the problem.

According to Systems Theory, when a system in a steady state of equilibrium takes in too much new content – new forces, new elements, new relationships – it goes into a state of disequilibrium, which is unstable. At that point, the system has to evolve and transform to a new, higher form of organization or else devolve into a new, lower form of organization.

The Earth is a system. The human species is a sub-system of the Earth. The system of the Earth and the sub-system of the human species have entered a state of profound disequilibrium. Humanity and the Earth must now either evolve to a higher level of organization or devolve to a lower level of organization.

We see the instability caused by and causing this disequilibrium wherever we look – climate change; habitat destruction and species die-off; failing and failed states; poverty, hunger, and disease; economic recession; wars and the threat of larger wars. Half of us, over 3 billion of us, live each day on less than it costs for a cup of coffee and 24,000 children die each day because they are so poor.

We need a new and better system for the human species and the Earth, a system that yields:
Peace among people and peace with the Earth.

Health and wellbeing for all people on a healthy planet.

An opportunity for each person to live a satisfying and creative life and make a contribution to the whole.

We need to evolve to a higher level of organization or the Earth is going to devolve to a lower level of organization as a planet, which may take it outside of the narrow tolerances required for human life, if it comes to that.

The time is short. We all have to act right now. Let’s call this aspect of Planetary Philosophy “One Purpose.”

In One Planet, One People, One Purpose, I have found a philosophy that I can believe in and that can guide my thinking and my actions. In fact, I would contend that the three principles of Planetary Philosophy can provide the foundation for a Planetary Movement that everyone alive can join. Every religion, every nation, every ethnic group can find its place on our One Planet as an aspect of our One People embracing our One Purpose.

So, given that these facts are so clearly true, how do we make the transformation? How do we realize our One Purpose as One People sharing our One Planet? How do we build a Planetary Movement strong enough to accomplish our One Purpose? I’m going to give you my answers to this question in Part Five.

But first, I’m going to share with you how I have used the perspective of Planetary Philosophy to formulate a philosophy of consciousness and a philosophy of capitalism.
PART TWO: Rediscovering Philosophy

It’s clear that the human species is in trouble around the world and, I believe, that one of the most important reasons for this is that we lack a unifying understanding of our situation and unifying vision to guide our actions.

So what is to be done?

At a very basic level, humanity needs a clear, coherent, effective philosophy for our times – one that helps make sense out of the situation that we are in and helps identify and direct the actions that we need to take.

To pursue such a philosophy, it’s important to take a hard look at the philosophy that most of us share now at least in part and to some degree. That is the scientific philosophy.
Science

In the mid-twentieth century, a philosophical school called “Logical Positivism” asserted that the science provided the only true knowledge. That school suggested that we should stop considering metaphysical questions (about how to understand the nature of our world and ourselves and anything spiritual and how to choose the best actions to take). Rather, Logical Positivism suggested that we should use the scientific method (verifiable, replicable experiment to formulate mostly mathematically expressed laws of nature) to answer all questions.

Because of the many successes of science, Logical Positivism was popular for a little while, until some philosophers of science noticed that there was no way to use the scientific method to prove that the scientific method provided the only true knowledge. That assertion, the core insight of anti-metaphysical Logical Positivism, was a metaphysical one. Oops.

Logical Positivism lost the argument philosophically, but, unfortunately, by and large in practice it still holds sway with the scientific community and with the popular imagination of a significant portion of the population. In the popular imagination of those who do not look to religion as the source of secure knowledge, the scientific method is assumed to be pretty much the only way to produce virtually certain knowledge. What we know using science is what is known. What we don’t know yet will someday be known if we pursue the scientific method.

This prejudice in favor of the scientific method and against metaphysical philosophy, has led to some very serious conceptual problems. For example, most science is based on a mechanistic-deterministic model of the universe. According to this, mostly hidden, assumption, the universe is like a machine (or more recently, a computer) that somehow made and continues to make itself. The way this universal machine functions can be understood if a group of people carefully
observe it, share their observations, and formulate its rules using mathematical equations that then can predict how the machine (computer) will function in the future.

Science, guided by this mostly implicit philosophy, has produced some very significant understandings. It has also provided the basis for some very impressive technologies (specialized machines/computers taking advantage of an understanding of the rules of the universal machine/computer).

Unfortunately, the whole human experience suggests that machines (and computers) don’t make themselves. Rather they are made by people. So we should not get too enamored of the rather naive assumption that the universe is like a machine/computer that makes and keeps on making itself, even given the technological successes and the predictability of the laws of physics stemming from this approach.

So, where has this combination of the scientific method and the partially buried assumption of the mechanistic-deterministic model of explanation gotten us? It’s gotten us into a bit of a mess.
The Limits of Scientific Knowledge

Let’s look at what orthodox science says to us about ourselves and the world we live in. It all started with the “Big Bang,” when a virtually infinitely small and virtually infinitely dense particle of some unknown substance exploded for an unknown reason and launched the universe.

What surrounded that primordial particle is unknown. What came before that primordial particle is unknown. Where the universe is headed, as it expands in all directions, is unknown. The expansion does seem to be speeding up, though no one knows why. The universe is composed, among other things, of billions of galaxies made up of billions of stars. It appears that there is a “Black Hole” (a concentration of gravity so powerful that light can’t escape from it) at the center of each galaxy, but science doesn’t know anything about what is going on inside any of these Black Holes.

For the equations of astro-physics to work, scientists have had to postulate that most of the universe is composed of dark matter, an unknown substance that has never been directly experienced in any way, and also of dark energy, another completely unknown substance. According to the NASA website, “It turns out that roughly 70% of the Universe is dark energy. Dark matter makes up about 25%. The rest – everything on Earth, everything ever observed with all of our instruments – all normal matter adds up to less than 5% of the Universe.”

Things are similarly opaque at smallest levels of sub-atomic quantum physics, where the mechanistic/deterministic model of explanation has become the mechanistic/probabilistic model of explanation, which sees the smallest energy units, quanta, as having the characteristics of both waves and particles, with measurement difficulties.
It takes at least a quantum of energy to measure a quantum of energy and the act of measurement changes the system, so all knowledge must become approximate and take into consideration the observer. Some scientists hold the view that all of the possible states of a quantum system exist in a multiverse of many parallel universes. However, why any of this should be so is left unexplained. Are there many universes? If so, why is this so? How many universes are there? Why and how do they interpenetrate each other? These are all questions that have not been answered.

The situation isn’t much better when it comes to time. According to Einstein’s equations, time could just as well flow backward as forward. There is no explanation as to why time flows from past to future. One of the most significant, largely hidden assumptions of orthodox science has been that the future will, in essential respects, be like the past. All of the “laws of science” assume that the future will be the same as the past in respect to these laws (the deterministic aspect of the mechanistic/deterministic model of explanation). Yet there is no explanation for why the future should be essentially like the past.

At the quantum level, the laws become formulations governing probabilities rather than certainties. It’s clear that, in many respects, the future is different from the past. However, the most basic question of why some aspects of the future are different from the past and some aren’t, remains unexplored. For that matter, there is no explanation for why numbers and mathematical equations can describe and predict the behavior of many aspects of the universe/multiverse.

Einstein showed that matter can be transformed into energy and that the amount of energy would be the square of the speed of light. The atomic bomb was a dramatic demonstration that Einstein was correct in his assertion, but why is it that, when matter transforms into energy, the amount of energy produced is the amount of matter times the square of the speed of light? Why does light move at the constant speed that Einstein formulated? Can anything move faster than the speed of light? Science doesn’t know.

Life is an emergent property in relation to the agglomerations of chemicals that compose any living system, but science hasn’t been able to produce life from chemicals or to explain either how or why it happens. The 2nd law of thermodynamics posits that all systems tend to degrade into their simpler and simpler components, yet the whole of evolution is the story of increasingly complex systems, with emergent properties that can’t be predicted based on their component parts, building on their predecessors to produce new complexity with different newly emergent properties. This is clearly a huge, unexplained, violation of the 2nd law of thermodynamics.

I could go on, but I think the point is made. The scientific method with its mechanistic/deterministic/probabilistic metaphysics has produced a significant amount of knowledge surrounded by a much vaster amount of ignorance.
The scientific method involves making precise, verified observations about some aspects of the external world, formulating usually mathematically expressed ‘laws’ about the relationships between those aspects of the external world, and then, based on those laws, making precise, verifiable predictions about observations of what will happen in the future in relation to those aspects of the external world. It is essential that the observations can be repeated by comparably situated observers.

However, as the Heisenberg Principle has demonstrated at the quantum level and the placebo effect has demonstrated at the level of medical trials, all observation has an effect on what is observed. In fact, what the scientific method does is try to minimize that effect, so as to be able to obtain results that are approximately verifiable by different observers using similar procedures.

In fact, the problem goes much deeper. The scientific method tries to correct for the impact of the act of observation on what is being observed, but it assumes that the future will be essentially the same as the past, at least as regards the aspects of the external world being observed.

If you are studying magnetism and observing magnets and formulating laws about magnetic polarity and then predicting the behavior of magnets in the future, you are assuming that the universe will stay constant, at least as it relates to magnetism, in the future. If the nature of the universe as it relates to magnetism were to change in the future, your predictions wouldn’t be accurate and, therefore, your laws would be wrong.

The hidden assumption about time probably won’t trip you up in relation to predictions about magnetism, but that hidden assumption about time may be very significant in relation to emergent phenomena. That’s why it’s much harder to predict the economic and political behavior of human beings. The hidden assumption that things will be the same in the future, in relation to what is being studied, as they were in the past may very well be, and often is, wrong in relation to human behavior.

The problem goes deeper still. The scientific method was designed to use precise observations to focus on the external world. But it’s hard to study the nature of consciousness that way. Yet, everything we know about any aspect of the universe comes through our consciousness. Research on how the brain works is exploding and extremely interesting, but all that knowledge comes through the consciousness of the brain researchers and comes to us through our consciousness.

So, we have come full circle to something analogous to the Logical Positivist’s conundrum. Consciousness is required for the scientific method to operate, but the scientific method (with its mechanic deterministic/probabilistic metaphysics) based on objective observation, can’t directly study the consciousness that is central to its operation. Science isn’t going to get us out of this problem. Philosophy is.
Reenter Philosophy

The scientific method is a set of assumptions that are used to produce knowledge, but these assumptions themselves are not amenable to experimental verification. They are what set the ground rules for experimental verification. Dealing with those and other assumptions and their limitations and problems is the territory of philosophy. Philosophy is about how to make and test and use assumptions. It has its own craft.

As Western culture emerged out of the Middle Ages, the Medieval Universities offered four kinds of doctor’s degrees, theology, medicine, law, and philosophy. Theology addressed God and religion, medicine – the human body, law – the rules of society, and philosophy – the natural world. As the Middle Ages evolved into the modern era, science gradually emerged from philosophy. Eventually, like some mythological Greek god, science devoured its parent.

Science grew out of philosophy and then lost touch with it. Now science would greatly benefit from the rediscovery of the craft of philosophy. So, what happens if we start to take metaphysical philosophy seriously and use the craft of philosophy to examine our situation?
Philosophy deals with basic assumptions about ourselves and the world we live in: how we choose them; how we organize them; and how we use them to guide us. Originally, Philosophy had three main branches: 1) Ontology, which focused on the nature of being and the types of existence; 2) Epistemology, which delved into what constitutes knowledge and how to know; and 3) Axiology, which considered values, morality and how to act.

**Ontological Questions:** Ontology asks questions like:

Is the universe essentially a machine that God made? Perhaps it’s a machine that somehow made itself.

Maybe the universe is an idea in the mind of God. Maybe the universe is an idea thinking itself. Maybe the universe is just my idea and there really is nothing else.

How about the possibility that the universe is an organism that God initiated or the possibility that it is an organism that is evolving itself?

Is the universe a pattern of vibrations sung by God or singing itself?

What is the essence of time, of space, of energy, of matter, of life, and of death?

What is before birth and after death?

**Epistemological Questions:** Epistemology explores questions like:

Does knowledge come from sense experience or from rational consideration or both?

Will knowledge emerge from reflection on the experiences presented by the outer senses (vision, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling) or reflection on the experiences of the inner senses (kinesthetic awareness, inner seeing, inner hearing, meditation visions, and lucid dreams) or both?

How do we determine whether our experiences conform to a reality outside of us?

Can the mind give us accurate knowledge of the worlds outside of ourselves by some means other than experience – perhaps by thought or intuition or inner vision?

How do we test our knowledge? Does it come from the right authorities? Do we compare our knowledge with the knowledge of others? Do we see how well our knowledge works to guide our actions? Is our knowledge internally consistent? Does it feel right?
**Axiological Questions:** Finally, Axiology addresses questions like:

How do we know what is good and what is bad for us and for other people?

How do we decide what choices to make and what actions to take?

Do the ends we are trying to accomplish justify the means we are using to accomplish them? Or do our means have to be intrinsically just if our end is justice?

What are the values that should guide us? What’s best for ourselves? What’s best for our community? What’s best for our country? What’s best for the planet?

**The Philosophy of Orthodox Science:** From the perspective of this understanding of philosophy, the orthodox scientific Ontology is that the universe is a machine/computer that somehow made and is making itself and behaves in a way that is consistent over time.

The orthodox scientific Epistemology is that knowledge is based on independently verifiable (often instrument mediated) observations through the external senses that can be explained by (usually mathematically expressed) hypotheses which predict future independently verifiable observations. Hypotheses that are “proved” – by predicting something that actually happens regularly – become “natural laws” that can be pieced together to form integrated theories that give a broader understanding of different aspects of the universe.

The orthodox scientific Axiology is that truth (as defined by scientific Epistemology) is the only scientific value. Science should pursue knowledge, regardless of the result and science bears no responsibility for the uses to which its knowledge is put. This approach to scientific knowledge has led to very powerful technologies with no grounding in values.

**The Philosophy of Orthodox Capitalism:** Science and technology arose at the same time that the capitalist economic system also emerged. The philosophy of orthodox capitalism holds that the only purpose of business is to produce financial profits (make money), particularly in the form of short term profits, and accumulate economic capital, particularly in the form of financial capital. If all businesses and all individuals maximize their own short term self-interests by making as much money as possible, then the greatest good will result.

Orthodox capitalism has used the discoveries of science and the capabilities of technology in the context of the (often implicit) mechanistic philosophy to make money by treating its factories as machines (with its workforce as cogs in the machines) that take in resources and produce products, pollution, and waste. This combination of orthodox capitalism and orthodox science/technology has brought us to our current reality – a social crisis embedded in an ecological crisis.
And, orthodox capitalism isn’t even doing so well in relation to economic/finance capital. Making money as the sole value (and pretty much at all costs) is at the root of the current global economic crisis as well.

To be fair to science, the emerging fields of ecology and climate science have provided compelling information about the ecological crisis, particularly the climate change dimension of it. And to be fair to capitalism, there is a whole movement of businesses and business people who recognize that businesses should build (not destroy) social and environmental capital as well as financial/economic capital.

However, without tackling the basic philosophical assumptions of orthodox science and orthodox capitalism head-on, the forces that are trying to deal with the social crisis and ecological crisis right now are locked in a struggle that may not be won rapidly enough to avert a global catastrophe. We need to reframe the debate.

It’s past time to look beyond the limits and the largely hidden assumptions of orthodox science and orthodox capitalism.
PART THREE: Planetary Consciousness

So, what could be the basis of a better philosophy?

Alfred North Whitehead, perhaps the last great Western metaphysical philosopher, suggested that orthodox science is committing the “fallacy of the misplaced concrete” by taking highly abstract, instrument mediated, observations and using them to try to explain and predict the human experience and other emergent phenomena in the universe instead of grounding our knowledge in our actual concrete human experience.

Rather, Whitehead suggests, we should base our knowledge in our real experience, which is what we know most clearly and intimately about the universe. Any explanation of the universe (or any aspect of the universe) that does not conform with the essential structure of our actual experience is flawed, to the degree that it doesn’t so conform.

One of the most important insights that the rediscovery of philosophy can offer to science is that our experience of the world is a conscious experience. Our consciousness – our thoughts, our feelings, our sensations, our intuitions – provide our most basic form of knowledge. The world has to be the kind of place where this type of consciousness exists, because this type of
consciousness is our most intimate experience of the world. In fact it is our only experience of the world.

Therefore, if each human being is a conscious living organism, it is much more likely that the universe is also a kind of conscious living organism, than that the universe is a non-living, non-conscious machine that somehow makes itself and then somehow gives birth to conscious humans that are inherently alien to it.

But, you may reply, we don’t experience the larger consciousness of the universe. Well, the most realistic hypothesis may be that the universe has many levels of consciousness, a consciousness spectrum like the energy spectrum, but, again like the energy spectrum, we only experience a relatively narrow band of the consciousness spectrum.

Think of the cells in your bodies. It’s probably pretty hard for them to imagine what your consciousness is like, but that doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist. And your consciousness clearly affects your cells, for example flooding them with adrenaline and stimulating them to different kinds of action when you get very excited or very happy or very angry or very frightened.

So what happens if we shift our Ontology and consider the universe as a conscious, living, evolving organism?
The Anthropic Principle

In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn argued that normal science moves in a relatively smooth fashion, integrating new knowledge into preexisting theories, which exist within particular world views. However, periodically there are scientific revolutions when the whole world view or, as he puts it, the paradigm changes. Moving from a geocentric to a heliocentric solar system and from Newtonian to relativistic physics are two such examples of changing a paradigm.

From the perspective of Planetary Philosophy, we are in the middle of another, perhaps even more basic paradigm shift, from a mechanistic/probabilistic universe where human consciousness is a sort of accidental epiphenomenon that requires special explanation to a conscious universe in which human consciousness exists along a narrow band of a much broader spectrum of universal consciousness.

In Western thought, this paradigm shift has been formulated as the Anthropic Principle. The standard form of the Anthropic Principal holds that observations of the physical universe must be compatible with the conscious life that observes it. The strong form of the Anthropic Principal asserts that the universe must be compatible with conscious life, which means that it is most likely that the universe is a living place that contains a spectrum of consciousness.

There are two main schools of thought and lines of reasoning that derive from the Anthropic Principle.
The Accidental Universe: One school is represented among others by Stephen Hawking, the theoretical physicist and cosmologist. He suggests that the fact that human life on Earth exists – and can only exist – within a very narrow and improbable set of physical and biological tolerances is an accident. In an infinite universe even the most improbable occurrences will happen somewhere. By the Anthropic Principle, the universe we are observing has to be such that we can observe it i.e., we just happen to be here in this highly improbable reality and we shouldn’t draw any special conclusions from that fact.

The Universe by Design: The other school, represented by the ‘intelligent design’ folks, asserts that the existence of our conscious life on Earth, within the very narrow and improbable tolerances required for it, implies that an intelligence created the universe (for us perhaps) and has some purpose in mind for it.

The Conscious Universe: However, both schools seem to miss an important implication of the Anthropic Principle. We each experience the universe through our consciousness. That means that the universe is experiencing itself through an aspect of itself (each of us) that is conscious. What we know most intimately is that aspects of the universe (each of us) are conscious and those aspects of the universe experience other aspects of the universe consciously. Therefore, what we know most intimately is that we live in a conscious universe.

The Spectrum of Consciousness: Given that its consciousness is what we know most intimately and profoundly about the universe, it is highly unlikely that our current form of consciousness is the only form of consciousness in the universe. It is much more likely that there is a spectrum of consciousness in the universe and we inhabit one small aspect of that spectrum.

We know that the consciousness of people in other cultures differs from ours. We know that the consciousness of highly trained Taoist and Yogic and Sufi and Kabbalistic masters differs from ordinary Western consciousness. We know that the consciousness of animals differs from human consciousness. All that, and much more, is evidence that we live in a conscious universe and experience a portion of the consciousness spectrum of that conscious universe.
The Gaia Theory

In the 1970s, the chemist James Lovelock proposed the Gaia Hypothesis, named after the Greek Earth Goddess, Gaia. The Gaia Hypothesis proposed that life on Earth is a self-regulating system involving the biosphere, the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, and the pedosphere (skin of soil and living organisms), all of which are intimately integrated as an evolving complex system.

Wider research proved the original hypothesis wrong, in the sense that it is not organic life alone but the whole Earth system that is self-regulating. However, the hypothesis has been modified and elaborated enough and there have been enough predictions made and confirmed that the Gaia Hypothesis has become the Gaia Theory, which now holds that the Earth system as a whole seeks a physical and chemical environment optimal for contemporary life.

Acceptance of the Gaia Theory has become so widespread that, in 2001, a thousand scientists at the European Geophysical Union meeting signed the Declaration of Amsterdam, starting with the statement “The Earth System behaves as a single, self-regulating system with physical, chemical, biological, and human components.”

Originally, many Earth scientists strongly criticized the Gaia Hypothesis, suggesting, among other things, that it involved a teleological explanation (rather than the type of mechanico/deterministic explanation favored by traditional science). Lovelock responded that “Nowhere in our writings do we express the idea that planetary self-regulation is purposeful, or involves foresight or planning by the biota.”
However, maybe Lovelock hasn’t gone far enough. It seems possible to simplify and strengthen the Gaia Theory if we take the strong form of the Anthropic Principle seriously, which asserts that the universe must be compatible with conscious life, which means that it is most likely that the universe is a living place that contains a spectrum of consciousness.

From this perspective, we can reformulate the Gaia Theory as “The Earth is alive and behaves in a purposive fashion with a type of consciousness in order to pursue an environment optimal for life.”

The proposed consciousness of the Earth would clearly be located at a place on the consciousness spectrum that is different from ordinary human consciousness or human consciousness as augmented by the technologies of traditional science. But there is significant evidence that people who train their consciousness, e.g. Yogis and Taoists in the Eastern metaphysical tradition, can reach and participate in wider portions of the consciousness spectrum, and, in some cases, touch the unique form of consciousness that is manifested by the Earth.

However, the Eastern maps that have emerged from this participation have tended to lack the useful corrective of systematic external observation (the central purview of Western science) and they, by and large, have not provided us with a future oriented philosophy powerful enough to orient and guide us through the great transformation that is taking place right now.

However, if it is true that it is possible to connect with the consciousness of the Earth, then we may be able to find ways to partner with the Earth in accomplishing the One Purpose of Planetary Philosophy, i.e. the evolution of a higher order living system within which the human species takes its place furthering and being furthered by the life of the Earth. The question then becomes, how do we do this?
Inner Experience and Inner Power

External observation is a relatively crude method of acquiring knowledge about our consciousness. Rather, doesn’t it make sense to turn our consciousness on our consciousness to observe its structures and processes, and then evolve inner technologies, based on that knowledge, to guide our experiences and actions? We have already seen that any explanation of the universe has to begin with the foundation of my consciousness and the consciousness of other human beings. In fact, our explanations of the universe should be grounded in what we know best about the universe – our conscious participation in it.

Since each of us is an aspect of the universe and each of us is conscious, it follows that becoming conscious of our own consciousness would seem to teach us about the consciousness that is at the heart of the universe – at least the universe as we experience it. What happens, then, if we hypothesize that inner experience can provide knowledge that is valid?

Is it possible to attain heightened states of consciousness that participate more deeply in the conscious, evolving organism that is the universe? Doesn’t it make sense to train our consciousness, as the key vehicle we have for experiencing and exploring the universe, to experience a wider range of the spectrum of consciousness in this conscious universe?
And, doesn’t it make sense to compare our inner experience with the inner experience of other people in a way that produces potentially verifiable inner knowledge?

Eastern philosophy has recognized that we live in a conscious universe and suggested that various traditions and teachers (Gurus) have already mapped the conscious universe and provided us with paths to follow in expanding and deepening our participation in it.

The shamanistic tradition in native cultures, the Yogic and Buddhist traditions in India, the Taoist tradition in China, the Sufi tradition in the Middle East, and the Kabbalistic tradition in the West have cultivated inner experience, leading to inner knowledge. According to these traditions, people who follow the practices prescribed by one or another of the different traditions come to be able to expand the spectrum of consciousness that they can access and participate in.

Looking at the history of these traditions, it seems clear that concentration on inner-experience not only provides inner knowledge, it also provides increased inner power which has a kind of resonance effect, whereby the stronger consciousness attracts less strong consciousnesses as followers.

The Indian Guru with thousands (sometimes millions) of followers is an example of this phenomenon of inner knowledge leading to inner power with a powerful magnetic resonant effect. In its worst manifestations, the cult leader with cult followers is also an example of the phenomenon.

Hitler was such a leader who combined occult knowledge and power with military science and technology to bring millions of people into a Nazi movement that used terrible means to accomplish horrific ends.

However, the history of Mahatma Gandhi and the movement for Indian liberation shows the potential positive side. Gandhi combined his philosophy of non-violence, (whereby the means were the ends in process), with a personal power, schooled by significant inner work, to create a way for people to act in concert with great moral force and great political effect.

So, let’s posit that a philosophy for our time should utilize the Ontology of a conscious evolving universe, the Epistemology of balancing inner knowing and outer knowing, and the Axiology of using good means to accomplish good ends.

Planetary Philosophy is attempting to provide an approximation of this philosophy that we need right now by embracing the conscious universe as a basis for formulating the three unifying principles – One Planet, One People, and One Purpose.
If we accept the strong form of the Anthropic Principle, in concert with the strong form of the Gaia Theory, it may be the case that we have only to reach down into ourselves that are aspects of the Earth and find the Earth calling to us showing us the way to live at peace with her.

The strong form of the Anthropic Principle may also be taken to suggest that groups have a kind of group consciousness, a group mind if you will. The psychology of crowds and the behavior of herds, hives, ant hills, and many other types of group behavior argue for this perspective. If this is true, then it may be the case that the large group that is the human species has a type of consciousness. Right now that consciousness is fragmented and divided against itself. But if we quiet our minds, pay attention to our breathing, relax, and listen, perhaps we can participate in a Planetary Consciousness, hearing a deeper singing coming from our species trying to survive in harmony with our planet.

What then is this Planetary Consciousness and how do we reach it? We, at least most of us, only participate in our own individual consciousnesses. (One of the most significant things about the art experience is that it allows us to participate, to a certain extent, in the consciousness of the artist and, thereby, expand a little our own consciousness.) So let’s explore how we get from our individual human experience to Planetary Consciousness.
Consciousness Practices

So, what can we say about human experience? (And, in this instance, what can I say about my experience?)

First and, perhaps, foremost as we have seen, my experience is an experience of consciousness. If I am not conscious of something, then I don’t experience it. It may affect me, but I don’t experience it. What then is this consciousness? Consciousness is an interior experience of the world outside and the world inside. Consciousness is a succession of instants of awareness in a stream of awareness with an over-arching unity that enables us to connect the immediate past with the immediate future and make some sense of what’s happening in the immediate present.

Second, my conscious experience has a center and vectors in space and time. I experience everything outside of me from the perspective of my location in space. I experience everything inside of me along the vector of time – a succession of presents that remember their pasts and anticipate their futures.

Third, my consciousness has different degrees of focus, clarity, understanding, and power. I hear sounds up close more clearly than I hear sounds at a distance. Some of my experiences make sense and some don’t. For a very young child, perceptions are fuzzy, not much makes
sense, and it’s hard to act effectively. As the child grows, perceptions became clearer. The world makes more sense. And effective action becomes easier.

Fourth, I experience different forms of consciousness. Waking and dreaming are the two clearest examples. Waking consciousness tends to focus on outer experience. Dreaming consciousness focuses on inner experience. Through meditation, it becomes possible to focus waking consciousness on inner experience.

Fifth, if I practice being aware of my consciousness and learn how to direct and focus it, I can strengthen my consciousness, my understanding, and my power to act.

Without some practice for strengthening our concentration and focus, our consciousness tends to jump from one short sensation or memory or feeling or thought or intuition string to another, without our controlling where the next associational jump will take us. We tend to construct our home, work, and recreational environments as outside stimuli that help us guide our consciousness into loose tracks.

However, the Yogis and the Buddhists and the Taoists and the Sufis and the Kabbalists all practice ways to focus and concentrate consciousness. Almost all of these practices start with paying attention to the flow of our consciousness. One of the simplest ways is just to pay attention to our breathing for an extended period of time. For people who haven’t put in some serious practice with this, it is shockingly difficult to do. Our minds just wander off and we suddenly realize that we are worrying about something or anticipating something or participating in some other stream of mental activity and we aren’t paying attention to our breathing any more.

With practice, however, it becomes possible to pay continuous attention to our breathing for many minutes, even hours, and eventually constantly. Then conscious awareness of our breathing becomes the backdrop on top of which we can think thoughts, or feel feelings, or have memories, or anticipate what will happen on purpose by guiding our consciousness. As this type of practice continues, a coherent self begins to emerge that can guide our consciousness to focus anywhere and stay focused there until we decide to focus somewhere else.

Consciousness is a little like an I Pad. Initially our consciousness is like an I Pad that jumps from one App to another App semi-randomly. A successful consciousness practice enables us to learn the way the I Pad operating system works and how to choose which App we want to access and what we want to do in that App and then, when we are finished, how to move on to another App.

Some consciousness practices train us in new consciousness capabilities. Visualization is a good example of a very useful consciousness capability. We are told that Einstein had a very powerful ability to visualize. If we can’t visualize, the I Pad of our mind can’t access visual images leaving
us in a world restricted to words or feelings or sensations. A comprehensive consciousness practice begins with training us to be aware of and to focus our consciousness and then to access the full range of types of consciousness available to humans. We become fully aware of and fully able to choose to participate in our inner and outer worlds.

For most of us, when we begin to pay attention to our consciousness, what we find is that we are talking to ourselves silently in our minds. Some say that the way we keep our world together and keep functioning is through this “inner dialogue”. We tell ourselves how to interpret events, how to react, what to do, how we should feel, and so forth. Some of the various spiritual traditions refer to this inner dialogue, this inner talking to ourselves, as our ‘Ego’.

For many of us, our inner world is composed almost exclusively of this Ego, which helps us cope but also can get us into a lot of trouble. The other aspects of our inner world often operate subconsciously. Feelings, for example, may take place below the surface of our consciousness and subconsciously determine how the inner dialogue proceeds. If we don’t like a particular feeling for some reason, we may tell ourselves to act in a way that avoids causing that feeling, even though that action may be quite counter-productive.

After some consciousness practice, it becomes possible to turn off this inner dialogue and shift levels of awareness to become conscious of other aspects of our inner worlds. One of the simplest ways to do this is to pay attention to something else, like our breathing. This is because our consciousness has a certain size or scope. If our consciousness is full of one form of awareness, another form of awareness won’t fit.

One way we can assess the size of our consciousness is to check to see how much of our body we can be aware of at one time. Is it a finger, a hand, a whole arm, two arms, two arms and a head? Most people, when they start out developing a consciousness practice, can be aware of maybe one finger or, even, perhaps one hand. Their consciousness is about the size of a finger or a hand. Typically, their inner dialogue fills up their consciousness and there isn’t room for anything else.

So paying attention to breathing means there isn’t enough consciousness to pay attention to the inner dialogue at the same time, so the inner dialogue shuts off for a (usually brief) time. As we proceed, that time gets longer. As we proceed, it begins to be possible to pay attention to our breathing and other things, like other bodily sensations, or feelings, or thoughts at the same time. Through this process, our consciousness expands. And also we can learn how to turn that inner dialogue off altogether and experience our inner and outer worlds directly, without that filter.

As we proceed with a consciousness practice, and learn how to shut off the Ego inner dialogue, it becomes possible to experience much more of our outer world. That sunset, that painting, that piece of music can affect us much more deeply if we aren’t talking about it or talking about something else in our mind while we are seeing or hearing it.
At the same time, it becomes possible to experience much more of our inner worlds, once we have shut off our Egos. Sometimes we become directly aware of a wider and wider array of our physical sensations. Good athletes, fine dancers, powerful martial artists are, among other things, people who have trained themselves to become aware of the full range of kinesthetic sensations coming from a large portion of their bodies and to build new, more effective habits for how to use their bodies.

Beyond the physical, we can gain deeper access to other aspects of our inner world. This can take the form of various kinds of meditation. Meditation is another very useful consciousness capability. Meditation has been defined by some as continual focus on one thought, feeling, or image to enable the deeper meaning of what is being focused on to emerge. Successful meditation requires being able to be aware of our consciousness and to focus it. Meditation can be thought of as a form of self-hypnosis whereby we put ourselves in a kind of trance.

Mantra Meditation can be one very useful form. Try the Planetary Consciousness Mantra. Pay continual attention to your breathing. Breathe in and silently say “One,” then breathe out and silently say “Planet”. Breathe in and silently say “One,” then breathe out and silently say “People”. Breathe in and silently say “One,” then breathe out and silently say “Purpose”. Repeat this mantra for 5 minutes, 10 minutes, even 15 minutes. You will get the benefits of Mantra Meditation, and it may even be a doorway to connect with those aspects of the consciousness of the Earth and the consciousness of the Human Species that are working for survival – the emerging Planetary Consciousness.

Now try adding images. With “One Planet” and see images of the beautiful Earth from space, beautiful places you have been to or you have seen pictures of. With “One People” and see images of people over time, working well together, taking care of each other, supporting each other – from your personal life, from the news you have seen, or from the books you have read. With “One Purpose” see the Earth and the Human Species transformed with the different wars and threats of wars resolved and people living in peace, with food and water and shelter and opportunity for all.

If a significant number of people actually practiced the Planetary Consciousness Mantra regularly, we might be much further along with the transformation that we need.

Another type of meditation can be referred to as “Vision Meditation.” Vision Meditation enables us to access visions, which can provide access to deeper experiences and insights and more profound knowledge and wisdom. One process for doing this can be to:

1. Formulate some focus or question.
2. Pay attention to our bodies, the sensation of our feet on the ground, our seats on our chairs.
3. Turn off the inner dialogue.
4. Pay attention to our breathing, which may be accompanied by a mantra and/or a visualization to help us engage with our focus or question.
5. Allow awareness to shift to deeper levels.
6. Just wait until a vision presents itself.
7. When the vision comes, go with it, explore it, and see if it doesn’t provide insight into our focus or an answer to our question.

The vision can be a little like a waking dream or a movie. The visions we experience with Vision Meditation are not visualizations, like those we might use to accompany a mantra, in that we are not actively controlling the visions with our volition. Rather we receive what is presented to us on the screen of our awareness as if it’s coming from someone else or someplace else or perhaps a deeper aspect of ourselves.

Through this type of Vision Meditation our consciousness can engage with the field of consciousness that surrounds us. Some spiritual traditions suggest that our individual consciousness is a small bay connected to a vast ocean of consciousness. The psychologist Carl Jung characterized this ocean of consciousness that our consciousness is connected to as the Collective Unconscious, inhabited by transpersonal forces that he characterized as Archetypes.

Through using the Planetary Consciousness Mantra leading to Vision Meditation, it may become possible to engage with the consciousness of the Earth and participate in a kind of Planetary Consciousness, and it may become possible to engage with the consciousness of humanity, and participate in a kind of Species Consciousness. By doing so, we may be able not only to tap into a profound source of insight but also encounter an exceptional source of power. Try it.

We have seen that an acceptance and cultivation of consciousness, leading to Planetary Consciousness, grounds Planetary Philosophy and serves as an essential corrective for Orthodox Science. Now let’s look at how Planetary Philosophy, in turn, can serve as an essential corrective for Orthodox Capitalism and lead to a Planetary Capitalism.
Evolution is a process of diversification followed by unification, leading to further diversification, followed by subsequent unification.

One celled organisms found ways to agglomerate to function better as multi-celled organisms. The slime mold is a transitional figure in this process. According to Wikipedia: “When food is abundant, a slime mold exists as a single-celled organism, but when food is in short supply,” certain slime mold cells send out a chemical signal and then collections of slime mold cells “congregate and start moving as a single body. In this state they are sensitive to airborne chemicals and can detect food sources. They can readily change the shape and function of their parts and may form stalks that produce fruiting bodies, releasing countless spores, light enough to be carried on the wind or hitching a ride on passing animals.” When these spores land they become slime mold cells and begin the process all over again.

Slime molds, living at the intersection of the plant and the animal worlds and at the intersection of the single celled organism and the multi-celled organism, enact the transformation from
unity to diversity and back. Humans do this as well, when a sperm cell fertilizes an egg cell and a human organism begins the journey from the single cell to the multi-celled organism.

According to Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, external agglomeration (unification) is accompanied by a correlative ‘interiorization’ – essentially an advance in consciousness. The evolution of ever more complex multi-celled organisms eventually moved out of the ocean onto land and thence through the age of reptiles to the age of mammals and eventually to the age of humanity. This process produced ever more complex external agglomerations and ever more complex interior consciousnesses.

This diversification/unification dynamic continued through the various stages of human evolution. Hunter/gatherers evolved into villages, which became city states and subsequently empires. The empires broke up into kingdoms, which became nations, and now, virtually every portion of the entire Earth is encompassed in one or another nation.

However this diversification of nations has reached its limit and it is time for a correlative phase of unification. That doesn’t mean that the various nations have to be eliminated. The single cells continue in multi-celled organisms. Rather we need a philosophical, social, political, economic, and cultural unification movement, a Planetary Movement, that can show us how to cooperate across national borders to operate within the tolerances established by the Earth’s ecosystem that allow for the continuation and advancement of human life.

Some will say that this means we have to give up our freedom. That is most certainly true for certain freedoms. In fact it has already happened for certain freedoms. Humanity has given up the freedom to explode nuclear devices. We recognized that the fate of the whole human species was seriously threatened by continuing to explode nuclear devices, so we voluntarily gave up that freedom.

Humankind gave up the freedom to utilize chlorofluorocarbons in refrigeration when it became clear that they were destroying the ozone layer of the atmosphere, which is essential for the continuation of human life.

The U.S. Constitution establishes a balance between freedoms and rules. What it means to be an American citizen is to exercise our freedom in the context of the laws enacted by the institutions established by the Constitution. Through the process of elections, we have even established what amount to rules for revolutions, whereby we choose to continue or to change governments without resorting to killing each other.

If we want to express our freedom by driving to someplace at a distance from where we live and work, we use the roads and follow the traffic laws to do this. Our freedom to travel requires exercising our responsibility to follow the rules of the road. Most great artists learn their artistic crafts before using those crafts to express freely their unique visions. All crafts, all professions balance freedom of expression with the disciplines that underlie the particular craft or profession.
Freedom is one half of the equation. The other half is responsibility. Unlimited freedom is a license to destroy people and the planet for personal gain. Unlimited responsibility stifles the growth and evolving change that is essential to all life. True creativity, true innovation, and, in fact, true capitalism comes from the balance of freedom to try the new and the bold with responsibility to protect the social and environmental foundation that allows us to live together in peace with each other and peace with the Earth. By now, the best business leaders in the world recognize that the best businesses are those that are not only profitable financially, but also those that benefit society and the environment.

It is time for us to give up our freedom to continue with the highly unstable human system that we currently have. We need a new Planetary System. Planetary Philosophy suggests that the creation of this new Planetary System should be our One Purpose right now and that this One Purpose should be guided by the fact that we are One People and that we share One Planet. The time for unification has arrived. Let’s take a look at what this means for our economic system.

At the Davos World Economic Forum in January 2008, Bill Gates challenged business leaders throughout the world to utilize their best innovative thinkers to address the big issues facing our planet. He called this Creative Capitalism. He joins others pursuing new forms of capitalism like Paul Hawken’s Natural Capitalism, John Mackey’s Conscious Capitalism, and Professor Michael Porter’s Shared Value Capitalism. Each of these leaders realizes that the time for business as usual is over. The time for capitalism as usual is also over. The way we have practiced capitalism over the past 200 years has created great wealth and a high standard of living for many in the U.S. and western world, yet it has left out a large portion of humanity and threatens the planetary eco-system.

The old capitalism has produced huge budget and balance of payments deficits; an extreme and widening gap between the very rich and the rest of the population; dependence on high cost dangerous foreign oil; very serious air, land, and water pollution; and climate change. Business and society have come to a fork in the road early in the 21st century. The path business people take will play an essential role in determining the future of our businesses as well as the future of the U.S. and the world for many generations to come.

It’s time for a new capitalism. Whether it’s called Natural, Creative, Conscious, Shared Value, or New is not the issue. The issue is to determine the particulars—the principles, the values, the strategies, the policies, and the practices that become deeply embedded in the culture of what let’s call a Planetary Capitalism, guided by the triple bottom line values of people, planet, and profits, which are quite close to the Planetary Philosophy principles of One Planet, One People, One Purpose. At its core, a Planetary Capitalism has to recognize that business cannot prosper in an unhealthy world. Healthy business and a healthy society require each other for long term prosperity.
Toward a True Market Economy: The Three Forms of Capital

It’s been said that capitalism could be a great system, but it’s never really been tried. Capitalism as it has largely been practiced to date has sought to accumulate economic capital at the expense of social and environmental capital.

Now it is true that the discovery of how to accumulate economic capital by offering a product or a service at a price that is more than the cost — thereby generating wealth —, is a great and important discovery. Classical capitalism has wielded that great discovery to generate great wealth, but at a great cost to society and the environment.

Planetary Capitalism recognizes that there are at least three forms of capital essential to the creation of genuine prosperity. In addition to economic capital (financial and manufactured), there are two other forms — natural and social. Any business-person knows that, over the long run, a successful business needs to invest wisely to generate more income than expenses and to grow its capital. If a business lives off its capital, it will eventually go bankrupt. Planetary Capitalism recognizes that it is essential to build all three forms of capital in a True Market Economy.
Natural Capital: The economy operates within design limits inherent in the natural environment. If the economy disrupts the natural environment it disrupts itself, at great financial cost to society and to individual businesses. Most recently, witness the devastation of Super Storm Sandy. Under the deceptively named “free market” economy, which bears little resemblance to the type of market envisioned by Adam Smith, enormous resources have been lost that were once, in fact, provided for free by intact ecosystems.

Conversely, a True Market Economy recognizes its dependence on the natural environment for fresh air, clean water, climate stability, renewable energy, and a thriving eco-system. In a True Market Economy, businesses derive value from the eco-system without disrupting it. As the True Market Economy emerges it will utilize true cost pricing and true cost accounting to value major interactions with the natural world.

Social Capital: A prosperous economy depends on a stable society with a skilled and creative workforce. The economy threatens its own foundations if it disrupts society by allowing an extreme gap to emerge between the very wealthy few and the rest of the population or by inadequately supporting society’s ability to ensure public safety, an effective educational system, a well trained workforce, and quality affordable health care.

Likewise, a prosperous economy contributes to a stable society by creating the jobs, the opportunity for productive work, and the income that people need to live satisfying lives. A True Market Economy recognizes the profound contribution of social capital to a prosperous economy and builds social capital by reducing the wealth gap, paying its fair share of taxes, and making investments in a healthy society in many other ways.

Economic Capital: Sustained economic prosperity requires that both the private sector and the public sector operate according to sound financial principles. Massive government budget and balance of payments deficits are not sustainable and put the countries that incur them in jeopardy to foreign lenders. At the same time, if the state of a country’s physical infrastructure is in serious decline, then its economic capital is in decline.

Economic capital is most effectively built and the economy works best when operations are transparent and guided by appropriate policies. Sound regulations provide the guard-rails that keep the economy on track. If those who criticized sub-prime lending and exotic real estate derivatives had been listened to, the economy would have saved trillions of dollars and the Great Recession would not have happened. Massive subsidies to major corporations and industries, hidden inside the tax codes, contribute to the deep distrust of the government, policy makers, and business leaders. The allocation of our economic capital should be fully transparent to have an economy and a society that function well.

In a True Market Economy, the government (the public corporation) lives within its means, except during significant economic downturns, and partners with private businesses so that both private and public sectors operate in an economically responsible fashion, while maintaining a sound financial system and reliable physical infrastructure. Investments of
public funds for the benefit of current and future generations should be made regularly and wisely. Just as in any business, the government should clearly differentiate between “spending” and “investing.” They are not the same.

**True Market Metrics:** A True Market Economy needs True Market Metrics – transparent, accurate, timely economic information reporting systems that include a national profit and loss statement and balance sheet to measure the health of our economy, society, and environment and the degree to which the economy is building all three forms of capital.
Toward a New Way of Doing Business

The good news is that the movement to transform capitalism has been growing and evolving for decades. It has taken a variety of forms. Some of the many examples include:

- Church pension funds screening out the “sin” stocks of alcohol, gambling, and tobacco throughout much of the 20th Century.
- The Anti-Apartheid Movement arguing that investors should divest ownership of the stocks of companies doing business in South Africa.
- The Socially Responsible Investment Movement screening investment portfolios based on social and environmental criteria.
- The Organic Agriculture and Sustainable Forestry Movements encouraging the elimination of chemical pesticides and fertilizers and the use of logging practices that maintain healthy forests.
- CERES, an association of corporations agreeing to adhere to the CERES Principals for social and environmental responsibility.
The Global Reporting Initiative, which provides a set of international standards for companies to use in evaluating their social and environmental performance.

**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Taken together, these and other strands have come together into a very widespread Movement for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with a very large percentage of publically trading companies providing some form of CSR or sustainability report and trillions of dollars in assets invested using one or more social criteria.

At the same time tens of thousands of social entrepreneurs have launched companies specifically designed to operate in a socially and environmentally responsible manner and to address significant social and environmental problems. The whole Clean Technology field, including companies focused on generation of solar and wind energy, energy efficiency in retrofits and new construction, and design of mixed-use, walkable, transit oriented, livable neighborhoods is one leading example of this trend.

More recently, even large corporations like General Electric, Nestle, Google, IBM, Du Pont, Interface, Walmart, and Chevron have formulated business models to solve important social and environmental problems and produce market rate profits at the same time.

**Creating Shared Value (CSV):** Harvard Professor Michael Porter has characterized this approach as Creating Shared Value (CSV), which he defines as ‘policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates. Shared value creation focuses on identifying and expanding the connections between societal and economic progress.’

According to Professor Porter, there are three key ways that companies can create shared value opportunities – by:

1) Reconceiving their products and markets.
2) Redefining productivity in their value chain.
3) Enabling cluster development in their business clusters.

GE’s Ecomagination program, which has shifted the company’s focus toward Clean Tech products and produced some of the highest levels of profitability in the corporation, is an example of the first way.

Walmart’s establishment of sustainability standards for all of its suppliers, which has forced thousands of businesses across the globe to rethink the design and manufacturing of their products in a more environmentally responsible fashion, is an example of the second way.
Nestlé’s work to build agricultural, technical, financial, and logistical firms and capabilities in each coffee region and to support efficient, sustainable high-quality local production is an example of the third way.

CSR can be seen as a way to ‘do no harm,’ thereby not depleting environmental, social, and economic capital, while CSV can be viewed as a way to ‘create positive good’ by directly building environmental, social, and economic capital.

**Benefit Corporations (B Corps):** Benefit Corporations (B Corps) have taken a step beyond CSR and CSV. As of the end of 2012, 13 states have passed legislation allowing companies to incorporate as B Corps and include what amounts to a commitment to CSR and CSV in their corporate charters to guide them in value creation for all of their stakeholders, not just their shareholders.

The California version of B Corp legislation includes provisions obligating companies incorporating as B Corps to publish annual reports assessing their social impact according to established economic, social, and environmental standards. Essentially B Corps commit to operating in a way that builds economic, social and environmental capital as well as producing financial profits.

By the end of 2012, close to 80 companies in California have incorporated as B Corps, including some relatively well known ones such as Patagonia, Sun Light & Power, and Singularity Education Group.

A much larger group of companies have gone through an independent certification process to become certified as B Corps without taking the step of incorporating as a B Corp. Globally, there are 650 certified B Corps in 23 countries and 60 industries, according to B Lab, a B Corp advocate and certification agent. It’s been said that B Corp certification is to corporate governance what LEED certification is to green buildings/developments and Fair Trade certification is to coffee and other imported products.

Taken together, CSR, CSV, and B Corps amount to a new way of doing business and a set of initiatives that lead in the direction of Planetary Capitalism, and this movement is definitely growing rapidly.

Swiss Re, the giant reinsurance company, has put major businesses around the world on notice that it will no longer cover companies who risk liabilities due to irresponsible environmental practices. This means triple bottom line accounting (people-planet-profit) will not just be optional. It will be essential – reducing externalization of costs and forcing a re-thinking of the balance sheet accounting.

Top line value creation for all stakeholders is becoming as important to business success as bottom line value yield (profit) is to shareholders.
The Emergence of Planetary Capitalism

Through CSR, CSV, and the actions of thousands of social entrepreneurs, a Planetary Capitalism is emerging that is pursuing environmental, social, and economic sustainability and resilience. It takes the forms of:

- Hundreds of large corporations, linked through CERES and the Global Reporting Initiative, establishing and implementing policies that produce increasingly higher levels of sustainability performance.
- Thousands of Clean Technology companies creating the renewable energy and resource efficiency technologies needed to power a sustainable economy.
- Trillions of dollars of socially and environmentally screened investment portfolios, often managed by members of the Social Investment Forum.
- Thousands of small companies, affiliated with Green America and BALLE, pursuing local green economies.
- Business organizations like the Green Chambers of Commerce and the American Sustainable Business Alliance representing thousands of businesses supporting policies that foster the sustainable economy.
  - Hundreds of cities and counties adopting sustainability plans, climate action programs, or sustainable economic development strategies.
**Planetary Capitalism and Wealth Creation:** There is quite a bit of evidence that the emerging Planetary Capitalism is succeeding financially. Planetary Capitalism is not merely a moral imperative. It is an economic one. Over the long run, Planetary Capitalism should do better financially (out-compete) the old capitalism.

While no corporation is perfectly green or perfectly socially responsible, and some are leaders in some ways and laggards in other ways, many leading larger corporations are embracing the perspective that green and/or social responsible business is good business. For example, some of the leading companies that have recognized the economic opportunities inherent in going green include:

**Wal-Mart:** As arguably the largest corporation, Wal-Mart is a very interesting case. Wal-Mart has always been successful at creating economic capital for itself, though often not the economic capital of the communities where its stores are located. More recently, Wal-Mart has moved aggressively, with its Sustainability emphasis, to build environmental capital. However, in relation to its employment practices and its community impact, this all has come at the expense of building social capital.

Nonetheless, its environmental record has become impressive. According to its Sustainability Progress Report, Wal-Mart has committed to an environmental responsibility program, targeting 100% renewable energy, zero waste, and the sale of sustainable products. Wal-Mart has invested $500 million in sustainability, increased building and fleet efficiency by 15%, built a set of experimental green stores, and is requiring its suppliers to go green through its Sustainable Value Networks.

**GE:** In its 2009 report, GE indicated that its Ecomagination initiative now has 90 products generating $18 billion in revenue, with overall corporate greenhouse gases reduced by 22%, water reduced by 30%, and energy efficiency increased by 50% from 2004 levels.

**DuPont:** Dupont reports on its social and environmental progress using the Global Reporting Initiative reporting format and is independently monitored by Environmental Resource Management. DuPont has saved $3 billion while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 72% over a decade. DuPont is aggressively developing sustainable products for buildings and construction, transportation, agriculture and nutrition, and communication.

**Interface:** In its Sustainability Report, Interface, Inc., the world’s largest manufacturer of commercial and residential modular carpet and broadloom, shows that it has grown $200 million (to over $1 billion) without increasing resource consumption, and the company has avoided $250 million in waste management bills.

Other major U.S. corporations with comprehensive sustainability programs include: Dell, Johnson Controls, Hewlett Packard, Johnson and Johnson, Coca Cola, H.J. Heinz, Google, Random House, Nike, Starbucks, Time Warner, UPS, Whole Foods, Xerox, Target, Walgreens, and many others.
Building social capital is also being recognized as good business. According to CNN Money, if you had invested an equal amount of money in all the publicly traded companies on the first *Fortune Magazine*’s 100 Best Places to Work list in 1998 and then adjusted the portfolio each year, adding the new companies, dropping the ones that fell off the list, at the end of 2010 you would have realized a return of 11.06% per year, a cumulative return of 291.13% for the 14 years. By comparison, over the same period, the S&P 500 generate an annualized return of 3.83% and a cumulative return of 63.04%.

However, *Planetary Capitalism* is about more than what we make and how we make it. It is also about taking a role in shaping the future. As businesses begin to change, they will influence their suppliers and their customers to change. Eventually the entire market place begins to change and this leads to change throughout our society. And, changes in public policy, legislation, incentives, and regulation will support and encourage the change happening in individual businesses. As any society elevates to a more responsible, sustaining way of working and living, it will have an enormously positive influence on the rest of world.

It is certainly true that classic capitalism has created economic capital at the expense of social and environmental capital, thereby causing a substantial portion of the environmental and social problems that our planet and our species face. However capitalism can be and is being an essential part of the solution to our problems.

Imagine every entrepreneur, every manager, every board member, every worker, every customer, and every supplier in every business in the world embracing the need to build all three forms of capital, guided by the principles of One Planet, One People, and One Purpose. What would the world be like then? That is the promise of *Planetary Capitalism*. 
PART FIVE: A Planetary Movement

It's clear that the human species is in crisis. The wars and rumors of wars, the disasters and prophecies of disasters, the famines and the fear of greater famines soon, the hurricanes, floods, and droughts and the predictions of extreme climate changes to come all recall past apocalyptic prophesies. The situation is so persistent and extreme that many of us try just to pay attention to something else. However, that's probably a bad idea. Rather, let's try looking at the situation head on.

Right now, humanity is oriented by what divides us. We define ourselves by our identities as different nations, different religions, different political parties, different ethnicities, and
different economic classes and we get angry with each other and we fight with each other, sometimes in our minds and sometimes in fact.

But what unites us?

Planetary Philosophy asserts that we can be united by three principles. All of us are part of One Planet. We are all members of One People, one human species. Right now, at this time, we all need to have One Purpose – to make the great transformation so that we can live at peace with ourselves, with each other, and with the Earth.

Adoption of these three principles need not be in conflict with the essential tenants of any of humanity’s diverse religions or economic/political systems. They are grounded in a reality that cannot reasonably be denied by anyone.

Our bodies are composed of the Earth. 100% of our bodies are made of the Earth’s materials. We are what aspects of the Earth feel like from the inside. We are truly One Planet. No one can deny this.

As members of the human species we share 99.9% of our DNA. 99.9% of our genetic make-up unites us and only 00.09% divides us. We are truly One People. No one can deny this.

We are clearly in a time of transition. The human political, economic, and cultural system is unstable. We are at each other’s throats. It is more extreme in some places than others but no place is unaffected. We need to transform the human system to survive. We have One Purpose. No one really can deny this.

So, given that these facts are so clearly true, how do we make the transformation? How do we realize our One Purpose as One People sharing our One Planet?
Changing the Story

We need a Planetary Movement that generates examples of a new Planetary System so that we can learn to create better examples so that we come to understand better what the new Planetary System looks like and feels like. We need a Planetary Movement that includes enough people so that we reach a tipping point and the direction shifts and we start building momentum for the new way of life. Each of us needs to identify what our contributions are to Planetary Evolution and make those contributions or else we are contributing to Planetary Devolution.

There must be some magic number of people that are needed to join this Movement and live according to its philosophy in order to reach the tipping point when the new consciousness takes off and starts building massive positive momentum. We don’t have much time, so it’s important to get to the tipping point soon as possible. However, it’s got to be the right tipping point. A significant error right now could lead to very unfortunate consequences. It’s important for the Movement to include a powerful self-corrective characteristic.

What would a thriving, growing, powerful Planetary Movement look like? How does it get launched? Get organized? Engage with the great religions? Engage with culture, with politics, with business, and with science/technology?

The truth is that there already is a powerful Planetary Movement already alive and growing almost everywhere, but it’s not what gets paid attention to as the story of this time. The story of this time that gets paid attention to right now is the story of economic dislocation combined with religious, ethnic, economic, political, and cultural conflicts and the inadequacy of our
economic, social, and political institutions to deal with the dislocation and the conflicts. We need to change the story.

If we just looked at all the problems facing us as a species and somehow thought that we needed to create a whole new system out of nothing to take care of all of these problems, the situation would, indeed, be pretty hopeless.

Planetary Philosophy offers a way to change the story, re-frame our reality. The new story is the story of the emergence of a Planetary Movement. If we look at what’s going on around the world through that lens everything begins to look different. The reality is that instances of the Great Transformation are everywhere. As examples, just look to:

- The socially responsible, sustainable businesses working to treat the Earth well and their employees well and to do business with other such businesses to begin to form a sustainable restorative economy.
- The social action, political action, community action, peace, and environmental organizations working to transform the political, economic, and social landscape.
- The cultural, arts, and dance organizations creating a culture of peace and justice and respect for the Earth.
- The traditional societies working to preserve their traditions of reverence for the Earth and for all life.

We may not have arrived at the tipping point where the momentum begins to shift strongly in favor of the Planetary Movement, but strong and deep forces are emerging and growing and connecting. A powerful vector is taking shape as it begins to incorporate millions of people. The tipping point may be closer than we think.

One of the reasons for this is that the Planetary Movement may have some very powerful friends on its side. Perhaps we are beginning to tap into the emerging unified consciousness of the Human Species and the Earth in a Planetary Consciousness that takes on the mission to preserve the life of our One People so that our One Planet survives as home to the next wave of evolution. As Planetary Consciousness engages, how, then do we strengthen our actions? How do we hasten arrival at the tipping point when the momentum shifts?
Building a Planetary Movement

Let's postulate that there are five keys for each of us to contribute to reaching the tipping point when the Planetary Movement takes off and begins to generate massive, explicit, positive momentum. The five keys can be formulated as Acceptance, Engagement, Exemplification, Connection, and Celebration.

1. **Accept**: The first key is acceptance. If we embrace Planetary Consciousness and accept that we are individual manifestations of One Planet and One People and if we accept that the current system cannot hold, must evolve or devolve, then we have a great responsibility and a great opportunity to make our own unique contributions to the accomplishment of our One Purpose. Each of us has a unique experience of Planetary Consciousness, a unique perspective on how to understand it, what it means, and what its implications are. And each of us has special talents and gifts and skills to contribute to the growing Planetary Movement.

2. **Engage**: The second key is engagement. Some of us have already found the best way for us to engage with the Planetary Movement. Maybe it’s working in a local environmentally and socially responsible business. Maybe it’s joining a social or environmental action organization. Maybe it’s creating art that tells a piece of the story of our times. That engagement can only be strengthened by framing it as part of a Planetary Movement.
Some of us need to find the best way for us to engage in one or another of the many aspects of the emerging Planetary Movement. If that’s true, then we just need to look within and ask ourselves, what is the contribution that is right for us to make right now? If we get stuck for a few moments, we can try using the Planetary Consciousness Mantra to get unstuck. We can feel the force, the Spirit of the Earth and the Spirit of the new Human Species, rising in us helping guide us to make the right choices. It doesn’t have to be the perfect first engagement. Starting is what’s important, engaging with some aspect of the Movement. If it isn’t the best choice, make a change when the opportunity presents itself.

3. **Exemplify:** As the Mahatma, Mohandas Gandhi, said, ‘The means are the ends in process.’ For any engagement to tap into the power of the emerging Planetary Consciousness and truly to contribute to the Planetary Movement, it needs to exemplify One Planet, One People, One Purpose. The way to build the Movement is to create examples of the Movement, of the Planetary Society, the Planetary Economy, the Planetary Civilization we aspire to. We are touching deep energies, real powers, so it is essential to make sure to use them wisely and the only way to do that is to make sure that each action we take, each organization we build truly manifests the peace with ourselves, peace among all peoples, and peace with the Earth to which we aspire. Bad means create bad ends, period. For the good to triumph in the end, it has to triumph each step of the way.

4. **Connect:** Let’s recognize that, in relation to everything we engage with as an aspect of the Planetary Movement, our deepest strength is in making the connections. My stream can link with your stream on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Google+. We can learn from each other and connect our work. My business can do business with your business. I can patronize your business. You can patronize mine. My organization can form a coalition with your organization. I can support your organization. You can support mine. My art can join in a Planetary Festival with your art. I can appreciate your art. You can appreciate mine. As we connect, we can strategize ways to make more powerful connections. We can weave each of our powerful examples together to create the tapestry of our future world right now.

5. **Celebrate:** The Planetary Movement is not about struggling to survive, though our survival is at stake. The Planetary Movement is about creating examples of the world we want, connecting them to build larger examples, and celebrating what we do as we do it. Ultimately, the Planetary Economy will win, because it will be more successful economically. It will be possible to make a better living within it. It will be more fun. Planetary Politics will create more effective governments. Planetary Art will be better art. Winning is not winning at the end of the process. Winning is winning right now and celebrating our victories along the way, as we move into the Great Transformation.
The Emerging Planetary Movement: It’s important to recognize that a Planetary Movement is a transitional movement. We are trying to get to the next higher level of planetary organization and intelligence. We don’t know what that will be like and we don’t know what that will be called. But we can be sure that, once we have made the transition to the next higher level of organization, we will have created a platform from which to begin another cycle of creativity and evolution.

As with other forms of evolution, the successful initial examples of the Planetary Movement ought to manifest the next higher level of order and be much more efficient, profitable, enjoyable, and powerful than current organizational manifestations of the Earth in crisis.

So the challenge is to build powerful examples of the Planetary Movement that have within themselves the ability to inspire and to replicate themselves and then to connect all of these examples into a much larger integrated example and then to begin the process again.

However, we need to realize that the Planetary Movement transcends any organization or set of organizations. We need to move too fast, grow too large, and expand too rapidly for the Movement to be encompassed by just one organization or even one set of organizations. The Planetary Movement needs to be a true Movement of many organizational forms.

We also need to realize that – while many examples of the Planetary Movement already exist, already are in place, and already are producing significant progress – it could be very useful to adopt a guiding Planetary Philosophy of One Planet, One People, One Purpose that could help weave the many strands of the Movement together and help spin out the many new strands that need to be created.

Each of us can take on this challenge in our own lives by treating ourselves as specific examples of Planetary Consciousness and then by practicing the Planetary Philosophy however it manifests for each of us, through our family lives, our social lives, our work lives, our political lives, and our cultural lives. We are One Planet. We are One People. We have One Purpose. The time has come for all of us.

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