
OBSTACLES & STRATEGIES

Turning Back Climate Change and Preventing Mass Extinction
OLLI - November 9 and 16, 2015
Melissa J. Mills

OVERVIEW

- Principles
 - Obstacles
 - Strategies
-

PRINCIPLES

- Values and Desires
 - Safety/Curiosity
 - Balance and Tension
-

HUMAN ENGINEERING

- We like challenges
 - We like making things better
 - We like being part of the group
 - We create solutions!
-

2 weeks ago 1. Moral issue instead of science in addition (economic) to

- What is effective
- What is feasible.

1 week ago 2. Economic feasible

- Detailed plan
- economics + science
 - Lab as UC

Economics arguments

Reputation

Economic Interest

Reputation

Fear
Desire for safety
security
comfort

Curiosity...

Learning
Making things better
Understand how things work

• serial, logical sequence

Two minds
left right
old - new

conscious - unconscious

40 \$ps

11,000,000 \$ps

Plato: 3

Reason = Heart
Spilted = Brain
workers = Gut

Aristotle

Balance => Tension

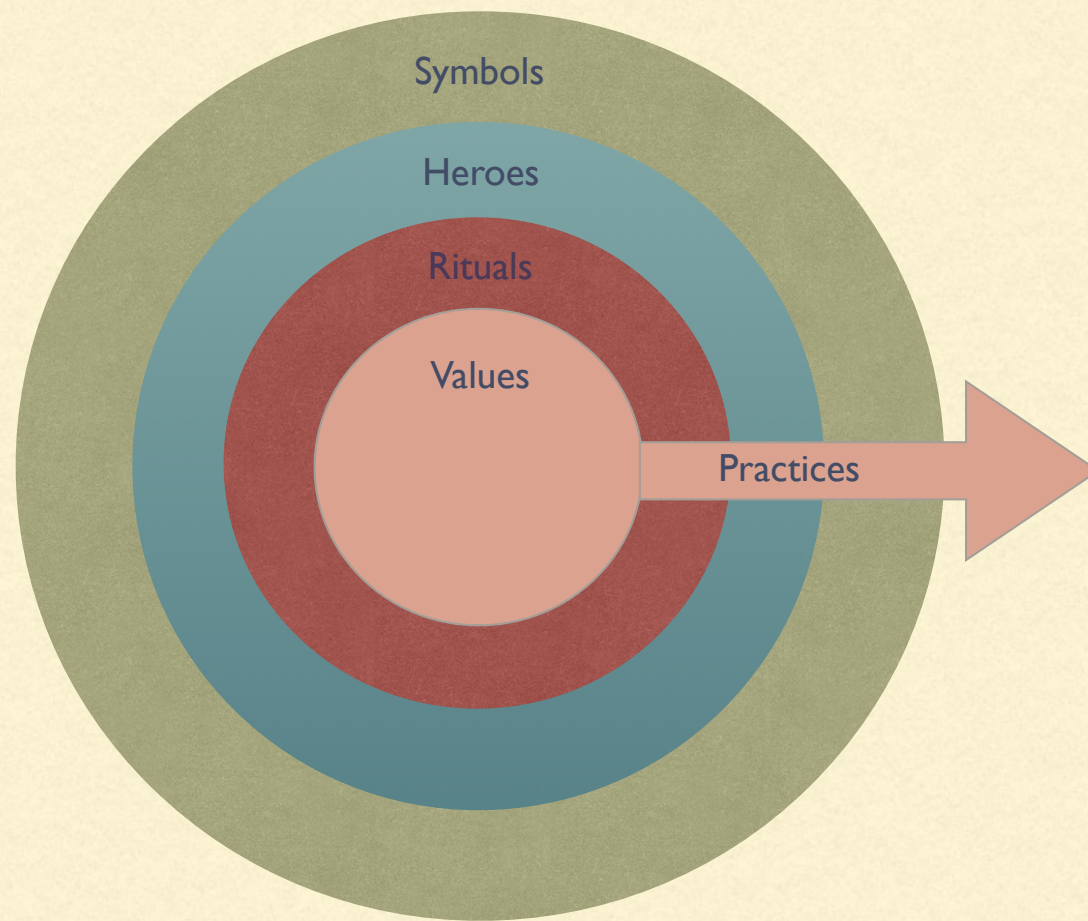
PSYCHOLOGICAL OBSTACLES

- Drop in the Bucket Effect
 - Identifiable Victim Effect
 - Confirmation Bias
 - Doubt / Uncertainty
 - Intellectual vs. Emotional
 - Tragedy of the Commons
 - Us vs. Them
 - Fallacy of Material Fulfillment
 - Too Many Choices Paralysis
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MENTAL MODELS

- Hidden assumptions
 - Irrational fear when hidden assumptions and values are threatened
 - **Positive Remedies to Replace**
 - **Curiosity, Challenge, Cooperation**
 - **SUCCES**
-

CULTURE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS*



* www.tamu.edu/faculty/choudhury/culture.html

EXTRINSIC REWARDS

The Fallacy of Material Fulfillment

- Money
 - Image and social standing
 - Power
-

INTRINSIC REWARDS

Priorities Correlated with Self-Reported Happiness

- Personal growth
 - Meaningful, close, trusted relationships
 - Feeling of making a contribution outside yourself
-

WHAT IS OUR STORY?

- Growth = Success?
 - Consuming More = Better?
 - Unfettered Competition = Survival?
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CREATING A NEW STORY

- Personal Growth = Success
 - Connecting More = Better
 - Sustained Cooperation = Survival
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CREATING COALITIONS

SAFETY
POSSIBILITY
COMMUNITY

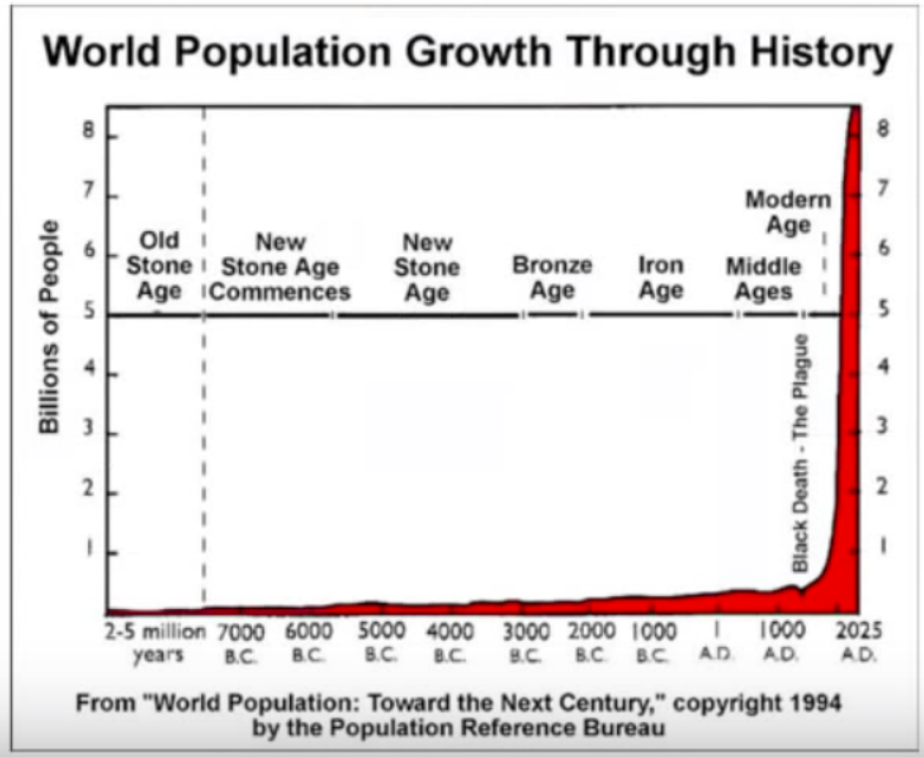
*“Unless people fully realize
the extent to which the planet is in peril,
people will fail to do
enough to save it.”*

- Martin Nowak, *SuperCooperators*
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INTERVENTIONS

- Accurate diagnosis of the system
 - Specific predictions about the present system's ineffectiveness & factors that may increase ineffectiveness
 - Changes necessary and the sequence with which they may be brought about
 - Knowledge of resisting forces and strategies for neutralizing
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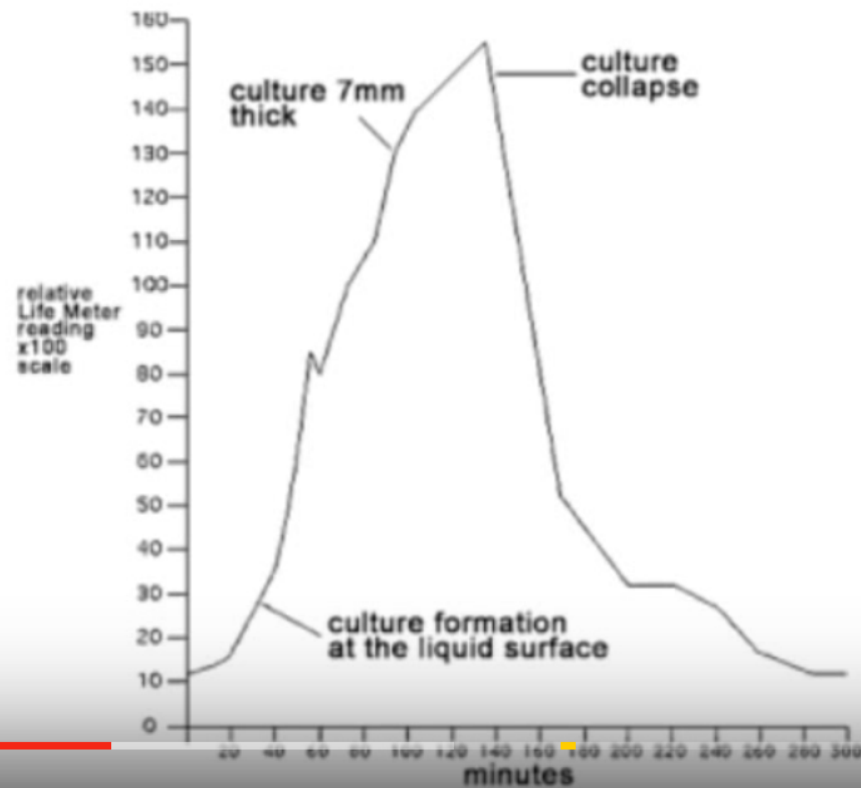
Human Population Longer History



▶ ⏩ 🔊 2:32 / 16:02

CC ⚙️ 📺 🗉

Yeast Growth in Culture



WE CAN DO IT!

Remember the Four “R’s”

- Re-Imagine
 - Resist
 - Reform
 - Re-Create
-

POPE FRANCIS IN *LAUDATO SI'*

Given the complexity of the ecological crisis and its multiple causes,
we need to realize that the **solutions**
will not emerge from just one way
of **interpreting** and **transforming reality**.

Respect must also be shown for the **various cultural riches** of different peoples,
their **art** and **poetry**,
their **interior life and spirituality**.

If we are truly concerned to develop an ecology
capable of remedying the damage we have done,
no branch of the sciences and
no form of wisdom
can be left out,
and that includes religion
and the language particular to it.

STICKY IDEAS*

- Easy to remember
- They change something
- Political slogans
- Proverbs
- Fairy tales

* Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *Making It Stick*

“STICKINESS” = “SUCCESSION”

- Simplicity
 - Unexpectedness
 - Concreteness
 - Credibility
 - Emotions
 - Stories
-

A FOOT IN THE DOOR

Three Questions to Ask

- Who am I?
 - What kind of situation am I in?
 - What does someone like me do in a situation like this?
-

CORE MESSAGE

*“We’re going to put a man on the moon
and return him safely
by the end of the decade.”
- JFK*

- **S**imple, **U**nexpected, **C**oncise, **C**redible, **E**motion, **S**tory
-

DEMOCRACY AND LEADERSHIP

- People want to be “normal”
 - Reputation and standing are deep needs
 - Nature abhors a vacuum
 - 10% shift changes the whole
 - People align their lives with their values
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EXAMPLES FROM HISTORY

- Women and the vote
 - Civil war and end of slavery
 - Moses and the Israelites
 - Washington crossing the Delaware
 - RADAR during WWII
 - Surrender of Japan by Emperor Hirohito
 - Cuban Missile Crisis: JFK and Khrushchev
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COALITIONS

- People are relational
 - Networks of diversity create strength
 - “Systems Change” and “Systems Thinking”
 - Natural coalition: environmental, social, and economic justice
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SUMMARY

- We're in motion
 - We are driven by our values
 - How can we connect and build coalitions?
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LOCAL RESOURCES

- Transition Durham
 - NC Interfaith Power and Light
 - NC WARN
 - NC Climate Justice
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REFERENCES

- Chris Argyris, *Intervention Theory and Method: A Behavioral Science View*
 - Dan Ariely, *The Upside of Irrationality*
 - Barbara Fredrickson, *Love 2.0*
 - Jonathan Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis*
 - Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*
 - Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking: Fast and Slow*
 - Martin Nowak, *SuperCooperators: Altruism, Evolution, and Why We Need Each Other to Succeed*
 - Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*
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