

§4 The Prophetic Promise

The Prophetic Promise

Happiness is not so difficult:

When you have rooted greed out of your own heart,

Here is enlightened sharing:

Realizing you are not the only wise person in the world,

We project ourselves onto others:

You will envision that other people can do the same.

We bond with mankind:

By then you have made the Ernstraudian beginning and the rest is history about to be lived anew.

Ernstraud Magazine

volume 1, number 1 :: 08 August 2011 :: Written by the publisher

happiness sharing as a way to peace

Publisher: Kent V. Busse, 1660 W 104 Street, Chicago, IL 60643-2823, USA

Free distribution: www.ernstraud.org ; ISSN 2164-4926

Copyright © 2011 Kent V. Busse. You have an unlimited license to reproduce the content in any place, manner and quantity, in whole or in part, if you include the credit "Used by permission of Ernstraud Magazine."

§1 Pumping Gasoline

Oregon has required motorists to employ attendants to pump motor fuel. While I welcome increasing employment, especially when it includes interaction between people, this particular interaction is very difficult because under "full service" in Illinois, attendants used to top off my tank--a practice that is totally unacceptable. My knee-jerk reaction is to tax the motor fuel to provide more beneficial jobs, like playground supervision or parks beautification.

However, in the Oregonian setting, I should support the majority program if my suggestion does not carry the day. If my heart is in the right place, I will make the best of my situation. Instead of idly complaining that someone might spill gasoline on my fender, I will seize the opportunity to hop out of my car and see how well I can charm the attendant's day without micromanaging. The car will survive, I will be significantly happier, and the attendant will pass on the feeling of peace and well-being to other customers during the day. My cooperation will not only increase the peace in the legislature, it will also increase the peace in the mundane local world.

In case you missed it, please note that this allegory might be just the pattern we need in the heat of the current budget battles.

§ 3 Throwing Family to the Wolves

*You cannot outrun the wolf. No deer can do that.
All you need to do is to outrun the slowest deer.*

* * *

We do not apply the above maxim to the human family. We do not throw our family members to the wolves in order to preserve ourselves--or do we?

Instead of encouraging the elite few to survive, humans think about how all of us might survive. We try to build shelters, grow crops, control threats, and overcome disasters for the preservation of the whole family.

We don't have to put the slowest deer on a stretcher to be carried by the other deer. We develop more sophisticated response techniques so that the slowest deer can run at its modest best and still survive. We learn to identify and manage the wolf for the benefit of our whole family. Both the pain and the glory will touch all of us.

* * *

* * *

The pages of this magazine stimulate you to think about differing approaches to some of mankind's affairs. The substance of the Ernstraud content is positive attitude, not final solutions. Positive attitudes lead to cooperation in action.

§ 2 Positive Relationships for Success

Survival Guide

The will to live in harmonious fullness

It takes a community!

Success coaches teach us that millionaires do not feel they have *enough*.

Survival (happiness) is our *positive relationships* with other people.

(This happens to be the fundamental rule of business success.)

If you put something into the common pot (frequently called "friends"), later you will not find it empty.

Let it include everyone you meet.

The need to be social is fundamental within us.

We practice our **empathy skills** in family, workplace, neighborhood, and community. Transforming **our** hearts will transform the government because we will choose leaders who represent what we are--people who can work together constructively.

§4 I'm So Glad I Could Talk

Customers are always happy to hear their pianos after I tune them. Is that the only happiness they share with me? No, my other obligation is to be so kind that the customers say to themselves "I'm so glad I could talk to Kent today."

Peace activism is not only fine-tuning an institution like taxation or social welfare. It is also a commitment to delivering the message so that the audience will say "I'm so glad I interacted with Kent today." Indeed, if I do not inspire that happiness in my listener, there is little chance that my message will have a positive effect.

Undertaking to be against something constitutes being in opposition. **Progress**, on the other hand, is a matter of being in support of something. *Peace building lifts the self-esteem and happiness of the parties to the peace.*

When I try to tune two people who think they hate each other, it is crucial for both of them to conclude "I'm so glad I could talk to Kent today."

Ernstraud Magazine

volume 1, number 2 :: 05 September 2011 :: Written by the publisher

happiness sharing as a way to peace

Publisher: Kent V. Busse, 1660 W 104 Street, Chicago, IL 60643-2823, USA

Free distribution: www.ernstraud.org ; ISSN 2164-4926

Copyright © 2011 Kent V. Busse. You have an unlimited license to reproduce the content in any place, manner and quantity, in whole or in part, if you include the credit "Used by permission of Ernstraud Magazine."

§1 How to get to a Flat Tax

The fair road to a flat income tax is bedded on *flat incomes*. As long as there is any form of income disparity, **caring** people will apply tax policy to repair the damage.

We humans are hard-wired to rise to our highest capability; we do not require money incentives to get us there. If strawberry pickers were paid as much as lawyers, I would still choose to become a lawyer. In appropriate numbers, strawberry pickers and other laborers are as necessary, and should be paid as much, as this lawyer.

People with extraordinary needs or incapacitations require extra consideration. It will probably work out more smoothly to create exceptional channels, other than tax breaks, for delivering their needs and keeping them as productive as they can be.

When we have spread the jobs and resources evenly, we are ready for a simple flat tax that will be fair to everyone.

§ 2 Labor Day Celebration

When I grew up in the Space Age, Labor Day seemed to celebrate the struggle of the common man against inhuman exploitation. The parties to labor disputes had been bitterly pitted in opposition to each other, and in this adversarial setting, workers had united to assert their dignity and overcome the greed of management. The power of collective bargaining had won improved working conditions.

Is it necessary for one side to lose when the other side wins?

Now that my adulthood falls into the Information Age, the names have changed. "Personnel Department" has become "Human Resources Department" to acknowledge that every worker is to be nurtured and cultivated to his or her full potential. By cooperating in a common enterprise, we accomplish more than by directing our energies against each other. Although we have not yet achieved equal pay between the top management and the bottom entry level, we have come a long way in recognizing that worker morale is the key to productivity. Without coercion or confrontation, enlightened employers respect and encourage human dignity as never before. We improve our lives together.

Let us hope that every Labor Day will celebrate further understanding of our shared life within the human family.

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Deming and <http://deming.org/> for background discussion of the philosophy of Dr. W. Edwards Deming, 1900-1993.

§ 3 The Open Mike Gaffe

"If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all."

Diplomacy protects us from the embarrassing "open microphone" gaffe. How many public speakers have spoiled their images by saying or whispering out of place comments when they *thought* the microphone was switched off! Before the press examines our embarrassing words, let us examine our own hearts. Why should we harbor thoughts that we must not speak?

Of course some facts are confidential and there are good reasons we do not divulge them. On the other hand, a typical gaffe reveals an opinion or feeling that is more negative than factual. We can avoid blurting out something of that nature by not entertaining the thought in the first place. Instead of biting our tongues, we civilize our thinking.

For example, we can focus on the positive. The phrase "Joe just doesn't understand negotiation" should have been *perceived* as "Joe and I haven't agreed yet; we have some ground to cover before we take action." When I sincerely respect Joe's side of an issue, even my unguarded comments will display that respect and further a good working relationship. I won't blurt out any hurtful thoughts because my *attitude* will be kind and positive. Indeed, we manifest the good in ourselves when we can recognize *and address it in others.*

This does apply to the "other" candidates for political office.

§4 Do Healthy Lives Cost Jobs?

Recent headlines have asserted that curbing environmental pollution will cost **jobs**. On the other hand, rampant pollution is known to cost **lives**. Let us change the job situation so that we do not perpetuate injurious conditions--so that *full employment will not kill people*.

Let us preserve physical, mental, and spiritual health: physical health as in freedom from man-made hazards and preventable diseases; mental health as in positive attitudes of loving ourselves so that we have love to share with others; spiritual health as in developing empathy which promotes equal well-being throughout the whole human family.

An economic system takes known natural and human resources and distributes them over measurable needs. If the system rewards some people at the expense of others, we seek to adjust the system so that it will serve all of us fairly. It takes resolve to reduce pollution health risks first, then arrange the economic consequences accordingly, constructively absorbing the workforce which was previously generating environmental damage. We are not slaves to the present harmful state of affairs, and must not be passive victims of bad conditions. Intelligence is the ability to reconfigure society's demands so that the jobs we ask people to do are constructive, not destructive. We will redistribute social burdens to reduce environmental health costs and to distribute the resulting costs fairly over a healthier population: we will create the right jobs.

It does take some social cooperation to achieve this net result. Shall we set out together to get there?

Ernstraud Magazine

volume 1, number 3 :: 03 October 2011 :: Written by the publisher

happiness sharing as a way to peace

Publisher: Kent V. Busse, 1660 W 104 Street, Chicago, IL 60643-2823, USA

Free distribution: www.ernstraud.org ; ISSN 2164-4926

Copyright © 2011 Kent V. Busse. You have an unlimited license to reproduce the content in any place, manner and quantity, in whole or in part, if you include the credit "Used by permission of Ernstraud Magazine."

§1 Proving To You That You Can Do It

In one specific area, my job performance was 80% failure. My supervisors could have said "we won't give you another assignment in that field until *you* prove to *us* that you can do it." Instead, they took the approach "*we* are going to prove to *you* that you can do it." They gave me an easy assignment and plenty of time. Success changed my self image.

Can we generally have this effect on people around us? Can we prove to our neighbors that they can do the right thing? I have been called on to tune pianos in messy settings. The pianos soon match their surroundings: paper wads, pieces of candy, toys, pencils and other objects are strewn all over and within the instruments. In contrast, clean and tidy surroundings set up the expectation of good behavior, and the well-respected pianos remain clean and properly maintained.

Now the great leap of faith: if people grumble when plastic grocery bags are outlawed, can we encourage good behavior and let people demonstrate their ability to do the right thing? If we "environmental" voters bring our own canvas bags and set a cheerful example, do you suppose we can influence our neighbors by using exemplary actions instead of laws?

§ 2 A Poem about Generation

The house I occupy
Does not shelter the presently homeless.
If I did not have a house either,
How would the homeless come to
Recognize his homelessness?

Except for minerals like salt,
What I eat was once alive.
Did I bring about its death?
Because my food did not spring forth
spontaneously in the wild,
It was cultivated for my consumption.
Did I bring about its life?

Physically I am the top of a food chain.
Intellectually there is not even a
Definition for the top of the chain.
Is my intellectual death (wrongness)
Or my life (rightness)(house)
Merely a prerequisite for
The next element in the chain?

04 December 2004

§ 3 Civilization: the Absence of Retribution

Those who do *not* intend public correctional institutions to be instruments of rehabilitation and redemption are the people who are still waiting to realize their own redemption. Let us extend patience and hope to these people.

Just as hurting people hurt people,
so do healed people heal people.
One road to healing is to heal others.
Remember,
what you give out is what comes back to you.



Prisoners may obtain some relief through talking about themselves, taking classes, and otherwise developing themselves. Beyond that, however, lies the even more powerful personal growth that comes through fostering some other life form. The "bird man of Alcatraz" is one illustration of the healing influence obtained from living beings. Gardening, forestry, farming, animal husbandry, nature conservation, pet care--anything involved with nurturing living things--will be therapeutic, uplifting, and inspiring to those who need help improving their own lives.

Employers, **unite!** For starters, if we **all** pledge that no family will receive total compensation more than double the median household income, grossly excessive salaries are gone. The saved resources provide for research, increase starting salaries, improve working conditions, and lower prices--in other words, they raise the standard of living in society at large.

Since the formula really is so simple, it is tempting to find targets to blame. However, blame is not a constructive mindset; it is akin to cursing the darkness. Lighting a candle is overcoming the present disease at all levels, focusing on improvement. *First, parents teach children to reciprocate parental love and generosity. Families provide the earliest environment for acting out empathy. Schoolteachers elucidate ways to collaborate and not to compete. Graduates refuse to be paid more than average total compensation. It then follows that united employers keep the above pledge to pay no more than average income. As a mathematical consequence, without fabrication of nonexistent imaginary resources, nobody is paid less than average income.*

These positive steps can be accomplished without conformist utopian institutions and without the tyranny of government coercion. They are to be implemented by the voluntary good will of the people who will benefit the most: *all of us!* It has been said there are two kinds of Americans--those who are rich and those who plan to become rich. That individual mindset prevents achieving an egalitarian society through techniques such as progressive taxation. The cure begins with the pledge "I will never be rich." Fortified with that foundation, we do not depend on government to legislate our morality.

All right, back to my original question: Fellow Americans, do we really hate each other? When will we love each other enough to collaborate? Our happiness awaits.

Ernstraud Magazine

volume 1, number 4 :: 10 November 2011 :: Written by the publisher

happiness sharing as a way to peace

Publisher: Kent V. Busse, 1660 W 104 Street, Chicago, IL 60643-2823, USA

Free distribution: www.ernstraud.org ; ISSN 2164-4926

Copyright © 2011 Kent V. Busse. You have an unlimited license to reproduce the content in any place, manner and quantity, in whole or in part, if you include the credit "Used by permission of Ernstraud Magazine."

§1 I Should Compromise?

Have you told your elected representative not to compromise? Shame on you! -- Of course, that depends on what you mean by compromise. We praise "I will not compromise myself" when that means shunning graft. We disrespect "I will not compromise the exact details of the plan that I am proposing." That proposal divides; it does not govern.

The purpose of government is to meet human needs. If we have no needs in common, we lose our purpose to have a government. The reason to elect legislators is to address our shared needs.

Once we identify a shared need, we can fairly have a diversity of plans aimed at meeting the need. When those plans become personal hobby horses aimed at popularity and influence, they are no longer properly aimed at our needs. They obstruct constructive collaboration.

We assemble "the assembly" in order to work out the details of our common enterprises. If you and I propose completely divergent details, our task is to discover or create new details acceptable to both of us. Failing that, we cannot be governed; the law remains silent.

Let us say to our elected representatives: "We have hired you not for your sugar-coated campaigning, but for your ability to cooperate and create something that does not yet exist." Those who understand will liberally share the credit when the task is accomplished.

§ 2 Non-Governmental Organization

In international relations, a non-governmental organization (NGO) is well recognized and accepted as an agency for providing social services without having law-making authority. It is time to extend the same principle to the neighborhood level.

Cultural diversity in the United States has reached the point where unanimity is hard to achieve. We have probably always been unanimous in condemning murder and stealing, but never in embracing a particular religion. Where we agree, it has been relatively easy to codify behaviors through public laws. Where we disagree, public laws have been slow to emerge or to endure the test of time.

The absence of agreement leaves a social void; we might even disagree about whether there is a void that needs to be filled. Some of us feel freed from unwanted control, while others feel a need to be grounded in something identifiable. This is hardly an area where a single government prescription will fit all of the people.

So how do we address the areas where we differ so fundamentally? The individual does not benefit by being cut loose and set adrift. There remains a need to be social; it is fundamental within us to do things together. We have reservations about surrendering to social control while we value the positive reinforcement of social support. Herein lies the nub of nongovernmental organization: we seek institutions which combine our efforts, that is, organize us, while they do not impose controls over us. We band together in voluntary associations according to our own preferences.

The key to utilizing NGOs is to identify which social functions need to be governed by public laws and which prosper under voluntary associations. In some places, the employer provides the social glue that encompasses needs outside the workplace. Elsewhere, patronage and party loyalty provide a social framework. Religious practice routinely involves comprehensive social participation. Secular community organizations engage the public for shared activities that address shared needs.

We need NGOs in areas where we are not unanimous. We need the flexibility to socialize without surrender to uniform control, and seek to perfect the associations that help us to do so.

§ 3 Why do Americans Hate Each Other?

How do I know Americans hate each other? I watch their behavior: they compete *against* each other. By perpetuating a system that bestows its wealth on the most aggressive and most greedy, many people around me demonstrate a poverty of empathy and understanding. They have surrendered happiness.

Having no enemies to hate, I must propose a conjecture: I would have to hate a person terribly to want to force him to live on less than I have. Lacking that hate, I cannot take more than my fair share out of the common pot. Indeed, I cannot abide that some individuals take less than my share out of that same pot.

There is a demeaning myth that excellent human performance is motivated only by fear or greed. This myth denies the personal satisfaction that comes from good performance. Dignity is doing my best in return for my fair share of resources. A company robs me of that dignity when it offers unequal wealth in order to bribe me to amass an unfair share for myself or for my company.

The corporate myth maintains that talented individuals will leave the company if they are denied these excessive bribes. In other words, *if I promise never to pay anyone more than average income*, all the executives in my company will quit. Enter collective bargaining: if all the companies around me make the same promise, where shall the overpriced executives go? They will find themselves thankful when they have an income at all, and their job satisfaction will come from good performance, not from bribes.

It is essential not to have an underclass of people who are so desperate that they will compete against (undersell) each other and force wages down. At the other end of the payscale, it is important not to let companies compete against each other to force elitist wages up!