

THE ESSENTIAL CORE OF DRAGON DREAMING: SPREADING THE CHANGE

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ABSTRACT: *Cultural Creativity lies at the core of Dragon Dreaming (needing updating)*

Who are we? The book "Cultural Creatives" proposes the USA is split between three cultures.

Firstly we have the Modernists as follows

8% 11 million American adults are "Business conservatives", upper middle to upper class people, of whom 59% are in the top income level. For them modernism and capitalism are working and they want it keep that way

12% 23 million American adults are "conventional moderns". They dislike the cultures of "traditionals" and "cultural creatives". They are cynical about politics and disgruntled about society, but work hard for private family interest.

13% 25 million American adults are the "striving centre". Just below middle income, they strive for upward mobility and success and inclusion, white collar, lower paid professionals and small business people, lean to conservative religion.

15% 29 million American adults are "alienated moderns", including a large proportion of "angry white males", and about 50% drawn from the blue collar workforce. These are falling into poverty as a result of economic globalisation.

Total 51% of the population

The first "counter culture" to this - which started over a century ago as a reaction to the moderns are the "traditionals".

They are split into two

10% 14 million American adults "new traditionals" are the Moral Majority types, politically active, anti-abortion, anti feminist, fundamentalist, upwardly mobile, defend private ownership (form an alliance with "business conservatives" on many matters)

14% 19 million American adults "old conservatives" who distrust politicians and politics. Anti-big money, small town, family values, religiously conservative, generally downwardly mobile. Farmers, small business people.

Cultural Creatives are roughly equally split between

12% 24 million Adult Americans are the "core creatives" who openly espouse Cultural Creative values. Post consumer, they espouse ecology and environmentalism, feminism, support alternative health care, self actualisation, peace, social justice, participatory democracy and spiritual growth (rather than religious conservatism).

13% 26 million American adults are "green cultural creatives", follow environmental concerns or social issues. Of average interest in the spiritual or personal-growth dimension of cultural creatives, are less well educated and less activist than the core group.

Cultural Creatives are the last of the three cultures to emerge, having emerged as a result of the 1960s generation and their "children" and cultural successors. About 60% of Cultural Creatives are women.

Cultural creatives are the fastest growing group. They have grown from 5% of the population in 1985, so both traditional and modern numbers have been declining.

If this analysis by Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson, based on close interviews of 100,000 people are correct, we could expect there would be three sets of "memeplexes" currently competing for adherents in America at the moment.

It is interesting that there are different attitudes between these various groups. There is also a growing split between these groups over most issues, and a constant jockeying and alliance building for adherents and power to be able to "swing supporters" into action about different issues.

There is much that I have written or am writing about Dragon Dreaming. Some people ask me what is the core documents they need to read first. Others have asked can they translate this material. But as you know Dragon Dreaming is a wheel, one can really start at any point on its surface, proceeding in the direction that captures their interests. But as those that are in any way familiar with the work know, this wheel is in fact a spiral, a double spiral, a double helix. It spirals into the core of who we are as human beings, in this time and place, and at the same time it spirals outwards into the wider world, transforming our relations with others, both human and the more than human beings we share our lives with. It reaches deeply into the past, and extends out towards the future. So feel free to create your own path through these materials.

To help those interested in translating this material into other languages I recommend you start with the following Documents. They contain the core of the Dragon Dreaming approach that is different than other approaches.

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FACT SHEET NUMBER #6

INTRODUCTION: MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE:

USING DRAGON DREAMING TO BUILD AN OUTRAGEOUSLY SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

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FACT SHEET NUMBER #7

INTRODUCTION: MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE:

HOW TO BUILD AN OUTRAGEOUSLY SUCCESSFUL PROJECT: A COMPREHENSIVE STAGE APPROACH

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FACT SHEET NUMBER #12

HOW TO RUN A DRAGON DREAMING CREATION CIRCLE : A FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

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FACT SHEET NUMBER #21

PLANNING A PROJECT - HOW TO CREATE A KARABIRDT: A FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

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Remember though, the core principle of Dragon Dreaming. These materials are not the “core” of the method. The core of the method is actually in using the approaches for your own projects. They are the map, not the territory you must cross, they are the menu or the recipe, not the meal. The true core of Dragon Dreaming is actually walking the territory, or in cooking and eating the meal.

ORGANISING YOUR OWN DRAGON DREAMING WORKSHOP

A large number of people are interested in how to run a Dragon Dreaming workshop for their area or project. The following guide is intended to help such people.

Dragon Dreaming uses living systems theory, deep ecology and Australian Aboriginal wisdom in the process of making people's dreams come true by building sustainable projects and organisations for the "Great Turning" of our culture, as it moves away from the empire building of the Industrial Growth Civilisation of endless consumerism, towards the life sustaining culture of the future. It works by building projects that meet the three objectives of the Gaia Foundation, namely, that projects all work for

- **personal growth** - commitment to your own healing and empowerment
- **community building** - strengthening the communities of which you are a part
- **service to the Earth** - enhancing the wellbeing and flourishing of all life

To organise a Dragon Dreaming workshop that delivers on these promises, firstly, make sure you build your own "Dream Team" for such an activity. The Dream Team should be a group of 4-6 people who come together to make the workshop happen. The way you build your Dream Team is to invite friends, neighbours, colleagues, work-mates, acquaintances or other people you can identify who may be interested in the core of Dragon Dreaming. There are in the Dragon Dreaming materials, particular fact sheets that are of assistance to the work that your Dream Team undertakes.

Using charismatic communication (See Fact Sheet Number #10), share with them your passion for this work, use the Dreaming Circle (See Fact Sheet Number #12) process, of the Generative Question, "What would the organisation of a Dragon Dreaming workshop have to be like so that you could say it was the best way you could have spent your time?" Collect the results and these then become the basis of your working together.

Once your team is clear about what they hope to achieve as a result of organising such a workshop, create your own Karabirrdt to help with making this dream come true (See Fact Sheet Number #21). Remember, the essence of a Karabirrdt is to "play a game together that makes our dreams come true". This will enable you to see how much work needs to be done to make the training successful.

There are a number of principles by which this should work. Firstly, it is a general principle of the Gaia Foundation of Western Australia that the organisers of any training activities, do not have to pay, they come for free. In a sense, the work they do as volunteers is their payment. Decide who should be the trainer? There are now a number of trained trainers in this work, in Germany, England, Austria and Switzerland who are quite capable of running a Dragon Dreaming Introductory or Intensive workshop. There are also video materials now available, on the web, that give some help. Although of course there are always exceptions, it is usually best that a person who seeks to become a trainer first attends a Dragon Dreaming Train the Trainer workshop. It is also important that the person selected to be the trainer should be familiar with the materials and have run at least 2 projects, each of not less than 6 months duration, using the method. It is also important that new facilitators to Dragon Dreaming work initially as co-facilitators with an experienced leader, as this will help in uncovering potential pits and traps in advance.

Organising costs for the workshop are important. In addition to any costs for venue hire, accommodation, cooking or meal preparation, publicity, printing of materials, there is also the

matter of payment for the transport accommodation and work of the facilitator. Generally again, in the Gaia Foundation of Western Australia, we have adopted the principle that all transport and accommodation for the trainer is met by the organisers.

PAYMENT FOR FACILITATORS

What should facilitators of Dragon Dreaming get paid? The essence is that Dragon Dreaming provide a fair remuneration, not an excessive profit for either organisers or facilitator/presenters. From experience each contact hour generates at least 4 hours of extra work for the trainer, in either the preparation of materials, clarifying the time tables and content for sessions, follow up with organisers, or else follow up after the workshop. Facilitators should work out how many hours of work they will be doing at the training event, and multiply it by 5. This would give a true estimate of the amount of time they will be spending on this work. What it means is that generally a one day workshop generates a week's work.

Facilitators of Dragon Dreaming charge fairly. To work out their hourly rate it is important that they first find out what is the average hourly rate for work in the country or region where they live. This is the rate they then charge. People charging more than this for an hourly rate are not recognised as official Dragon Dreaming Trainers. Buyer beware!

How to work out the costs to participants? Firstly, although smaller workshops in exceptional cases are possible, from experience I strongly recommend that any Dragon Dreaming workshop should have at least ten paying trainers. These ten should at a minimum cover all the costs needed for the trainer. Thus, with a team of 4 organisers, this means that the minimum number coming to a workshop should be 14 people. Should you have more than 14 (and there is no limit to the numbers a highly experienced trainer can handle), the extra people coming will generate a surplus. This surplus can be used in one of three ways.

1. It can be used to reduce the cost of attendance for each person present.
2. It can be used to provide a number of free or reduced scholarship places for those who have difficulty meeting the payments but are really keen to attend.
3. It can be used to establish a small grant scheme to any worthwhile projects that come out of the workshop.

It is important to note here some essential factors. Firstly note that the surplus is not split up as a bonus or a profit for the organisers or for the trainer. This is because an essential feature of the economic model that lies behind Dragon Dreaming is that unearned profit represents essentially a theft from the community. Secondly, it is important that everyone pay for the training. From experience we have found that people who come completely free generally are less committed than those who pay. They are generally not so committed to using the methods for their own projects, may be disruptive for the more serious learners, and generally forget what they have learned the fastest. This principle that everyone pays may sound in contradiction with the principle of the Gaia Foundation that no-one ever gets turned away for lack of money. But there is a way in which this contradiction is overcome.

One way is that those having difficulty paying can get a reduction if they can find a friend or acquaintance interested in coming too. They can also practice “Empowered Fundraising” (Fact Sheet Number #27) to raise the money necessary for the workshop through seeking sponsorship from others for their training. In Western Australia, we generally ask people who are having difficulty meeting the costs to let us know in advance as quickly as possible. Those who are having difficulty are then introduced to others in the same category, and they together have organised their own pre workshop Dragon Dreaming project to raise the funds through a film evening, a collective meal or some other events. People reading this have no idea on the personal growth and empowerment such an approach has on the lives of the people in this situation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE TO THE EARTH

There is another important principle for Dragon Dreaming workshops, indeed for all Gaia events. It is important that those people who come to a Dragon Dreaming workshop actually practice the Gaian principles listed above. All training is part of the personal growth of each person involved. It builds a sense of community amongst participants that is ongoing (and from our experience may last for years). But it is important that all training work in service to the Earth. This is done in various ways. For instance, what is the “carbon footprint” involved in the work. If air-fares of trainers are involved, how do you “green the miles” of the people involved, to make the event “carbon neutral”? With the food needed for the event, try to make sure that this is locally grown and prepared organic food is possible. Frequently in Western Australia, we have organised workshops as residential affairs (sleeping and celebrating together is facilitated in these circumstances). In such cases we consider food preparation and even child care as important gifts to the Earth. To help minimise the costs we have often asked people to bring food to share for the number of meals that the group is together. Trust is important here. The group then becomes a self-organising system “safely out of control” for the duration of the workshop, with all participants taking turns in food preparation, the dishes, or in cleaning the venue afterwards. We also believe in leaving venues in a better condition than they were when we arrived. This is one reason why in Western Australia we have found that Seminar Centres have always been pleased with the Gaia Foundation events and Dragon Dreaming work we have done, and are pleased to have us return!

Building time for these “Services to the Earth” into the workshop is important. It also helps reduce the burden for the logistics and organising work needed by the “Dream Team”, preventing burnout. In fact, often at the start of workshops in Western Australia we have found a useful principle is for the Dream Team to introduce themselves, and then promptly resign. In such cases, they may have prepared check-lists of tasks that are necessary to make the event run smoothly and participants divide up into self-organising working parties for the Administration, Accommodation, Meal organising, Program Support, Childcare or other matters as and when they arise, in advance. Remember Dragon Dreaming creates a way for us to “play our projects”, the more playful you as organisers can make the event – the better. Organising outrageously successful events is a skill that is useful always to Dragon Dreamers. Fact Sheet Number #11 is of help here. The Fact Sheet on Self Managed Conference Design is also useful, (see Fact Sheet Number #24).

Finally, don't forget, those who become organisers need to build in a celebration after the event has been held to complete the Dragon Dreaming process. The costs for this celebration too are a legitimate project cost. Groups organising Dragon Dreaming projects have celebrated through sharing a movie, a meal in a restaurant, picnics with families and children and many other ways, with the expenses for these events being paid for by the project.

Good luck!

ONE PERSON MAKES A DIFFERENCE

THE POWER OF THE VOLUNTEER

Another 22 year old Australian Juan Mann has started an international campaign of "free hugs" for strangers in public places, that has also spread around the world. Uploaded on UTube it is officially the most watched video, with more than 70 million viewers. Free Hugs day is the first Saturday after the 30th June every year, and it too has spread around the world. Another Australian campaign that has spread around the world is the brainchild of Ian Kiernan.

In 1987 his dream came true and he had a chance to sail around the world. Sailing through the Sargasso Sea, he was horrified at the rubbish that was floating in the water. To make a difference, in 1989 on returning to Australia he started cleaning up Sydney Harbour, which grew into Cleanup Australia Day – now the nation's biggest environmental action. A group of Estonians took on the initiative and began "Cleanup Estonia" and from there the movement has now also spread around the world. Such gifts have the power to motivate change in a way few other things can.

Attila Heiki, a Finnish man, has been taking the clean-up message around the world.