

## THE UNIVERSALITY OF THESE PRINCIPLES

by Dr. D.H. (Dee) Groberg

The principles contained in the Seven Habits and Principle-Centered Leadership appear to be as valid in Brazil, India, and Malaysia as they are in the United States and Canada. They are as effective for Hindus, Moslems, and Buddhist—or any other religious or cultural group—as they are for Christians.

As director of International Operations, I have now taught 7-Habits and/or Principle-Centered Leadership in 16 countries. Many of these presentations have been at international conferences, so there were representatives from many more nations, cultures, backgrounds, and faiths. Each time I have found that the participants resonate to these principles as a foundation for what they want to achieve. But more interestingly, they not only value these principles, but claim ownership of them. They don't just say "Thank you for introducing these new ideas," but rather say, "Thank you for reminding us of what we have always known. These principles have always been a part of our culture, our heritage, and our values." This wording says a lot about the universality of the principles. For example:

**Malaysia:** Moslem participants claim these teachings are found in the Koran.

**Indonesia:** A high level executive said that he had always believed these things but our materials gave him a practical way of living them.

**Japan:** People relate them to the teachings of Buddha and the Bushido code of the Samurai.

**Hong Kong:** Participants say that these ideas are contained in the teachings of Confucian and Mencius.

**India:** Participants ask how I knew so much about Hinduism as these teachings seemed to be straight from the ancient Bhagavad Gita writings.

**Mexico:** Participants claim the teachings are at the heart of their values.

**Philippines:** They resonate around them as principles that are central to their culture.

**Europe:** My experience in Europe with representatives from several nations and cultures has been similar to my experience elsewhere: they accept the principles as their own.

**Russia:** Participants said that these principles were the old Russian traditions that they had gotten away from for the past 70 years.

None of this should be surprising. I believe that it is a reflection of the fact that these principles are what we claim they are: **timeless, universal, self-evident** and **self-validating** concepts. As such, it would be more surprising if the enduring religions and philosophies did not contain them in some form or another.

While in Russia, I asked a group there the same question that I have asked people throughout the world: "What do you value most?" Their response was consistent to what I have heard everywhere else:

1. **Some aspect of FAMILY** (usually expanded beyond blood relatives)
2. **Some aspect of FREEDOM** (including freedom to contribute in their work, freedom to chart their own path, freedom of health, financial freedom, etc.)
3. **Some aspect of FAITH** (things that **transcend** basic needs, including things such as love integrity, meaning, spirituality, relationship with God, etc.)

This helped me to see people everywhere not as Russians, Chinese, or Indians, but simply as fellow human beings with the same basic needs, hopes, and desires as me. Maybe things such as **FAMILY, FREEDOM,** and **FAITH** are fundamental **HUMAN VALUES** that transcend religions, nations and cultures.

(Continued on Reverse Side...)

While reading the book I have the feeling that I have known all the things in it before. Isn't it strange?

Quote from Elizabeth Nencheva in Sofia, **BULGARIA**

I have read two of your books, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and *Principle-Centered Leadership*, and I must compliment you on the powerful messages they contain. *Seven Habits* is one of the most influential books I have ever read.

Rob Papenfus, **SOUTH AFRICA**-10/23/92

"We regard the information in your book as an important piece in developing our project both from the individual viewpoint as well as from the collective viewpoint. Those of us presently engaged in the project have been working for years in the various fields of psychology and meditative yogic practices which have provided us with tools for dealing with, changing and integrating our physical, psychic, emotional and spiritual selves. The concepts in your book provide a base and framework for our leap into searching and discovering still newer dimensions. The Seven Habits... has become our manual for our collective and internal work with very good results."

Dr. Kalyanika Stauss, Acupuncture Clinic, College, Research Center,  
West Bengal, **INDIA** - 10/14/92

"The book is a classic in its content, format and especially in its masterful organization and presentation of the material. Elegantly written, this stimulating book has motivated me to act. ...The result already has been exciting, positive changes in me and the family."

Tsvi Pasikov, Jerusalem **ISRAEL** - 10/25/92

"If ever there was a country who needed to learn and use the principles conveyed in your book it is South Africa. You appear to be familiar with our country and the problems we face. There is so much for us all, yet we continually get bogged down in a "Win/Lose" scenario rather than aiming for the greater "Win/Win" to the benefit of us all... Like you I believe that there is some greater Being who has set in place natural laws to living which, if we adhere to, we will live satisfying and meaningful lives."

Don Gray, Training Systems, Capetown **SO. AFRICA** - 12/28/92

"The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People...struck a deep, responsive chord, and has been a very moving experience for me. Perhaps the impact was particularly deep because I have been consciously looking for greater meaning in my life, seeking to live it by good, basic values."

Alok Kavan, Management Consultant in **BANGALORE INDIA** - Jan 2 1993

"Yours is a sane voice in a confused and dissonant world. A key point for me is the non-sectarian and universal nature of your message making it applicable to people everywhere for use in their professional and personal lives."

David Parmer, Professionally Speaking Inc., in **TOKYO, JAPAN** - Feb 1993

"Your lecture convinced us that principles that work in the U.S. can be applied in Japan in exactly the same manner. We hope that the principles taught by the Covey Leadership Center will take hold in Japan in the near future."  
Akira Chida - Shin Tokyo Recruit Planning Co. LTD. **TOKYO, JAPAN** - Mar.1,93

## OTHER RUSSIAN OBSERVATIONS

In 1990 I was asked to be the key note speaker at the National Conference on Quality Control in Russia. Approximately 140 delegates from throughout the then Soviet Union were in attendance, as well as a small delegation from China, East Germany, and Romania. The State television crew filmed my presentation and interviewed me on television. From what I could tell, they loved the principles that we teach. At the end they said that if they, the Russians, proceeded to learn the techniques and methodology from the Western world, but do not make **attitudinal changes and paradigm shifts**, they will not be able to make the economic changes that need to be made. Events since then have borne this out.

As I walked through department stores, I saw long lines of people, 20-25 people and more, waiting to buy things. Lines everywhere! I asked my interpreter what he felt of Gorbachev and the reconstruction. He said that it was not enough. He said all the leaders in the past had promised that if people sacrificed now, the future would be bright. "So, what's new with Gorbachev? That's the same thing we've been hearing for the past 70 years." He said he believes that if the October revolution of 70 years ago had not taken place, Russia would probably be at a level of development similar to the United States or at least western Europe. He said the older he gets, the less he believes. I asked him what he does believe. His answer surprised me: "I want to believe in God. I've been taught to be an theist, but I want something consistent to believe in."

Prices were not so high there. There was just nothing to buy. It was hard to spend money. It was difficult just to try to eat. My interpreter and I went to McDonald's but there was a line of 1500 or so people going down to the end of the block, across the street, through the park, and down to the other end of the park. And it was raining. We went to a regular restaurant. No room and long lines. They sent us to a Chinese restaurant. Again, no room. Finally, we went back to the hotel. The restaurant there was full, too. And the coffee shop. My interpreter leaned over to me and announced the chilling truth: "You could starve to death in Russia with money in your pocket." We ended up eating crackers and cheese at the hotel bar.

One of the favorite things for Russians to do is to tell jokes about their situation. This is an indication of the degree of openness (Glasnost) they are experiencing. Here are three of them that I heard while there:

**The first story:** Stalin and Truman were arguing over the degree of freedom their nations had. Truman said, "In America anyone could go to Washington, D.C. and shout 'Down with Truman' and nothing would happen to him." Stalin responded, "We have that same freedom here. Any Russian citizen could go to Red Square and shout 'Down with Truman' too, and nothing would happen to him."

**The second story:** Stalin and Roosevelt were arguing over who had the most loyal subjects. Roosevelt said, "The American people would do anything for me." Stalin said, "The Russian people would do anything for me." They decided to test it out. Each picked an ordinary citizen and asked him to make a special sacrifice for several years for the good of the country. Roosevelt selected an Iowa farmer. Upon being asked to make this sacrifice, the farmer replied, "Oh, I would like to do it but I have a wife and family and parents I'm concerned about, so I can't do it." Stalin selected a Ukrainian farmer. The man responded immediately, "Yes, sir. I will certainly make that sacrifice and do this mission." Roosevelt asked the Ukrainian farmer, "Why were you so willing to do it?" His response was, "Because I have a wife and a family and parents I'm concerned about."

**The last story:** Brezhnev was writing a letter to Krushchev, who had already passed on to the next world. Brezhnev asked, "How are things in the next life? Is there anything that I need to bring?" Krushchev responded, "Yes. Bring your own knife, fork, and spoon." Brezhnev then asked, "Why do I need to bring my own knife, fork, and spoon?" Krushchev replied, "Because when Hitler is in the kitchen, he tries to make us Communists eat with the hammer and sickle."

Someone once asked me what new principles I have learned from other cultures. My answer is that I have not learned new principles of leadership from different cultures. **The basic principles seem to be the same everywhere.** But I have found cultures that apply and implement some of these principles better than others, often better than we Americans do. In many ways we drag behind in our implementation of them.

## DEVELOPMENT OF MAN'S OBJECTIVITY\*

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE</u>
524 BC	Buddhism (Eastern and Southern Asia)	Suffering is inherent in life; liberation by mental and moral self-purification.
501 BC	Confucianism (China)	Social relations.
457 BC	Athenian (Greek) culture	Understanding between rulers and the ruled.
30 AD	Christianity (Global)	Man's relations with other men; man's relations with God; universality. Emphasizes compassion and shared responsibility.
410	End of the Holy Roman Empire	The Dark Ages in Europe.
622	Islam (Middle East and North Africa)	Allah is the sole deity and Muhammad is his prophet. A man's hope of heaven depends on his behavior on earth; compassion is honored; the individual is important. This area did not have an economy that could sustain a culture.
732	Defeat of Moors at Poitiers	Stopped Islam's growth into Western Europe.
1683	Defeat of Turks at Vienna	Stopped Islam's growth into Eastern Europe.
17th century	Hinduism (India)	Social observances; mystical contemplation; practicing self-denial.
1456	Printing press	Ability to transmit ideas and information to large numbers of people.
1517	M. Luther's break with the Catholic Church	Whole body of ideas that followed.
1630	Galileo's conclusions on the Earth and its solar system	Example of man's growing confidence in his ability to examine, measure and predict the physical world around him.
1666	Newton's theory of gravity	Example (shared by Galileo) of objectivity; an insistence on the right to refer any issue to detached inspection.
1775	Declaration of Independence	The principle that no small group of men could write the laws for a much larger number of people, especially if the small group lived in a country far away.
1789-1793	French Revolution	Liberation from pre-fifteenth century constraints on the human mind by a royal autocracy. Some Frenchmen, including Napoleon, thought they could work out, with the force of scientific certainty, a set of general rules for the well being of mankind. Examples: the metric system of weights and measures and the scientific study of Egyptian pyramids.

\* An ethical theory that moral good is objectively real, or that moral precepts are objectively valid.

1 Authoritarians loathe objectivity, because it deprives them of their claim to lay down the law.

SIGNIFICANCE

SUBJECT

YEAR

1776-1926	Success Literature Review (Benjamin Franklin's autobiography)	Character was emphasized over personality development. Focus was on character traits such as: industry, thrift, commitment, courage, service to others, honesty, consideration and patience.
1917-1990	Marxism - Leninism (Russia)	Failure of a totalitarian system of government. In this situation, a single authoritarian party controlled state-owned means of production with the professed aim of establishing a stateless society.
1926-1976	Success Literature Review ( <i>How to Win Friends and Influence People</i> or <i>Psychocybernetics</i> )	Trend has steadily shifted from character to personality with trends toward: human relations technologies, or the processes of human interaction that secure cooperation, support, acceptance and favorable opinion or positive mental attitude, the power of constructive imagination.
1939	"Logotherapy" <sup>2</sup>	Existential analysis, or "man's search for meaning". Founded in Vienna by Viktor E. Frankl, a psychologist who survived the WWII Holocaust.
1946-1976	Success Literature Review (Stephen R. Covey)	The primary thrust of higher education shifted from moral to mental. The "personality literature" of this period is a symptom of the gradually increasing secularization of the American culture, and a fairly accurate mirror of our cultural mentality. The depth and pervasiveness of the social problems in our society are other symptoms. The "success literature" only mirrors the symptoms without dealing with the causes. When the personality ethic is separated from its character roots, it yields a manipulative personality.
1950's	"Transactional Analysis" <sup>3</sup>	A theory of "personality" by Eric Berne (1920-1970) who parted with psychoanalytic tradition in the 1950's.
1960's	"Deterministic" philosophy	The belief that personal choices are automatic responses to outside conditions or stimuli. Explanations of behavior typically take three forms: genetic, psychic (resulting from socialization) or environmental. Reactive behavior is typical of animals.
1980's	Business management ( <i>In Search of Excellence</i> , Peters and Waterman of McKinsey and Company)	The most successful companies in the world are value-driven and their leadership is committed to certain basic principles, beliefs or values which they attempt to translate into purposes, policies, programs and practices.
1980's	How culture shapes behavior	Importance of values and beliefs (from above).
1985-1987	Formation of Saturn Corporation	Validated and expanded the research behind the McKinsey work, but groped for the implementation process within this new subsidiary of GM until we called in Stephen R. Covey.

<sup>2</sup> One of over 250 varieties of psychotherapy practiced in the United States.

<sup>3</sup> One of over 250 varieties of psychotherapy that has been practiced in the United States.

YEAR

1987

SUBJECT

Principle-Centered Leadership (*Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen R. Covey)

SIGNIFICANCE

The objective of this program is to empower people and organizations to significantly increase their performance capability as they work to achieve worthwhile purposes. The following principles have become habits of people who consistently achieve desired results:

1. Be proactive - *habit of personal vision.*
2. Begin with the end in mind - *habit of personal leadership.*
3. Put first things first - *habit of personal management.*
4. Think win/win - *habit of interpersonal leadership.*
5. Seek first to understand, then to be understood - *habit of communication.*
6. Synergize - *habit of creative cooperation.*
7. Sharpen the saw - *habit of self-renewal.*

# Gandhi's Seven Blunders

by Donella H. Meadows

A few weeks before he was assassinated, Gandhi the Mahatma had a conversation with his grandson Arun. He handed Arun a talisman upon which were engraved "Seven Blunders," out of which, said Gandhi, grows the violence that plagues the world. The blunders were:

Wealth without work.  
Pleasure without conscience.  
Knowledge without character.  
Commerce without morality.  
Science without humanity.  
Worship without sacrifice.  
Politics without principles.

Gandhi called these disbalances "passive violence," which fuels the active violence of crime, rebellion, and war. He said, "We could work 'til doomsday to achieve peace and would get nowhere as long as we ignore passive violence in our world."

To his grandfather's list of seven blunders Arun later added an eighth:

Rights without responsibilities.

Gandhi gave the list to Arun in 1947. Almost 50 years later the blunders have been institutionalized, built into our corporations, our governments, our very culture. Not only are we no longer embarrassed by them, we actively practice them. In some of them we even take pride.

From Wall Street to state lotteries, we entice ourselves with the promise of wealth without work. Whole sectors of the economy offer pleasure without conscience. Many scientists believe their greatest strength is their ability to separate their knowledge from their character and their science from their souls. Advocate serious morality in a commercial context (away from the PR department) and you will be laughed out of a job. Morality? It might be nice to take the high road, but our competitors won't. So forget it!

Insiders in Washington and other capitals speak openly of their ability to cut political deals in a world totally without principle. That's how it works in this town, they say, and they're not apologizing or regretting, they're boasting.

Religious movements calling themselves Christian have somehow been derailed into picking and choosing among the gospels, grasping at Biblical snippets that seem to support possessiveness and self-righteousness, never noticing the passages that urge sacrifice, sharing, compassion, humility, forgiveness.

Conservatives raise high some of Gandhi's blunders (pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character) to bash over the heads of liberals. Liberals hit back with their own select list (wealth without work, commerce without morality). Everyone scrambles for rights without responsibility.

Somehow our public discussion has become dominated by either-or simplicities. If you complain about commerce without morality, you are accused of being against commerce. Suggest bringing humanity back into science, and you're anti-scientific. Say there's something wrong with wealth without work, and you're class-jealous, a hater of rich people, an underminer of capitalism. Mutmut

that worship might require sacrifice, that faith might entail service to the unfortunate, and you are suddenly an enemy of religion.

This simplistic thinking seems incapable of embracing the idea of BALANCE, which was Gandhi's central point. He wasn't calling for work without wealth or humanity without science, he was calling for work AND wealth. Science AND humanity. Commerce AND morality. Pleasure AND conscience.

A latter-day Gandhian, E.F. Schumacher, made a careful distinction between two kinds of problems, solvable and unsolvable. Solvable problems—like measuring the distance from the earth to the moon, or figuring out how to make a two-wheeled, human-powered means of transportation—depend on understanding the physical laws of the universe. Those laws are stable. Solutions to that kind of problem endure. Once you have an answer,

it will remain valid. You can give it to others and it will work for them too.

Unsolvable problems occur in the realm not of physics but of morality. They often take the form of reconciling opposites, each of which is profound and necessary. "How shall we raise our children, with freedom or with discipline?" is an example Schumacher gives. The answer has got to be not freedom without discipline, not discipline without freedom, but both, in a shifting bal-

ance, dynamic, not engraveable in stone, not the same for every parent, every child, or even the same child over time.

Life is bigger than logic, says Schumacher. There is no Final Solution to child-raising, except that "You must LOVE the little horrors.... Love, empathy, understanding, compassion—these are faculties of a higher order than those required for the implementation of any policy of discipline or of freedom."

Life is full of unsolvable problems. Pretending to have solved them by choosing just one or another of profound opposites can generate even more blunders than the ones Gandhi listed. Justice without mercy. Order without freedom. Talking without listening. Individuality without community. Stability without change. Private interest without public interest. Liberty without equality. Or, in every case, vice versa.

Listen to our public debates about health care, crime, taxation, regulation. You will hear the Gandhian blunders, the frantic search for a permanent simplicity, the passive violence that leads to active violence. There's no point in taking sides in these debates. There's only an opportunity to point out that balance, discovered through love, is what we should be seeking—and what we will always have to be seeking. ◊

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