Why Movements Fail - Thoughts for the new and rising leaders

Almost every generation of young people has emerged on the scene calling out the evils and wrongs in their societies, prescribing solutions, and, in some cases, even going as far as taking action against these ills . Yet, fast forward a few years, and we see that the same society is saddled with new ills , or the same ills appearing in a new form. Perhaps a few examples from recent history should be given to illustrate this point.

1) The young generation in Europe and America who emerged from the second world war, discrediting the older generation for perpetrating “senseless” wars, became leaders in their own generation, to escalate the arms race, that al l but guarantees eradication of life on earth, should the military arsenals that they have created be unleashed on humanity.

2) In the formerly colonized countries, many of the young people who led the struggle to release their countries from the yoke of colonial masters went on to found family dynasties that control their countries, in much the same way as their erstwhile colonial masters.

3) In the field of economics, the heralded goals of a planned economy, pushed by the young economists and social scientists at the turn of the 20th century, created bloated bureaucracies that hide faceless bureaucrats managing the lives of their citizens to oblivion. Those who wrested control back towards the, so-called, free market economy have, or are plunging their societies back into the grip of the few and growing rich, just like the robber barons, whose evil deeds were the focus of earlier agitations.

4) Not to be ignored is the religious fervor of the young that launched revivalist movements that have morphed into virulent fanaticism, in practically ALL religions, and that now holds the world hostage.

Should these examples not make us wonder, why?

Surely the ills that the youth recognize are real!

But the repeated failures to cure these ills , and to bring about lasting changes, when these youth assume leadership, should give us pause to consider that, perhaps, the solutions have been based on faulty assumptions, or their solutions have been badly implemented.

This premise is even more probable when problems and solutions are defined in simplistic, ideological terms, like,. . . . . ***capitalism versus socialism.. .right versus left wing... . libertine versus puritan... . tribalism... . geo-politics….faithful versus infidel***, etc. , ideologies which, when closely examined, are purely intellectual in nature and devoid of our humanity. Humanity, in the sense used here, being the qualities that make us show and express love, and to have compassion, be flexible and have understanding.

When devoid of humanity, our perception and thinking of the problem become rigid, and the solutions designed are mechanical and robotic.
The “humanity” being talked about here should not be mistaken for "Humanism" - an outlook or system of thought that attaches prime importance to human thinking. Humanist rely completely on "the potential

or innate virtue and goodness of human beings", and thus seek only rational ways of solving human problems, avoiding any reference to a divine or supernatural input or support.

Any keen reviewer of the examples listed above, or solutions implemented by the youth of the recent past, would have no difficulty in seeing that they were designed and implemented using the humanist approach to problem solving.

Another observation that one can make from these examples is that the humanistic approach soon shows the rigidity of its proponents, as evidenced by their unwillingness to consider other options, even in the face of the glaring failures of their solution.

Goodness, the acclaimed motivation of humanism, is generally defined as the quality of "being morally good or virtuous". However, history provides adequate evidence that many who have considered themselves very moral, or virtuous are some of the greatest oppressors and perpetrators of evil against humankind, with the systems that they imposed in the name of making their societies more virtuous or better (i .e. improvement on good).

Many may immediately think, in this regard, of religious or political tyrants of history. But we should also allow our minds to consider the great emotional human suffering that is today being experienced as a result of the new humanist systems imposed, or introduced to solve social problems, by the well-meaning youth of the recent past. If nothing else, the huge tide, and growing variety of addictions (legal and illegal), and all manner of escapist behavior, with which many in today's "better and progressive societies" try to soothe their spiritual, emotional and psychological pain is very obvious to any serious observer.

Shouldn't this cause us to wonder if there is a correlation between this wide spread pain and suffering with our modern "humanistically" designed society?

However, it be said too that invocation of the name of GOD, or any Supreme Being, or deity, should not be automatically assumed to be guided by our humanity, the divine or the super natural. Anyone who closely examines the dogma of any religious group will have no difficulty recognizing that the focus of most orthodoxy is directed at gaining and retaining earthly power and control, and in most cases lack the essence of Love, as described by Paul in 1 Cor. 13:4-8, *"…Love is patient and kind; not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth."*

Hopefully, it is only a matter of time before the young ones of some future generation will consider and recognize that the pursuit of "virtue, or the goodness as defined by human beings" is not the same as "the true love of a fellow human being". And this very important concept may be the missing ingredient in designing or implementing a lasting solution to any problem.

It may even seem an irony, when it becomes known, that many of the young and strongest proponents and advocates of change were, themselves , originators or upholders, in former live times, of the very systems that they fight to over throw, or curtail in their present life time. The same is true of many who today are suffering under systems that they themselves championed, or benefited from in their former lives, while remaining silent, or indifferent, as others suffered from injustices similar to what they are experiencing today.

With this recognition, anyone, young or old, who is advocating or fighting for change cannot stand on the platform of their own virtue, or their own high moral standard . This recognition should induce an element of humility that should make room for humanity in the design of any proposed solution.

Even more important is that this recognition of past life responsibility brings the “personal” into sharper focus. Meaning that in every situation , each person’s perception, experience and motivation is determined by that individual’s spiritual needs and is experienced differently too, even when many are going through the same experience. Therefore, there is nothing like "group experience". Rather, society is the summation of individual experiences, for which each person is responsible for their own actions or positions. Even when such actions or positions are taken in the name of a group, or the constituted authority.

This recognition of personal responsibility should, hopefully, redress the situation that has prevailed for a long time, in which the very vocal few have driven society in their own directions, to society’s detriment or benefit. By not exercising their responsibility, the so-called silent majority intentionally or unintentionally fail to make use of their own Spiritual power for decision making. And, according to the Law of Creation, the unused Spiritual power is commandeered by those who are passionate enough to act.

As expressed in Mark 4:25…. . *“For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”* Here, we see an explanation for why the few have, for centuries, been able to control the many. The manifestation of physical control is simply the result of a preceding Spiritual conquest.

As any student of history knows, even the most notorious tyrant started out unsure and not so strong. But with time they grow stronger and bolder, as they overcome more people with the force of their own will power. That “overcoming” occurs because many do not exercise their own will power. Therefore, “society” cannot seat back, and leave change to the “experts”, gurus, spiritual leaders or, social activist leaders, because each one is ultimately responsible for controlling and guiding their own contribution, which ultimately helps to shape and define their society. Each will also face the consequences of their actions, attitudes, or lack thereof.

However, such recognitions can only be acquired through higher spiritual knowledge. Blessed is he, or she, who has the humility to seek, and to take the time to truly imbibe such knowledge, for that is the only pathway to exiting the cycle of oppressor and victim, in which much of mankind has been trapped through the ages, even with our various flavors of humanistic approaches to problem solving.

Blessed also are the leaders who recognize the need for this knowledge, for they can help improve their society, while growing and maturing spiritually themselves.
Amen.