

Social-sciences research essay series:

# A Basis for New Community and A Self-Evident Spirituality

Adapted from the book: “A New America, An Awakened Future on Our Horizon”

## A Basis for New Community

In times of crisis and necessity, extraordinary solutions are called for. We are now living in such a period. Only by recognizing a *greater positive context* in which we can truly embrace everyone, will we reach beyond suffering and conflict and usher in a new era in which war, conflict, and adversity can eventually become anachronisms.

This greater positive context has been expressed in diverse ways by many people over many centuries, and increasingly so, over the past decade. It is like a message from our higher, future selves trying to be heard. It speaks of a greater whole, the interconnectedness of all life, or an innate spirituality that is shared by all, even though it may not be immediately recognized. This context offers everyone a foundation from which to forgive and reconcile perceived or manifest tribulations and suffering that humanity has inflicted upon itself and this planet out of fear and ignorance.

Let’s take a quick look at a few indicators from the *In Our Own Words 2000 (IOOW-2000)* research that show widespread identification among the adult U.S. population with “positive future paradigm” values and beliefs:

### Connection and Involvement

- 93% agreed that it is important to teach our children to feel connected to the earth, people and all life, and 69% “strongly agreed.”
- 80% acknowledged that the earth as a whole is a living system, and 50% “strongly agreed.”
- 91% “would like to be involved more personally in creating a better world at whatever local or global level” they can and 54% of all respondents “strongly agreed.”

### Tolerance

- 86% believed that we don’t all have to agree to have a successful community.
- 68% believed we should be tolerant of all lifestyles and groups even if we don’t like what they do.

### Spirituality

- 55% said they had experienced a sense of the sacred in everything around them and had perceived everything as spiritually connected.
- 95% said they believe in God or a higher spiritual consciousness, and 85% “strongly agreed.”
- 83% agreed that whether we recognize it or not, we all just want to connect to God or a higher spiritual consciousness, and 49% “strongly agreed.”
- 96% believed it is important that we attend to our own spiritual growth, and 71% “strongly agreed.”
- 86% felt a need to experience spiritual growth.
- 33% agreed that they feel their spiritual needs are not currently being met.
- 61% say that religion and spirituality are not the same.

### Technology

- Only 46% were optimistic that technology will help foster trust by increasing communication.
- Only 37% believed that technology will take care of the environmental problems we face today.

### Leadership ethics and values

- 82% preferred that politicians hold the *same* moral and ethical values as they do.
- 64% preferred that politicians hold *higher* moral and ethical values than they do.
- 85% believed that the more information we have at our fingertips, the better our lives will be.

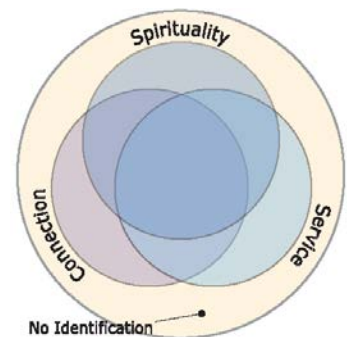
These indicators offer an inkling of the tremendous reservoir of core values and aspirations countless numbers of Americans share in common. *These extraordinary findings clearly validate the intimation that within our vast diversity as a society and a culture, we are fundamentally interconnected to a degree previously unacknowledged.* With this new perspective, the ramifications and possibilities are heartening as we appraise our current situations in the myriad arenas impacting our daily lives.

Open acknowledgement of our core values and higher aspirations can allow humanity to be more compassionate toward itself as it seeks to create something positive for its future. With a greater awareness of these fundamental principles, we can resolutely choose to end harmful, old practices and create something new, something that serves and nourishes our future selves, and something that will also serve us in the present.

Consistent with the four principles of new community described in this issue, statistical analysis of the IOOW-2000 research discovered similar principles.

### Connection, Service, and Spirituality: Core values which connect the majority of people

- "Connection " - represents a range of values and beliefs from the personal connection to one another, connection with creation and nature, and connection with the cosmos and higher consciousness.
- "Service " – represents a range of values and beliefs from helping one another, making a difference in the world, and nations helping nations.
- "Spirituality " – represents a range of values and beliefs from the traditional to the new, a sense of the sacred in all life, and connection to higher consciousness or God.



In the diagram shown above, the beige shaded area outside the three connected circles includes roughly 16% of the population that fell outside the basic elements of connection, service, and

spirituality –and who exhibit the strongest disconnect from self or society. The other 84% readily identified with any one or combination of these basic elements. (See June GA News Issue for more on this.)

## A Self-Evident Spirituality

These points are taken from the *IOOW-2000* research as examples of a self-evident underlying spirituality that is independent of nearly all religious or non-religious orientations.

### Universal Connection

- Belief that “What goes around comes around” (and thus do no harm) helps provide a basis for people to recognize another facet of our mutual “interconnectedness.”
- Our earth is a unique kind of living organism, and as a whole system is fundamentally alive.
- Underneath it all, we’re all connected as one.

### Tolerance and Reconciliation

- Interacting with others broadens our horizons.
- To have a successful community, we do not all have to agree.
- Tolerance of lifestyles and groups is essential in a society composed of such diversity.
- Forgiveness and reconciliation help us all accomplish much more.
- We are all looking to be loved and accepted as human beings.

### Service

- To be more personally involved in creating a better world. Helping those in need is one of the most important things nations can do within the global community.

### Spirituality

- We need to be more conscious of and connected to all aspects of our own selves.
- Whether we recognize it or not, we all want to connect to God or a higher spiritual consciousness.
- Importance of and need for spiritual growth.
- Social and spiritual awakening can make the world a better place in which to live.
- Experience a sense of sacred in everything or see everything as spiritually connected

To one and all, let us consider these social value points as a basis for a powerful underlying commonality of our selves as facets of a greater creation.

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