

2012: Welcome to the Shift - An Interview with Barbara Marx Hubbard



by Linda M Potter

In 1952, 22 year old Barbara Marx, the daughter of Marx Toys founder, Louis Marx, accepted an invitation to the White House. There she famously asked President Eisenhower, “What is the meaning of our new power that is good?” It was a question that had weighed heavy on her heart for seven years – the seven years since the bombing of Hiroshima. He didn’t have an answer. She was determined to find one.

In 1984, her name was placed into nomination for the vice presidency of the United States on the Democratic ticket. “I pursued the office as an idea candidate in order to put forward some ideas for a positive future,” she says, ideas like a Peace Room equal in sophistication to the War Room that would track and report what was going right in America and the world.

Today, Hubbard is a revered futurist, a respected visionary. Buckminster Fuller called her “the best informed human now alive regarding futurism and the foresights it has produced.” She is the President of the Foundation for Conscious Evolution and the author of more than a half dozen books, including the soon-to-be-released, *Birth 2012 and Beyond*. She is an agent for change and a tireless advocate for what she calls a cocreative society and a synergistic democracy. “The American Dream is not a noun; it’s a verb,” she insists. “It’s a Creative Evolution movement in embryo.” Now, she says, it’s finally ready to be born.

LP: There has been so much speculation around what 2012 means for planet Earth. We’ve heard both “end of days” predications and talk of a new world age being birthed. What do you think we should be focusing on?

There is fear and concern — a sense that something is ending, something is dying. It's true that something is dying — a certain state of consciousness. We're now acknowledging that behavior patterns like nuclear proliferation, resource depletion and pollution must change. But at the same time there's a huge uprising of what's being born, of what's emerging, of what's creative.

To me, 2012 has two elements: 1) Hospicing what is dying and 2) Giving birth to what is being born. Dec. 22, 2012 [the day after the end of the Mayan calendar] is like a first birth-day. Much like Earth Days, this Birth Day is giving a consciousness to what's being born on this planet — a shift toward a planetary culture, toward a co-creative humanity, toward the immediate action of restoring the earth, toward cooperation and participation — toward the birth of a more Universal Humanity.

LP: You've spoken out about the importance of groups like Occupy Wall Street in shifting consciousness. Can you explain how you think movements like these fit into the larger picture?

An evolution of our society is happening and has been for some time. There are cultural creators and there are innovators [working to make changes], so there's an illusion of consciousness. But existing systems like corporate and political structures are all top down dominator. And they're all under stress. None of them can handle the problems we're facing.

I think the Occupy movement symbolizes our coming together to create a new community, a new culture of equality, a new place for all views to be heard. But at the same time, it is a protest of the dominator structure that is creating poverty, scarcity and inequality. For me, the greater part is not so much the protesting against what needs to be changed, but the groping towards what wants to be a more creative and more participatory democracy. I think like the Arab Spring, this is the American Autumn. We're actually participating in the evolution of democracy. This is a wave as great as what got us from monarchy to democracy.

LP: You're saying that our evolution is more about what are we moving toward rather than what we're moving away from. Do you think Conscious Business is part of this evolution? How does it fit into this model?

Yes, Conscious Business is a part of this. Hazel Henderson [founder, Ethical Markets Media, LLC and author of Ethical Markets: Growing the Green Economy] talks about the "ethical marketplace."

She honors people who are conscious capitalists caring for their company and doing things of value. She also helped create the Calvert-Henderson investment fund where your investments are vetted as to how they affect the farmers and the workers, for example. She's urging the evolution of capitalism from a single bottom line to the triple bottom line: the person, the profit and the planet.

LP: It seems to me that you can't have Conscious Business without ethical practices. Are they two sides of the same coin?

There is a wonderful understanding here that evolution itself has to become ethical evolution. What I'm speaking about is conscious evolution which means we are conscious that we're affecting our own evolution by everything we do. We're conscious that we can destroy our environment and our civilization, but we're also becoming conscious that we can restore our environment and evolve ourselves. So, there is a real gap between the negative scenarios leading to destruction and the positive scenarios leading to a sustainable, peaceful, evolvable world. What conscious evolution does is look at that gap from here to there and says, what is the step that society has to take to make the jump from de-volution to e-volution, and then on to conscious e-volution.

In my work, I teach that the way to cross the gap is to put a wheel in the gap (symbolically). I call it the Wheel of Co-creation. In this wheel is a little hub center with 12 sectors [surrounding it]: science and technology, education, justice, health, spirituality, infrastructure, environment, media, governance, relations, arts, and economics. In every sector there are already innovations that are working. If there were a system of connecting and communicating what's already emerging that works (towards a sustainable evolvable world), we'd see that emerging world in our

midst. And it would be a non-linear connectivity. Now, if you want to jump that gap fast enough to avoid the breakdowns that are accelerating, we also have to accelerate.

LP: We hear a lot about how things are speeding up as we're approaching Dec. 21, 2012. What do you feel is causing this acceleration?

One reason things are speeding up is that we're seeing that all these different systems [on the wheel] are interconnected. It's a living system. If you destroy one part of it, you're going to be affecting another part. Through the rapid connectivity of communication (for example, billions of people have cell phones), we're communicating person to person outside of any structures of mass media. You can self-publish, you can overthrow a dictator by assembling people who want to move together, you can occupy all these various towns and cities, you can get mass media to pick up what you're doing within a day, you can take your picture and get it around the world in a second. What does that mean? Things are more than just speeding up; they're integrating into one whole system.

LP: Are we causing the shift that's taking place right now? Or is the shifting happening around us, outside of our control?

I think it's both. There's an evolutionary process going on. Over and over again in evolutionary history, crisis has preceded transformation. We can see that our crisis can affect our own transformation, and if we continue to overpopulate and pollute to the current degree, for example, we will kill all life. So, we're being shifted by this awareness that we're affecting our own life support. That feels to me like evolution has produced people on this planet who are aware they're affecting their own evolution. This is a big jump. First of all we're noticing that there is an evolutionary process, then we're aware that we're affecting it. We're also aware of enormous inequities, starvation and poverty. What are we going to do about that? As long as we didn't know about it, we didn't have to do anything. What's happened is now we know about it.

When you are sending money to Haiti or to survivors of the tsunami in Japan, you're becoming empathetic with the whole planet Earth. The development of this interconnected, intercommunicating world is a natural phenomenon just like when the Earth created bacteria that then created life, which then created animal life and ecologies. It's not stopping with us. We're a part of billions of years of evolution. The cells, the molecules, the organs of our body were all billions of years in the making. You are the resume of the whole story of creation. You didn't have to do that whole story, but what you do have to do is exactly what you are doing. You're doing an interview with me. But what motivates you to do this? And does it relate to the deeper purpose of evolution?

LP: I'd say I'm motivated to do this interview because I want to participate in shifting the consciousness of the planet.

Well, there you go. That seems to be happening to millions of us. I was a housewife with five children. I always had a yearning for greater meaning, greater purpose. I asked great questions like "What is the meaning of our new power that's good?" I asked this after the atomic bomb was dropped. That impulse in me and in you and in millions of us I consider to be an evolutionary impulse. It's not just personal.

LP: Can you tell us a little bit about your current project with the Shift Network?

I'm doing a major project with the Shift Network to connect and celebrate the planetary birth experience we're calling Birth 2012. On December 22, 2012, there will be a celebration of what's working, what's creative, and what's emerging to invite greater global coherence. We want to connect people of all ages, from all backgrounds and all cultures who would like to give their greater gift to the shift on planet Earth. I'm currently writing a book, Birth 2012 and Beyond. In March, I will be going to different cities inviting people to form circles and hubs to create resonance with each other and their communities. Then they can work together to organize planetary celebrations of what's being born through us. I would recommend www.Birth2012.com and www.evolve.org as the best sites for more details.

LP: How many people do you envision participating in Birth 2012? Is there a tipping point that you feel will ensure its success?

We're saying we'd like to have 100 million participate. The figure I've been given [as a tipping point] is 300,000. If 300,000 people were to resonate from their hearts with the connection of the whole and the emerging of a more just and evolvable culture, that's enough. So, with the internet and other communication systems, this is all doable!

LP: If you get your 300,000 people (or 100 million!) participating on Dec. 22, what will you be feeling on Dec. 23rd?

I'll be really happy! The beauty of a birth is that it's the very beginning of what's going to happen. I think that if we have a critical mass of celebration of what's working and what's being born — of innovations and creativity — that it will shift the consciousness of humanity from a fearful sense of separation to hope and creativity.

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