

Lesson Thirteen

Text

How Could Anything That Feels So Bad Be So Good ?

Maybe it is time to adopt a new strategy in trying to figure out why life today is so difficult ,and what can be done about it. Assume that not only are things often not what they seem ,they may be just the opposite of what they seem. When it comes to human affairs ,everything is paradoxical.

People are discontented these days , for example , not because things are worse than ever , but because things are better than ever. Take marriage. In California there are about six divorces for every ten marriages — even higher in some of the better communities. One must admit that a good deal of discontent is reflected in those statistics. But the explanation so frequently offered — that the institution of marriage is in a state of collapse — simply does not hold. Marriage has never been more popular and desirable than it is now ;so appealing in fact , that even those who are in the process of divorce can scarcely wait for the law to allow them to marry again.

The problem is that people have never before entered marriage with the high expectations they now hold. Throughout history ,the family has been a vital unit for survival , starting as a defense system for

physical survival , and gradually becoming a unit for economic survival. Now , of course , the family has become a physical and economic liability rather than an asset. Having met , as a society , the basic survival and security needs , people simply don't need each other any more to fight Indians or spin yarn — or wash dishes or repair electrical plugs for that matter. The bonds of marriage and family life are no longer functional , but affectional. People used to come to love each other because they needed each other. Now it's just the other way around. They need each other because they love each other.

Listening to the complaints of those recently divorced , one seldom hears of brutality and desertion , but usually something like “ We just don't communicate very well , ” “ The educational differences between us were simply too great to overcome , ” “ I felt trapped in the relationship , ” “ He won't let me be me , ” “ We don't have much in common any more. ” These complaints are interesting , because they reflect high-order discontent resulting from the failure of marriage to meet the great expectations held for it. Couples now expect — and demand — communication and understanding , shared values and goals , intellectual companionship , great moments of intimacy. By and large , marriage today actually does deliver such moments , but as a result couples have gone on to burden the relationship with even greater demands. To some extent , it has been the success of marriage that has created the discontent.

The same appears to be true in the civil rights movement. The gains that have been made have led not to satisfaction but to increased tension and dissatisfaction , particularly among those benefiting from such gains. The discontent is higher in the North than in the South , higher in cities than in rural areas.

The disturbing paradox of social change is that improvement brings the need for more improvement in constantly accelerating demands. So ,compared to what used to be ,society is way ahead ; compared to what might be , it is way behind. Society is enabled to feel that conditions are rotten , because they are actually so good.

Another problem is that everything is temporary , nothing lasts. We have grown up with the idea that in order to develop personal security we need stability , roots , consistency , and familiarity. Yet we live in a world which in every respect is continually changing. Whether we are talking about skyscrapers or family life , scientific facts or religious values , all are highly temporary and becoming even more so. If one were to plot a curve showing the incidence of invention throughout the history of man , one would see that change is not just increasing but actually accelerating. Changes are coming faster and faster — in a sense change has become a way of life. The only people who will live successfully in tomorrow's world are those who can accept and enjoy temporary systems.

People are also troubled because of the new participative mood that exists today. It's a do-it-yourself society ;every layman wants to get into the act. Emerson's " do your own thing " has become the cliché of the times. People no longer accept being passive members. They now want to be active changers.

This participative phenomenon can be seen in every part of contemporary life — on campus , in the church , in the mass media , in the arts , in business and industry , on ghetto streets , in the family.

The problem is that modern man seems unable to redesign his institutions fast enough to accommodate the new demands , the new intelligence , the new abilities of segments of society which , heretofore ,

have not been taken seriously. Consequently , people are frightened by the black revolution , paralyzed by student activism , and now face what may be even more devastating — the women's rebellion.

Society simply has not had these kinds of problems before , and to meet them it will have to adopt strategies for their solution that are as new , and as different , and as paradoxical as are the problems themselves.

Instead of trying to reduce the discontent felt , try to raise the level or quality of the discontent. Perhaps the most that can be hoped for is to have high-order discontent in today's society , discontent about things that really matter. Rather than evaluating programs in terms of how happy they make people , how satisfied those people become , programs must be evaluated in terms of the quality of the discontent they engender. For example , if a consultant wants to assess whether or not an organization is healthy , he doesn't ask , " Is there an absence of complaints ?" but rather " What kinds of complaints are there ?"

Instead of trying to make gradual changes in small increments , make big changes. After all , big changes are relatively easier to make than are small ones. Some people assume that the way to bring about improvement is to make the change small enough so that nobody will notice it. This approach has never worked , and one can't help but wonder why such thinking continues. Everyone knows how to resist small changes ; they do it all the time. If , however , the change is big enough , resistance can't be mobilized against it. Management can make a sweeping organizational change , but just let a manager try to change someone's desk from here to there , and see the great difficulty he encounters. All change is resisted , so the question is how can the

changes be made big enough so that they have a chance of succeeding ?

Buckminster Fuller has said that instead of reforms society needs new forms ; e. g. , in order to reduce traffic accidents , improve automobiles and highways instead of trying to improve drivers. The same concept should be applied to human relations. There is a need to think in terms of social architecture , and to provide arrangements among people that evoke what they really want to see in themselves. Mankind takes great pains with physical architecture , and is beginning to concern itself with the design of systems in which the human being is a component. But most of these designs are only for safety , efficiency , or productivity. System designs are not made to affect those aspects of life people care most about such as family life , romance , and esthetic experiences. Social technology as well as physical technology need to be applied in making human arrangements that will transcend anything mankind has yet experienced. People need not be victimized by their environments ; they can be fulfilled by them.

The great frontier today is the exploration of the human potential , man's seemingly limitless ability to adapt , to grow , to invent his own destiny. There is much to learn , but we already know this : the future need not happen to us ; we can make it happen.

Vocabulary

paradoxical /'p rə'dɒksɪkl/ *adj.* 似非而是的, 自相矛盾的

discontented /ˌdɪskən'tentɪd/ *adj.* 不满意的

appealing /ə'pi:liŋ/ *adj.* 动人的, 有吸引力的

liability /ˌlaɪə'bɪlɪti/ *n.* 应负责, 有义务, 阻碍, 不利

affectional /ə'fekʃənəl/ *adj.* (属于) 感情方面的

yarn /jɑ:n/ *n.* 纱

asset /'set/ *n.* 财产, 资产

desertion /dɪ'zɜ:ʃn/ *n.* 遗弃, 离开

intimacy /'ɪntɪməsi/ *n.* 亲密, 亲近

paradox /'p rədɒks/ *n.* 似非而是的隽语, 反论

accelerate /ək'seləreɪt/ *vt. vi.* (使) 加速, 变快

way /wei/ *adv.* 远, 远离

temporary /'tempərəri/ *adj.* 暂时的, 临时的, 一时的

plot /plɒt/ *vt.* 制...之图, 在图解上标

明(某物之位置)

incidence /'ɪnsɪdəns/ *n.* 发生的方式, 影响事物的方式, 发生率

participative /pɑ:'tɪsɪpeɪtɪv/ *adj.* 参与的, 参加的

layman /'leɪmən/ *n.* 门外汉, 外行

cliché /'kli:ʃeɪ/ *n.* 陈词滥调, 陈腐思想

ghetto /'getəu/ *n.* 贫民区

paralyze /'p rəlaɪz/ *vt.* 使惊呆, 使瘫痪

engender /ɪn'dʒendə/ *vt.* 产生, 造成, 引起

assess /ə'ses/ *vt.* 对(财产)进行估价, 评价

increment /'ɪnkɾəmənt/ *n.* 增长, 增加额, 增值

mobilize /'məʊbɪlaɪz/ *vt.* 动员, 调动

transcend /tr n'send/ *vt.* 超越

adapt /ə'd pt/ *vi.* 适应

destiny /'destɪni/ *n.* 命运

Notes on the Text

1. figure out 演算出, 想出, 理解

2. There are about six divorces for every ten marriages.

每十个婚姻中就有六个离婚的。

3. The explanation so frequently offered — that the institution of marriage is in a state of collapse — simply does not hold.

每每给出的解释,即婚姻的传统处于崩溃的状态,已不再有效了。

in a state of 在...状态中

hold 维持(保持)有效 相关

4. for that matter 就那件事而论,关于那件事

5. Now it's just the other way around. 现在情况正好相反。

6. have much in common 有很多共同点

7. by and large 大体而言,一般而论

8. burden... with... 加...负担于...

9. He won't let me be me.

他不让我实现自我(比如实现自己的愿望,表达自己的想法和感情等)。

10. higher in the North than in the South

这里“the North”和“the South”分别指美国的北方和南方。

11. in a sense 从某种意义上说

12. Emerson's “do your own thing”

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19 世纪美国哲学家,提倡发挥自己的个性,而不是一味模仿别人或因袭传统。“do your own thing”在 20 世纪 60 年代曾一度成为西方年青人的流行用语,用来表达自由和个性。

13. mass media 大众传媒

14. black revolution

20 世纪 60 年代美国黑人为争取政治和经济平等而进行的斗争

15. student activism

学生为政治和社会目的而采取的军事行动

16. women's rebellion

西方的妇女解放运动,旨在从性别歧视和其他形式的男权统治中解放出来。

17. can't help but... 情不自禁做某事;只能做某事,别无选择

18. in terms of 根据,按照,用...的思想方法,从...方面(说来)

19. take pains 非常认真仔细地做某事 努力做某事
20. concern oneself with sth. 关心... 挂念...

Work on the Text

I True or false ?

1. Human affairs are paradoxical , because they are better than ever.
2. Those who are in the process of divorce can not wait for the law to allow them to marry someone else.
3. The function of the family has changed from a defense system for physical survival to a unit for economic survival.
4. Both marriage and family life are affectional nowadays than functional.
5. People today have higher expectations for marriage than before.
6. To some extent , the success of marriage has resulted in the discontent.
7. The only people who will live successfully in tomorrow's world are those who can accept and enjoy stable and steady system.
8. Although people accept being passive members , they want to be active changers.
9. Modern men are not fast enough to meet the new demands , new intelligence and the new abilities of segments of society.
10. People are afraid of the black revolution and activism but they are not afraid of the women's rebellion.
11. In today's society , high-order discontent is more advisable than the reduction of the discontent felt.
12. Human beings have more inventions today than ever before.
13. It is not so easy to make big changes as to make small ones.

14. According to Buck Minster Fuller , society needs new forms rather than reforms.
15. The author of this article believes that we can make future happen in our way exploring human potential and ability to adapt , to grow , to invent our own destiny.

II Fill in the blanks with the words or expressions given below.
Change the form where necessary.

affectional	asset	take pains	way	hold
figure out	destiny	valid	transcend	incidence
evaluate	adapt	liability	discontented	paralyze
intimacy	can't help but		mobilize	paradox

1. One of the striking facts of nature is the ability of living things to _____ themselves to practically any environment on earth.
2. How to _____ the performance of students is still a problem that troubles many professors.
3. The _____ bond is often very strong at the inception of marriage but it does not always endure.
4. The _____ of this disease has been greatly reduced thanks to our health-care program.
5. Since the energy crisis , these big cars have become a real _____. They cost too much to run.
6. Mary is by no means learned , nor is she good at any practical trade. The only _____ she possesses is her beauty.
7. Helen has a _____ look , as if she never enjoys life.
8. The concept of infinity _____ human understanding.
9. She _____ to see that her guests had everything that they could possibly want.
10. There is no doubt that what he said years ago is still _____.

11. The electricity failure _____ the train service.
12. The winner finished the race _____ ahead of the other competitors.
13. The teacher allowed his pupils the _____ of calling him by his first name.
14. Mrs. Warren felt that _____ had been unkind to her in making her poor.
15. It's a _____ , but the older she gets , the more active she is.
16. Sam wouldn't _____ how to print a program until the teacher showed him how.
17. She is still working on it despite all the adversities. I _____ admire her indomitable spirit.
18. As the circumstances have completely changed , the old theories concerning economic expansion no longer _____ now.
19. He's trying to _____ all the support he can obtain for the political party he has just formed.

III Translate the following into English :

1. 他上课总是迟到 ,真是让人琢磨不透。
2. 我本以为十年后他会成为一个富翁。但令我吃惊的是 ,现在情况正好相反。
3. 你不该全都怨他。我想 ,在某种意义上 ,他可能是对的。
4. 我们有共同语言。
5. 尽管实验结果不是很令人满意。但总体上说 ,我们还是有了不小的进步。
6. 赵叔为子女众多所累 ,头发也已花白了。
7. 9.11 以后 ,美国全国处于紧急状态。
8. 就艺术宝藏而言 ,意大利是世界上最富有的国家之一。
9. 我花大力气学习辨别真珍珠与人工养殖的珍珠。

10. 做父母的都不由得关心着学校教育的事。

Additional Exercises

I Vocabulary

1. _____ is the study of the way in which money , industry , and trade are organized in a society.
A. Economics B. Ecology C. Economy D. Sociology
2. Although nobody _____ his presence , Mr. Smith knew he had been recognized.
A. acknowledged B. admitted
C. requested D. attributed
3. The salesman at the door was so _____ that Mother finally bought something from him.
A. permanent B. persistent
C. perpetual D. permissible
4. The people were _____ by the dictator's secret police.
A. pressed B. compressed
C. depressed D. oppressed
5. Television has _____ motion pictures as America's most popular form of entertainment.
A. dismissed B. displaced C. removed D. replaced
6. The girls haven't a _____ of imagination.
A. scrap B. script C. scrape D. scratch
7. My sister felt very _____ when her husband forgot her birthday.
A. disappointed B. deceived
C. despaired D. deserted
8. The blue curtains began to _____ after they had been hanging in

the sun for only one month.

A. dissolve B. fade C. melt D. vanish

9. The university is holding a _____ on new forms of energy.

A. session B. symptom
C. symphony D. symposium

10. After a thorough search , the police _____ most of the missing jewels.

A. retreated B. refreshed C. reminded D. recovered

11. You _____ your head forward when you bow.

A. tilt B. poke C. elevate D. hoist

12. At the beginning of the school year every teacher is _____ a classroom.

A. allocated B. distributed C. sorted D. registered

13. His family _____ him in his present action.

A. updates B. upgrades C. upholds D. upsets

14. This dye is _____ in water.

A. valuable B. soluble
C. indispensable D. sensible

15. Over 1 billion people use wood for fuel , cooking and heating , and this excessive consumption of wood leads to deforestation , upsetting the _____ balance.

A. botanical B. ecological
C. geographical D. biological

16. If you say that something is _____ , you mean that you find it extremely pleasant or enjoyable.

A. gorgeous B. gracious C. conspicuous D. dubious

17. Businessmen should always _____ themselves to the local Chamber of Commerce.

- A. adjoin B. afflict C. affirm D. affiliate

18. The _____ at a meeting is the number of people who are present at it.

- A. attendant B. attendance
C. presentation D. retention

19. _____ are used to win a battle , strategy to win a campaign.

- A. Tactics B. Combats C. Doctrines D. Intrigues

20. Henry went to the table again carefully for fear of _____ any important data.

- A. ignoring B. skimming
C. slipping D. overlooking

II Grammar

Section A

Directions :

There are ten sentences in this section. Beneath each sentence there are four words or phrases marked A , B , C , and D. Choose the one word or phrase that best completes the sentence.

Example :

Scarcely had they settled themselves in their seats in the theater _____ the curtain went up.

- A. then B. when C. before D. than

The sentence should read , “ Scarcely had they settled themselves in their seats in the theater when the curtain went up. ” Therefore , you should choose B.

1. I will do it myself _____ ask him to do it.

- A. than B. instead of
C. in place of D. rather than

2. Of the twelve umbrellas , Catherine chose _____ !

- A. the less expensive B. the one most expensive
C. the least expensive D. the most expensive of them
3. There was nothing to be seen for miles _____ a few small houses.
A. besides B. beside
C. except D. except for
4. Scientists call Newton's idea _____ gravitation reaches throughout the universe the law of universal gravitation.
A. which B. that C. when D. where
5. I will give you the key to the house so you'll have it _____ I arrive a little late.
A. on occasion B. by chance
C. in case D. at times
6. _____, the book presents a clear picture of the subject under discussion.
A. Being a long book of at least 500 pages
B. More than 500 pages in length
C. Consisting on 500 pages or even more
D. With over 500 pages in its size
7. I've thrown away my old trousers. I'll have to buy _____ !
A. a new pair B. a new one
C. some new D. some new pair
8. The composition _____ any more.
A. need not to be corrected
B. doesn't need to be corrected
C. doesn't need be corrected
D. need not correct
9. This book will show you _____ can be used in other contexts.

- ## Section B

There are 10 sentences in this section. Each sentence has four parts underlined. The four underlined parts are marked A , B , C , and D. Identify the one underlined part that is wrong.

Now that the stress of examinations are over, we can all relax a while.

Answer B is wrong because the sentence should read ,“ Now that the stress of examinations is over , we can all relax a while. ” So you should choose B.

- 303 •

gives up.

D

14. My English teacher said we should write another composition for
A

tomorrow related for our experience at last week's workshop.
B C D

15. The refugees are very much upset because they have been
A B

deprived to their homeland and their families.
C D

16. As a boy , I was often told that the river was dangerous to bathe.
A B C D

17. If it hadn't been for your help , I really don't know what I do.
A B C D

18. If you had gone there to see the match , I'm sure you
A

would have enjoyed to see the Chinese Football Team win.
B C D

19. The names Jimmy , Billy and Bobby end in " y " are used
A

especially for children , but they often continue into adult life.
B C D

20. Of all the works of art shown in this exhibition hall the thing I like
A

more is the needle-work produced by the workers of Shanghai.
B C D

III Cloze

Unlike most sports , which evolved over time from street games , basketball was designed by one man to suit a particular purpose. The man was Dr. James Naismith , and his purpose was to invent a vigorous game that could be played indoors in the winter.

In 1892 , Naismith was an instructor at a training school , which