

Our Negative Behavior Was Situationally Conspiratorial — but Not Based on a Conspiracy at Its Core

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss conspiracies and their role in creating the damage that has been done to people in this country relative to race, ethnicity, and gender.

It is clear from looking at the evidence that we have discriminated as a country in very intentional and deliberate ways against any groups who did not look like or sound like the White majority group that has held power in this country for the past several centuries, and the question we need to answer about that behavior is: Why and how did it all happen?

Each and every minority group has faced economic, social, educational, and political discrimination in various ways over those years — and people from each group can point out, recall and clearly describe multiple levels of on-going discriminatory behaviors that have adversely affected their group.

We have done much better in recent years in many important aspects of our inter group interactions. Our Civil Rights Movement and our women's rights movements have both made magnificent — if often painful — progress in many areas.

But our most positive and enlightened civil rights gains have only been in the last 50 years and we have not yet achieved full success and remediation for our inter group education status issues or for our inter group economic status disparities for the groups who have faced that discrimination for all of those years.

The discrimination that is woven so painfully into our history and into our culture against people who were not White was also directed in a number of ways against women. Women were only given the right to vote in the last century — and many women are still facing economic challenges and disparities that are clearly gender linked. Problems in those areas are shrinking a bit, but they are not disappearing.

Recent Federal Reserve System data shows that the average income for males in America is \$52,000, with college educated males averaging over \$80,000. By contrast, the average income for females in America is \$41,000, and the average income for college educated females is \$60,000.

The differences by ethnicity and race are even larger.

When we look at the average net worth of families by group, we see significant differences in the average wealth of families by group that have not gotten better over the past couple of decades.

The Federal Reserve System's current data shows an average net worth of \$162,000 for White families, \$21,000 for Hispanic families, and an average \$16,000 net worth for African American families.

Some of those differences between those groups on income levels echo the learning gap data between groups that is explained in the Three Key Years book, where we currently have 60 percent or more of the White students in high schools performing computations and reading at grade level and but we only have anywhere from 20 to 40 percent of the students from other groups reading at those levels. We now have fifty years of failure as a nation in closing those gaps, in spite of many very well-intentioned efforts in a wide range of settings to make those gaps disappear.

We now know why we have failed in our schools for 50 years. Science has now shown us why those particular learning gaps exist. Those particular gaps relate back directly to the neuron development activities that happen for children from every group in the first three years of life, and we now know that the relevant processes and time frames are the same for children from every group.

The first three years of life are when the neuron connections that are built by the billions for each child from every group by someone interacting directly with each child in that time frame. The biology and the relevant time frames are the same for every group of children — but the actual direct interaction levels that happen for children tend to vary now in very consistent ways from group to group — and the learning gaps that exist in our schools result in very direct ways from that inconsistency in those interactions.

The first three years of life are extremely important for each child. The relevant processes are both biological and epigenetic, and we now know that what happens in the first three years of life sets up life trajectories for each child. The learning readiness levels we see at age four for our children create those learning gap patterns for the older children in ways that no one has been able to change in fifty years of generally very well-intentioned efforts to close those gaps.

Children from every group who get the right interactions that build billions and even trillions of neuron connections in their brain in those time frames do well, and children from every group who do not get those early and direct individual interactions fall behind and the vast majority who fall behind by age four do not catch up, because making those connections is so much harder to do from a pure biological reality after those very first key years.

In addition to those learning readiness issues — we have had a wide range very clear patterns of discrimination in multiple ways at multiple levels against all of the groups who were not White Americans — and we have also had clear patterns of discrimination against anyone who is not male.

A combination of those factors has gotten us to the point we are now, with major differences in wealth and income by family and group, and with significant discrimination factors still existing in many settings for too many of our people.

We need to be honest about the fact that those negative inter group behavior patterns relative to both minority groups and women have been our reality as a country for all of those years.

We also need to be honest with ourselves about those patterns and about the instinct-driven origins of those problems and those negative and damaging inter group behaviors. We need to understand why those negative behaviors are happening, and we need to understand that reality and situation in a way that will allow and enable us to change those behaviors in the future.

That raises the question of conspiracies.

Some people think that those patterns of negative behaviors each have actual conspiracies of various kinds at their core. Some people believe that there is a set of actual conspirators who put together, steer, and organize the whole array of negative inter group behaviors in actual functional settings to damage people from other groups.

Do Conspiracies Cause Those Problems?

A number of books have been written to describe the role and existence of those conspirators. Some people who ascribe to conspiracy theories believe that there is an actual set of people who have both the power and the intent to create and implement most of the negative and damaging inter group behaviors that obviously exist now and that have clearly existed since our country began.

A number of people, I have learned, believe that there are very explicit conspiracies and that there are actual conspirators at the core of the processes that create and guide those all of those negative inter group and negative intergender behaviors in all of those times and places.

When I first began looking at our patterns of inter group behavior, I saw and read a number of books and articles that argued in very credible ways that there are very clear and very intentional core conspiracies that underlie those discriminatory patterns and that actually create those sets of negative behaviors. Those books have great power to persuade because they do tend to give us clear descriptions that explain why those negative inter group behaviors have existed, and a number of people believe that major portions of our difficulties today are based on those conspiracies as described in those publications, communications and books.

That belief that conspiracies are at the heart of those behaviors and realities creates a couple of problems for us as a country.

The problem with believing in those conspiracies as actual functional and active conspiracies that are done by extremely powerful people is that that belief can cause some people to believe that the situation is hopeless and to believe that we are powerless as a nation to address and fix some of the problems because the conspirators who have created them are both extremely powerful and extremely evil and will not allow them to be corrected.

There are some conspiracy theories that have some very specific elements that actually can keep us from trying to solve some of the problems that we face, because they include a belief in the immense power of the invisible conspirators. That component of those theories can unintentionally damage us — because we do need to solve those problems, and we cannot allow a belief in the extreme power of conspirators to keep us from building solutions to our inter group problems in each setting.

There are conspiracy theories for both gender and ethnicity. The gender-based conspiracies also have a number of believers and proponents because some of the patterns of negative behavior against women also are so consistent that they feel like they must be planned and orchestrated instead of just happening.

Some of the gender related conspiracy theories also have a number of very distinct components and beliefs that we need to understand as we think about inter group issues and problems for both gender and ethnicity, with the goal of eliminating those negative behavior patterns.

Some people believe, for example, that there are conspiracies that cause our media and advertising agencies to create messages and use communications in a variety of ways for women that very intentionally and very skillfully cause some sets of women to feel insecure about their appearances.

Some people also believe that there are other very powerful and effective and aligned current sets of conspiracies to keep women from achieving or even seeking levels of authority in various settings.

Today's newspaper had a quote from a woman who said clearly that there is a conspiracy to cause women to feel insecure in both social and athletic settings as young girls — and the article urged women to triumph over that conspiracy, by explicitly rejecting the feelings that it creates.

Other articles and communications have said that there is often a conspiracy in business settings to keep women in meetings from being fully heard in those meetings. Those conspiracy theorists believe that someone somehow conspires to teach men to be rude and to be aggressive against women in those settings.

The sad truth there is that we do have some behavior patterns and cultural patterns that encourage men to be aggressive and discourteous in some of those settings, but no one took those men aside and coached them to adopt those patterns of behavior, so the truth is that behavior is not coordinated or conspiratorial. Many of the

men involved are extremely competitive against each other in those exact settings, and the likelihood of them setting aside their competitive forces against each other to align in a conspiratorial way against women instead is not very high.

Culture, however, is a factor for those behaviors.

We need to teach and understand that culture — not conspiracy — is the cause and enabler of those rude behaviors, and we need to create better cultural expectations in each setting that cause more enlightened behaviors to happen. The Truth is that we already very instinctively and almost compulsively build cultures for every setting. Five people standing in line will create a culture with behavior expectations for the line. This book and other InterGroup Institute books teach the role of our cultures and how to use them as tools for enlightened behavior in various settings.

We need to change cultures in some settings on some issues — and that will be a much more effective solution package than blaming conspiracies of some kind for those patterns of rude and intrusive behavior.

Conspiracies did not cause some of those behaviors.

That statement has the potential to make some people angry who are fully convinced that for both gender and ethnic issues in most settings, major and intentional conspiracies are to blame for many of our problems and our issues.

It can actually be a politically dangerous topic to question the existence of conspiracies in some settings, because there are a number of angry believers who, I have found, can sometimes feel anger and clear hostility toward the conspirators and anyone who challenges or questions the existence of those conspiracies.

That particular set of beliefs and responses was why I spent time actually looking for those kinds of conspiracies when I first started writing my books on inter group behavior three decades ago, and it has been a productive and interesting line of research and investigation over all of those years.

When I first started doing my research into inter group issues, I looked hard, directly, and explicitly for examples or instances of functioning and implemented conspiracies that might exist and that might be channeling and steering behaviors in those specific ways in any of my personally available and discernable settings.

Because of my job and because of my various levels of personal public involvements in various settings at fairly senior levels, I have had the chance to interact directly and personally in business, health care, social, and governmental settings with many people of both influence and impact — both in our own country and in several international settings. I have actually been in the “smoke-filled rooms” of legislative and congressional influence a number of times and I have spent time individually and collectively with leaders of major businesses and organizations and of a couple of nations, looking in all of those settings for people who were actually furthering, using, or supporting actual functioning conspiracies in those areas.

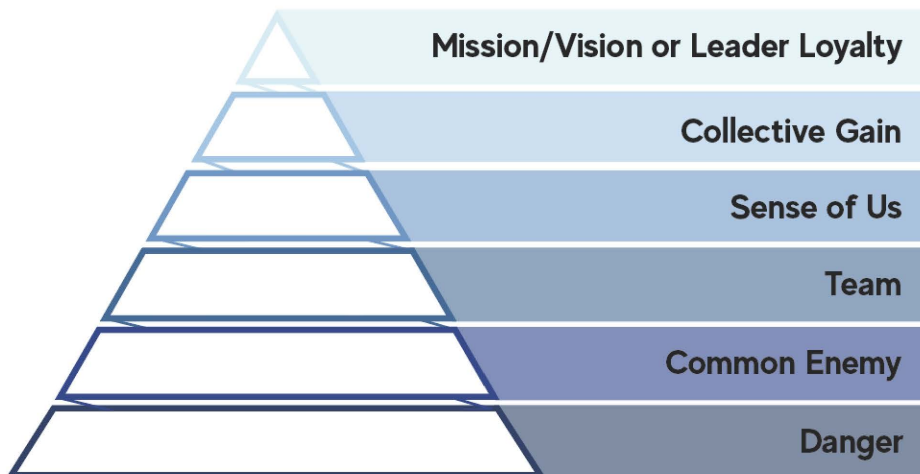
Conspiracies of some kinds do happen. That was clear.

At the political level, we clearly have a number of conspiracies in various states happening now that are designed to achieve goals like minimizing voting levels by minority Americans in those settings. We clearly have tribal thinking going on relative to a number of governmental issues, and we have politicians in too many settings who are skilled at invoking our Us/Them instincts and triggering a clear sense of common enemy in our minds to gain support from their own supporters in ways that create negative behaviors that are so consistent they can sometimes look conspiratorial.

I could find multiple examples of negative inter group and inter gender behavior — but I could not find that behavior actually linked to overarching conspiracies on those issues. What I found was leaders who used the explicit triggers on the alignment pyramid shown below very effectively in ways that triggered conspiracy like behaviors.

Each of the very powerful and effective triggers listed on this group alignment pyramid have been invoked in political settings by various leaders to gain the support of their own political constituency, and groups that respond to those triggers collectively often have subsequent behavior that can look like a conspiracy.

GROUP ALIGNMENT & MOTIVATION TRIGGERS



Those motivation and activation triggers on the alignment pyramid work to influence people in most settings because we all obviously have very consistent patterns of thinking and behavior by group on a number of issues, but the reality is that our history and our current interactions have been shaped and guided by those internal instincts and by invoking the alignment triggers in effective ways — and not by external conspiracies.

We have deep seated instinct-guided prejudice on the part of people from all groups about people from other groups, and we have strong emotional tendencies to ally with whomever we perceive to be Us and oppose whomever we perceive to be Them, in any setting.

In a large number of settings around the world, the negative sets of inter group behaviors go higher than mere conspiracy, and exist and function as public and governmental policy emanating (usually) from males in power in the relevant hierarchies, and from the local tribe that holds the key power position as a group in that country.

Myanmar and Syria are both showing the power of those inter group instincts to shape behavior today. The early chapters in this book describe those behaviors in 100 countries in some detail, and explain why the behavior patterns are so predictable in inter group settings across the planet.

I have personally been in multiple countries — like Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh — where there have been clear and intentional decisions by the people in local power to do very restrictive things relative to women and minority groups in those settings. Those decisions by the people in power to discriminate against women and minorities in those ways were extremely clear, and they created rules, laws, expectations, emotions, and cultural beliefs and behaviors that officially reinforced and enabled the primal sets of Us/Them values and gender interaction behaviors and values in those settings.

I spoke in Saudi Arabia to a few hundred doctors at a meeting sponsored by the Ministry of Health where there were only a dozen women doctors in the group, and that small set of women physicians were forced to sit in the back row and be fully covered for my presentation.

After my speech, two of the women physicians came up to the microphone for a photograph and they each had to be entirely covered for the picture. They were not allowed to eat in the same room with the other physicians during the lunch break that day because the gender-related rules of that culture were extremely oppressive and restrictive for women in each of those ways.

Women flying back into Saudi Arabia from other countries, who originally got on the airplane with bare heads and visible faces, must change into full-coverage clothing before exiting the plane — and there are people in some of the airports with long punishment whips who have been known to actually strike the women if they are not sufficiently covered in that setting.

I have seen similar behavior on gender-related issues in a number of settings. There are sometimes very negative restrictions on the role of women in different cultures, and that set of apparel guidelines and behavior rules is cultural in every setting, including our own, and those cultural guidelines and rules are based on instincts — not conspiracies — in every setting.

What I concluded was not that there is an international conspiracy of men to create those rules, but that there were very consistent patterns of gender-based and instinct-guided behavior that are described in Primal Pathways that make that consistency happen.

The fact that we all have very strong instincts to create cultures that codify and channel our expectations for group and individual behavior in every setting that is described in three of the InterGroup Understanding books means that we have those expectations in some form everywhere, and that we all tend to feel right when we are in alignment with whatever our culture is telling us to do.

But there was no linkage that I could see behind those discriminatory behaviors in those settings and any larger functional conspiracies relative to women that reached across and between countries on those sets of issues.

There are a number of people who attribute some of our own behaviors as a nation on gender issues to conspiratorial linkages of some kind.

We clearly do have people in political circles who have strong feelings on a number of gender-related issues — particularly in areas relating to reproduction, pregnancy, and pregnancy avoidance and termination.

Some of our deepest political divisions as a country tie very directly to those reproduction related issues — and there are people on both sides of those issues who are organized on those topics and who plan and conspire to have their own position and their own belief be our national policy, and to have their own expectations govern the behaviors of everyone in the settings they are in for those issues.

It is entirely legitimate to assign and discern conspiratorial definitions and constructions to some of those behaviors that relate to our reproduction rules, expectations, and behaviors — and to also assume that we will not handle those issues successfully as a nation until we decide to make handling those specific issues a functional priority and choose to have a painful and open set of communications about ways of dealing with the deepest sets of beliefs that exist today on both sides.

Those are very real issues. People have very different beliefs on those points, and both sides tend to believe their own position is right and that the other position is wrong and sometimes evil. Reproduction related issues are highly motivational for people on all sides of those issues. People actually do conspire on those issues to the point of getting their own people elected to the U.S. Senate and even appointed to the Supreme Court of our nation as part of that set of strategies and plans.

We do have people who conspire with other people in very intentional and deliberate ways on those sets of issues, and inter group strategies result from that set of interactions.

There are very real and highly organized points of view and communication approaches on those sets of reproduction-related issues.

On some other gender related levels, however, I found that some of the people who believe that there is a very real conspiratorial impact on some other, more mundane gender related issues and on some communication processes have been provably not correct in my judgement about the actual existence of a conspiracy for those particular communications-related issues.

There are people who believe strongly, for example, that our advertising agencies and our entertainment media sometimes conspire and actually intend to make women feel bad about their appearance and personal activity and then create ads and communications to achieve that conspiracy created goal of having some women feel bad about those areas of who they are.

I looked for actual conspiracies relative to those particular sets of issues in a number of relevant settings where I had direct and extensive exposure and extensive personal interactions, and I did not find that link.

I do not believe that it is functionally possible to even build that particular conspiratorial link inside the advertising industry on those issues of making people feel bad about their appearance, because it is too difficult to do in the real world using those tools.

I have interacted directly with major advertising agencies in several major cities at multiple levels, for example, both as a direct client and in various collaborative efforts. There have been some very interesting and highly creative people in several of those ad agency related settings, but I can't imagine any functional way that those people in that industry and that profession and in those settings could actually pull off a conspiracy — much less a conspiracy to oppress, repress, and depress anyone that also required those advertising-related people who did that work to somehow keep the relevant and functional information about that conspiracy secret and confidential.

I also do not think achieving those goals of making women feel bad about their appearance at a core level would be possible using those particular tools. I have worked extensively and directly with ad agencies in several settings to help create public health campaigns on issues like good health, healthy eating, healthy activity levels, and biologically powerful brain development for children, and we have had significant amounts of money to fund some of those efforts so that resources were not a problem for those agendas.

Those public belief- and public health education-related campaigns were actually very hard to do, and I know from personal experience that getting people to have a different feeling on any issue based on an ad campaign is not easy to do even when your goal is wonderful and positive. Having a negative goal and then changing minds in a negative way is even harder.

I am enough of an expert on those topics and tools to know that the ability to create those kinds of negative and undermining messages in an organized and secret way does not exist.

So, what is actually happening in the advertising world relative to the portrayal of minorities and women in our ads?

They are trying to sell products.

Understand what they are trying to do at those ad agencies in order to know what they actually do with their ads.

Ad agencies that create ads featuring thin white women do so because the agencies are hired to run ads that will sell whatever product it is that they are advertising, and the people producing the ads choose the models — not with the intention of making people of another skin color or another body shape feel bad — but because the people making those decisions believe those models will actually sell products.

That process is not Conspiratorial — it is entirely Commercial.

The relative C-word for all of those communications is *Commerce* — not conspiracy — in the design of those ads.

That means, of course, that we also need commerce to be part of the solution for those ad choices.

The way to overcome those commercial choices about who is included in the ads we see is to create a market for other ads that show heavier and older people, and that show people from different ethnic groups in ways that create sales for products sold by the companies to those people.

The other thing that we can do to change that pattern and that set of choices is to have everyone who cares about those issues to personally write on the internet and to communicate to the heads of companies and to their marketing teams that you want to see different messages and models in their ads. People in those companies who are trying to make sales listen to potential customers.

We are actually on the cusp of a golden age of customer feedback on multiple issues — and we should use social media links to steer communications to the people selling those products about how they can make more sales by being more inclusive of our groups.

My earnest multi-year search in multiple settings to find an actual functioning conspiracy on those particular sets of communication-related issues actually failed.

But what did not fail, however, was my effort to figure out why all those negative behaviors in those areas of education and health care and economic status can combine to create the clear impression that there could easily be conspiracies involved in all of those settings.

The Negative Behaviors Are Remarkably Consistent

I knew that there clearly needed to be a consistent and constant reason why we had done such negative things to so many people in such consistent and pervasive ways in so many settings over the course of our history as a country, and in far too many of our settings today, if it wasn't the result of a conspiracy by one group against the others.

The answer that I found early in the process of doing the research that has resulted in this set of inter group books was simple — pure, direct, highly powerful, extremely formative, universally consistent, and absolutely effective — instinctive behavior.

Instincts rule.

Instincts have significantly more reach, power, consistency, and pure and direct functional impacts than any other factors.

Instincts are, in fact, everywhere.

We all have instincts.

None of us can ever be free of the instincts we have in us. We can rise above them — and we can use them to create enlightened and positive behaviors for our lives and our settings — but we can never eliminate them from our thoughts, emotions, beliefs, or behaviors, and we always need to be on full alert to keep them from taking us to bad places and then feeling very right about being there.

The instincts we all have can be used to get us to good places — but they can far too easily take us down very negative paths to ugly and too often actually evil thoughts and behaviors, and they have the power to make us feel very right doing very wrong things when they are activated.

Those Evil Deeds Had Instinctive Roots

It became clear to me as I looked at those issues of negative inter group interactions that the White Americans who discriminated so badly and who often did damaging and sometimes intentionally evil things against each of the other perceived categories of Them in this country generally and consistently did those evil deeds against all of those other groups based on purely instinctive behaviors and thought processes and they felt right doing those ugly things to other people, because those people were aligned with our worst instincts on those issues for those behaviors and beliefs.

It was increasingly clear that those people in the majority population who were directly affected and personally and collectively influenced by those specific sets of inter group instincts did those evil deeds to the people they damaged with no sense of guilt because our pattern as people is not to feel guilt and to suspend both conscience and ethics when we instinctively perceive someone to be a “Them” and when we individually or collectively do damage or take action against that “Them.”

The learning process involved in developing these books and instinctive behavior-related teachings showed me very clearly that we have discriminated, as a nation, very clearly by group, and we have discriminated equally clearly by gender.

The male component of the population who ran our communities and our nation for a few hundred years has done a number of things to oppress, repress, and suppress women in various ways that have resulted in major levels of discrimination against women being embedded at multiple levels into both our culture and our economy, and that group also has created major levels of discrimination against every group other than the white majority tribe that set up our nation and then ran it in a very tribal way for a very long time.

The issues and factors that relate to discrimination against women are discussed in more detail in later chapters of this book; and in the books *Primal Pathways* and *Peace In Our Time*; and on the InterGroup Institute website.

We are not unique in that behavior.

Discrimination against women has existed in every country and in every setting in the world and it extends back into our history in every setting for as far back as historical records exist.

We need to look at various combinations of our instincts to understand why and how that happened.

One part of that historical pattern that has direct ties to our core instincts has been to have men be heads of families in every group with alpha power in each family setting. We know from our study of instincts that we are instinctively hierarchical, and that we create hierarchies in every setting. The heads of our hierarchies tend to have alpha status, and we now know that alpha status has psychological and neurochemical rewards for those people that clearly are instinct driven at their core.

We are clearly not alone in that pattern of behaviors.

Lion prides have alpha males. Wolf packs have alpha males. Horse herds have alpha stallions.

Similarly, my research and extensive reading on those issues showed me that our families in each culture everywhere that we had groups of people with cultures, had heads of families as part of their family structure.

Our cultures tend to give great support to that role and we have traditionally expected families in all settings to have direct and even strong loyalty to whomever is the head of the family.

The parallels for other alpha-creating settings and our own are obvious. The direct rewards that were given by our cultures to men who were heads of families to keep them providing food and to have them providing ongoing protection to their families as hunters and warriors as a functional tool to keep the families and the children alive in each culture included giving power and sex to the heads of families in each setting for being in that role.

That pattern of having males serving in those head-of-family roles extended in most settings to also having men be kings and chiefs, and filling each of the other roles we created in our hierarchies for tribal and group alpha status.

We have continued that pattern of having men as the primary people in alpha roles into relatively modern times. That is no longer a legal requirement, but we are still seeing that there are only a tiny number of women as heads of Fortune Global 500 companies or a tiny number of women as head of either our armies or our countries anywhere in the world.

There is nothing about that pattern of instinctive behavior about giving alpha status to men that makes it right for us going forward as a nation or a people. We can make enlightened decisions about all of those issues. The InterGroup book chapters on the role of women in our settings outline what some of those options are.

The truth is, that we get to make choices — and we can base those choices on enlightened values.

We should figure out as a nation what our values should be for all inter group and inter gender issues, and we should have our intellect take charge and we should have our intellect and our collective wisdom and our shared beliefs as a group build cultures and expectations that create equality and inclusion for us all.

We need to use our instincts in very intentional ways to make us successful and right as a nation.

We clearly need to have a working sense of Us to succeed and survive as a nation — so we should use our shared commitment to our enlightened values to define Us as Us to ourselves and to give us a values shaped path to our future as a nation.

Three of the Inter Group books outline the values we are using now based on our history, and we should adopt those values formally and collectively and give ourselves the Peace of Mind of having a future that will be safe and secure for our children and grandchildren as long as they all live because our values will cause that future to happen.

We can begin that process in part by being very honest with ourselves about our history as a nation.

Every Group Perceived to Be “Them” Faced Discrimination

Our long-standing patterns of instinct-triggered discrimination against all of the minority groups in this country are clearly a very real part of our history that we all need to understand and acknowledge. The negative inter group patterns that have resulted for our country from those instinct-guided behaviors have been extremely consistent for each of the groups who have triggered those differentiation factors ... at levels that are so

consistent and so universal that they actually do look as though they have some level of conspiratorial underpinning and we need to admit to one another that those behaviors have shaped who we are today.

Several chapters of the InterGroup books explain that painful history.

Hispanic Americans suffered major discrimination at very consistent levels in multiple settings. So did Asian Americans. Asian Americans could not get jobs or be elected to various offices, and could not buy property in a number of settings.

Every set of immigrants from Asia and the Middle East has faced similar barriers.

African Americans were very obviously discriminated against very deliberately in multiple functional, political, and economic ways, beginning with the extremely evil sin of inter group slavery and continuing for years after slavery ended with a wide range of laws that were intended to constrain, demean, oppress, and functionally and financially damage any and all people who had African ancestors.

American Indians were almost all expelled from their original lands, forced into often painful exile, and many of the children from those groups were moved into forced assimilation programs.

Those forced assimilation programs into White America for our Native American tribes tended to fail — just like the various attempts to assimilate and meld the Kurds have failed for centuries in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran and the very similar attempts to assimilate the Romani by taking their children into reeducation settings have failed in multiple European countries.

The Negative and Consistent Inter Group Interaction Patterns Look Very Much Like a Conspiracy

The high levels of consistently negative behaviors that have resulted for all of those groups of people for all of those years from that very direct discrimination that was directed against anyone who did not look White or who did not sound White has been so absolute and so consistent that it is very understandable that there have been people who have attributed those behaviors to conspiracies at the highest levels. .

We Invented the Term White to Give the Majority Group Here an Identity and Focus

We had patterns of behavior — rather than conspiracies — and one element that supported those patterns in very powerful ways here was to define the majority group in this country by the color of its skin.

Every setting needs an Us as the anchor for that set of instincts to function.

That pattern of consistency we see in so many negative inter group interactions around the world are all anchored in a macro package of primal instinctive behaviors that play out in every setting based on who the local groups are that function for themselves and with themselves as an Us in each setting.

Each location has a group that defines itself to be Us for that setting. Each group that defines itself as Us in each setting triggers its own set of instincts — and those instincts are always anchored on each group's perception of both who is their Us and who are their various Thems in each setting.

White Americans have been the dominant Us group on this continent for three centuries so that reality has channeled and triggered our behaviors as a nation.

White did not exist as a group before the invasion of this continent by the tribes from Europe. We invented the term White very early in the process here to give that group a group identity that moved beyond their old European tribal alignments.

We did an important thing to make the differentiation process for those instincts functionally simple in our country by settling in on a common language for the new Us group in America and by also very clearly defining the members of the core Us group by the color of their skin.

The old European tribes had fought each other as tribes for centuries on their ancestral turf. That history could not be more clear. They had separate languages, separate cultures, very separate hierarchies, and even different religious beliefs by group in the old-country settings. They each felt fierce loyalty to their own group — and they actually had hundred-year wars between the groups in old Europe because they were deeply and instinctively in opposition to one another.

They actually invented a new Us on this continent to overcome those prior divisions. The people from those countries who came to America gave up the old languages, adopted a new hierarchy and alignment, and defined themselves as being White rather than as being any other group, and many even made it a point of pride not to teach their children their ancestral tribal language.

Intermarriage did not exist between most of those groups in Europe — and they intermarried very freely and enthusiastically here.

They named their overall intermarried group White. White Americans. White Americans who spoke English as their tribal language.

That definition and that name obviously triggered its own set of problems and its own set of opportunities if you understand how inter group instincts work.

They then very intentionally and explicitly defined every other set of inhabitants on the continent who did not have that skin color and who did not speak that universal language as being various categories of Them.

Those particular sets of negative inter group interactions have been anchored and guided in our country by a perception on the part of White Americans about who is us and who is them. That pattern has been simple, extremely consistent, and clear. Every group that has looked different or has sounded different from the White majority American group “Us” has been perceived at a highly instinctive level to be a Them, and every other group has been discriminated against consistently by group as a Them in a variety of ways.

We all feel the need at a basic and powerful level to be part of an Us — and being white Americans who spoke English gave that particular tribe the ability to meet that need to be Us in a very primal and effective way that created our history as a country. There was a great consistency to the process, and it made complete sense as both a strategy and an alignment tool when you understand how those sets of instincts work.

The consequences of that consistent and very intentional negative inter group differentiation aimed at anyone and everyone who was not White has been very dysfunctional for all minority people in America. That level of pure inter group differentiation that existed for all groups has created very consistent negative and damaging national behavior patterns on inter group issues for literally centuries, and the impact of those instincts continues at a basic level in some instances of inter group interactions today.

That approach to running our country felt very right to White Americans because it had very direct instinctive underpinnings, and because we each tend to feel right when our behaviors help us fulfill our instincts.

It felt very wrong and even conspiratorial to members of all other groups, because each of those groups has been damaged as a group in various ways in the process — and it always feels wrong to be damaged as a group when you are in the group being damaged.

Too Many People Have Been Denied Access to the American Dream

One set of inter group interactions that has looked particularly conspiratorial, intentional, and negative to all of our minority group members is the fact that many people have very clearly and intentionally been denied access to the American Dream. For centuries, the minority groups who have been perceived to be a “Them” by the White majority in the U.S. have been very consistently denied full access to the American Dream.

That has been a bad thing for those excluded groups. The American Dream truly is a wonderful Dream. The American Dream of opportunity, freedom, innovation, hard work, and personal rewards and merited and recognized success is one of our great strengths as a nation, and it is an extremely enlightened, empowering, and enabling set of beliefs and behaviors for people in any setting.

I believe that to be true about the inherent strength and value of that Dream because I have seen our country succeed in so many areas based on people who have invented, created, and built important things for us all in the functional context of that dream.

I have been in more than 30 other countries where people do not have the opportunity to use their own efforts to succeed in important areas of their lives, and do not have the opportunity to prosper at a personal level because of their own efforts, and I have seen an absolute lack of progress and major impediments to progress in most of those areas because in many of those settings, people are not allowed to do the things — that allow and permit success — that are embedded in the American Dream.

People in those settings stagnate and are both frustrated and oppressed by people who hold economic and political power in those settings. The American Dream is a far better approach for us all because it does not damage people in those ways.

People who have the freedom and opportunity that is foundational to the American Dream can succeed and prosper, and we all prosper when we all prosper. Winning is most effective in win-win settings. We have been able to achieve creativity and innovation and productivity as a nation, in part because people who succeed here are allowed to benefit from their success, and the benefit to those people very effectively triggers continuing success — while people in too many other settings that I have seen who situationally prosper have their resources taken from them in a variety of ways by a number of unfortunate and damaging factors and forces.

Based on our own history and what I have seen in all of those other countries, I believe that the dream can be a powerful tool that has proven its value over and over again for the people who have been able to take direct advantage of it, and who have been able to use it in their own lives.

I also believe it to be true that only White American males have had clear and consistent access to the full benefits of the American Dream for almost all of our history. Women and minorities in this country have faced major barriers in multiple areas relative to that Dream.

The Barriers Were Significant — but Not Entirely Insurmountable

The barriers for women and for minority Americans relative to that Dream were significant — but not entirely insurmountable. The barriers for both minorities and women have been significant and real, but they have not been absolute. We have actually seen a number of major individual successes for both minority Americans and for women relative to the American Dream.

We have both women and minority Americans who have risen to positions of success and power and we have both women and minority Americans who have created great personal wealth. Individual realization of the dream has been achieved at a personal level by both women and minority Americans. But those successes have been achieved by individual people who each surmounted significant group-focused barriers to succeed.

However, those isolated and individual successes do not disprove the existence of the barriers for most minority Americans and for most women.

That is unfortunate and sad. I would have preferred that those barriers that should not have existed for those Americans should not have been in place for all of those years and I strongly believe that those remaining barriers need to disappear now for us to prosper fully as a safe and successful nation.

It has weakened us as a country to have those kinds of barriers to opportunity keeping large portions of our people from succeeding.

The basic logic for my strong belief about the need for us to include everyone in the Dream now is pretty clear.

We are obviously stronger collectively when more of us succeed. We need more people in our country to succeed so our overall country will be more successful overall.

We need to remove the remaining barriers to the American Dream for all Americans now. I believe we will be significantly stronger as a nation when those barriers are gone because more people will succeed and because collective success clearly creates and enhances collective strength.

Barriers to Owning Property, Having Jobs, and Holding Office Have Been Very Real

Our history of discriminatory treatment in several areas for everyone other than White males has been painful, dysfunctional, and damaging at multiple levels for everyone other than White males.

Barriers to owning property, to owning businesses, and to rising to levels of impact and influence have been very real. Those barriers have existed for people by group at extreme levels for centuries across the planet and they have existed in very real ways for too many of our American people here as well.

The various types and categories of discrimination that have occurred as a result have created levels of both damage and residual anger for significant groups of people that we need to deal with now.

My own sense from talking to a lot of angry people in a number of settings is that the residual levels of anger will continue to be felt for a very long time by the groups of people who had been damaged in this country because the injuries and even the insults to each set of people who have been damaged have been so significant, so longstanding, and so real.

The cumulative impact of those negative behaviors has had layers of negative consequences. Much higher local arrest rates for minority Americans have clearly existed in multiple communities. One consequence of those arrest rates has been that a significant number of minority Americans are now convicted as felons and have lost the right to vote.

So many Black men have been arrested, that the number of black American males in jail today exceeds the number of black American males who were enslaved during the Civil War.

Some people believe that there is an overarching conspiracy in place that exists to imprison African Americans in order to keep African Americans from voting. I have seen evidence of very real work in a number of states that have created barriers to voting for minority Americans, but I do not believe that specific conspiracy to put people in jail exists as a package, because putting people in jail is very expensive for us as a society and it creates a segment of the population that is less likely to help us all succeed.

We know that 60 percent of the African American men who have dropped out of high school are in jail today. We also now know that the pathway to dropping out of school begins in the first three years of life — and we know that we need to use our best efforts to help all children in their first three years of life to reduce their

chances of going to prison and keep them out of jail. More than half of the births in America this year will be to Medicaid mothers, which gives us a great opportunity to help all those mothers in the key weeks and months when neurons are connecting in our children's brains, and when their life trajectories on learning are being put into place.

We need a collective conspiracy to help children from every group at this point in our history.

Chapter Eleven of the book, *The Art Of InterGroup Peace*, explains how we need to help every single child from every single group get the right start in order to build inter group trust and then inter group Peace.

We Need to Perceive People — Not Color — and We Need “Consensual” to Be Our Only Interaction Standard

I am optimistic.

We have major problems — but we have the opportunity to make major progress.

Now that we understand the particular set of instinctive behavior related triggers that have created that discriminatory and dysfunctional behavior across all of those settings, we can make choices.

We can decide not to have those same factors steer us in the same direction in the future. Now that we have a better sense of how our basic us/them perceptions can negatively affect our thinking and our behavior, I do believe that we can and should take steps now to overcome those behaviors and to override them in all of the settings where they might emerge or exist.

We clearly need to eliminate the remaining barriers against women being included in our various settings and roles.

We have been blessed in very recent times with a very strong cultural backlash against sexual oppression of women that is changing our behaviors in a number of very good ways. The “Me Too” movement has made it very clear that men with positions of power will no longer be able to sexually abuse women under their power in our country. We are moving to a set of values that makes consensual sex our only acceptable sexual encounter context — and that is a very good direction for us to go.

We need to go from being a culture that made sexual coercion an expectation and a common reality for too many women into a culture that teaches, preaches, and enforces adult consensual sex as our only acceptable set of sexual encounters and interactions.

That is a key area where we can change our culture and make a very major difference in our society and lives.

We also each need to know now how to override our basic inter group interaction barriers when they become relevant to our own thoughts, values, and behaviors in any setting and cause us to have damaging feelings toward other people.

As a starting point, we all need to learn to see people as people instead of primarily seeing the skin color of people or seeing the eye shapes or the nose outlines of people. People are people. We are all people. That is a wonderful and useful truth that we all need to understand. The fact that we are all people at a very basic level is a blessing that we all need to work with in very intentional ways.

We truly do need people to be judged by the contents of their character rather than by the color of their skin. That can only happen when we get to know each other's character in a direct and trusting way.

We actually can make that change in our personal ways of interacting because we now know how our thought processes functioned in the past. We can have a much higher level of success in achieving that basic goal of seeing people as people when we each understand the impact that those visual skin color based visual instinct triggers have had on our own minds for all of those years.

Those same issues have applied to the people from every group. Every set of people tends to divide the world into us and them and every set of people tends to define people who do not look just like themselves to be Them.

White Americans did that — but so did every other group of people. It was more damaging when White Americans did it because White Americans held power and used that power in ways that were influenced by those perceptions. Other groups also need to decide who to trust and who to associate with in our settings and communities based on similar instinctive patterns.

It is time for all of us to understand how those patterns influenced each of us — and it is time for all of us to rise above those perceptions to create higher levels of belief system based “Us.”

We all need to each understand more clearly how all of those instincts have structured our own personal thought processes and our own personal behaviors and we need to make choices that let us make future decisions based on better criteria.

We Need to Interact Directly as People

We need a new collective conspiracy to develop a more inclusive sense of us that is not limited to skin color and tribe. We need to be an American Us as people — not function as dueling “min-us” subsets of divided segments and groupings.

We each need to accept each other’s core humanity. We collectively need to be an “Us” aligned by our beliefs and not divided by our ethnic group or race or by any other non-inclusive definition of who we are.

My own experience is that having personal relationships with people from other groups can help each of us achieve that needed people to people perception in important and personal ways.

That is exactly what the Dalai Lama advocates as one of his major pieces of counsel to the world. He teaches that we need to know each other as individual people in order to have actual Peace between real people. I believe he is right.

I can’t emphasize too many times how good and important it is for each of us to be friends with people from groups other than our own.

If we can’t create those relationships in person, we should build them electronically and we should build them virtually — creating friends that we share information with and have personal dialogues with using various Internet connections and tools.

We need people who are very good at various kinds Internet connectivity processes to help facilitate those exchanges and to enable and support those linking processes.

The goal for us all is to help us each see other people as people. We need to move past seeing people as stereotypes and collective labels. We need to have direct relationships with people at a person-to-person level that allows people to appreciate and know other people as people. People need to see people as people in order to interact with people as people.

We Need to Make Our Best Old Values More Inclusive

We don't need new values. We do need to make our very best old values more inclusive.

We need to build now on the enlightened instincts that caused us to call for freedom and to call for individual equality when the rest of the world was run by aristocrats and ruled by princes and kings and we need to use that best part of our history now as an anchor for our future as a new American "Us."

We need to build on our best values now. We need to understand clearly what makes our best values so special and so key to our future, and we need to very intentionally and effectively extend our very best values to all of us.

They are a wonderful and highly beneficial set of values, and they are better at many levels than the values that guide cultures and belief systems in multiple other settings in the world. Those values have given us greatness as a nation — and they have the ability to extend and expand our greatness into our future as a country and a people.

Those 12 core values are described more explicitly in the penultimate chapter of this book.

The existence of those very positive and beneficial beliefs and the inconsistent and very visible application of that old set of clearly enlightened values and opportunities only to White Americans for most of our history in ways that are extremely visible to everyone else has actually made the instinct-guided exclusion process in this country even more painful for many excluded people.

Many of the excluded people in this country have clearly felt and seen that exclusion by their group from the American Dream. Many people have perceived that exclusion to be very deliberate and entirely intentional by White Americans as a group, and there is growing anger on the part of many Americans toward White Americans today as a result of those realities.

That anger was not as visible to me when I began writing these books, but it has become more obvious to all of us in various public demonstrations in settings like Ferguson, where inter group anger is clear and definitive for that situation.

The armed vehicle on the cover of this book is not from a middle east war zone. It is actually a tank used in Ferguson to deal with the local people at the beginning of those protests. The inter group instincts, behaviors, emotions, and values that were triggered in that town were damaging and obvious to anyone who understands how those instincts work, and the cover of this book makes that reality very clear.

Movements like "Black Lives Matter" have strong support from a number of people who are very angry about the situations that we are facing today relative to issues like incarceration, income disparities, and education deficiencies at multiple levels.

We need to understand that anger — and we need to deal with it in ways that can build on our most enlightened values and bring us inter group Peace as a country.

There Have Been — and Still Are — Three Sets of White Americans

One of the realities that we need to deal with is that the disparities and tensions that exist are highly visible to many minority Americans on a regular basis, but a very large percentage of White Americans are not affected in any way by those issues, and quite a few White Americans are not even aware of their existence.

Looking at the belief systems of White Americans on those issues was a very interesting part of my learning on the conspiracy topic. It reinforced some of my thinking about actual conspiracies — because there is a strong relevance for conspiracy thinking for part of that population.

After talking to and with a significant number of White Americans about those issues and after looking at the behaviors of White Americans in multiple areas of inter group activity and inactivity for a number of years, I have reached the conclusion that the White majority population has been split roughly into three groups about our inter group issues. The size of each group has varied at different points in our history, but there has been a consistent division of belief and identity about those sets of issues into three sets of White Americans who have very different perspectives on those issues.

One group of White Americans does very damaging things.

It has been clear to me from the beginning of my research that one set of White people was actually working — sometimes working hard — to do racist, discriminatory, exclusionary, sometimes evil, and often clearly damaging things in a number of ways to various sets of minority people in this country.

Some People Are Negative and Do Intentional Damage

I believe today that we need to be very honest with ourselves on that point and that issue.

The subset of White people in our country who believe in doing negative and damaging inter group things clearly does exist. They have existed for a very long time. At the most extreme level, they supported slavery, Jim Crow laws, and lynching as very explicit tools for inter group damage and evil.

That set of people have done a lot of damage and some people in that group are clearly doing damage in very intentional ways today — and they aspire to do more damage in the future.

To the extent that situational conspiracies against minority groups have existed in various settings in our country, that set of White Americans have often been the primary conspirators.

There is some perversely positive information at the most macro level on that point today about that set of people.

Even though the anger level is high today for some members of that group, at their highest impact level, that particular set of negative inter group strategies and its array of advocates has actually lost some momentum and has less significant direct power in recent years.

They do not have the power they once had. We have recognized the damage that those most negative people were doing to us as a country, and we have passed a wide range of laws on issues like hiring, education, health care access, and voting rights that do directly protect our minority Americans from some of the damage done in those areas earlier in our history.

So, even though we are facing an increased backlash on inter group issues from a number of White Americans today, when you look at our historic reality, it is still true that the groups of people who are most negative make up a smaller proportion of the White American population than they used to, and it is also true that the most negative members of that group have currently lost the majority of their direct power and impact because we have changed some important laws to protect people from them.

Those particular negative people no longer have sufficient numbers to make our laws, but a number of people in that group would probably be willing to restore some of our most damaging inter group laws if they had the power to do that.

There are currently a couple of streams of thinking in that group of people. Some of those people are purely racist and tribal and want to do negative and damaging things to other people in ways that feel right to them because they have those sets of instinctive values and emotions fully activated.

Others in that group today are acting in negative inter group ways because they are currently feeling threatened at a very basic level relative to their own family and future, and we all instinctively respond very directly when we believe that our most basic Us is threatened.

So, our reality is that we currently have a number of angry and increasingly unhappy White Americans who believe that people from other groups are stealing or have stolen their power, and we also have some leaders who sometimes say things to inflame the angriest people with those sets of feelings to get them to support them as leaders.

The racist young man who recently killed a group of the African Americans in a South Carolina church is an easy-to-see example of that set of beliefs.

He was inspired in his negative behaviors and inter group hatred by other people who used the Internet to share their inter group poison with one another. We have had growing numbers of Church bombings in multiple settings, and those bombings could not be more instinctive behavior-guided and inspired.

Ku Klux Klan membership still exists with all of the inherent evil values that they hold and a number of other white-power groups have been enrolling people in their cause. Instinctive negative inter group behaviors clearly shape their beliefs and behaviors.

So we need to recognize that there are clearly some people in our country today from our White population who do want to do bad things to other groups of people, and we need to understand who they are and work to keep those bad things from happening as a result of what they do.

Some People Are Cognitively Oblivious

I also believe, based on multiple discussions and many conversations with people — and based on years of careful and direct observation in many settings — that another very large set of White people has tended to be pretty much out of touch with the entire inter group process and the entire set of inter group issues.

The minority Americans I talk to tend not to believe that the cognitively oblivious group of White people actually exists, but I know that it does and that it is actually surprisingly large because I have talked extensively with many members of that group and they are very real.

The White people in that group do not understand or even perceive the inter group anger and damage that is felt by so many Americans because it functionally does not have any impact on their lives that they know about.

The cognitively oblivious White people who I have talked to about those issues actually tend to be generally and generically in theoretical, philosophical, and even ideological favor of both inter group equality and inter group opportunity.

They are not negative people. They see issues like the “Black Lives Matter” movement and the act of kneeling for the National Anthem as part of the world we live in — but they don’t have a strong sense of how those issues interact with who they are as part of our nation, and they do not have a sense that they personally need to do anything now to help us have a better and safer future as a nation, or to create more inter group understanding in any way.

The fairly large percentage of White people who are in that generically supportive category on all of those issues generally do almost nothing intentional and do not direct themselves in either a negative or positive way on a personal level relative to any of those inter group issues in any area of their lives.

It is hard for minority Americans to understand how that mindset can exist, but what I have learned from those conversations is that *that* set of oblivious people is not affected in their daily lives by any inter group issues. My perception and observation from talking to large numbers of people in that group is that *that* set of people tends to ignore those issues until and unless some event or some direct incident brings any of those issues into public view and public attention and becomes relevant in their settings or world.

That actually makes logistical sense for many people. My experience has been that significant numbers of White Americans do not have a daily sense of the existence or the relevance of inter group issues because those people do not personally have a daily interaction or a working connection at any perceived level with any actual inter group issues.

Many of those people live in White neighborhoods, work in predominantly White work settings, and have relatively fewer settings where inter group issues are visible, relevant, or even mentioned.

When I talk to people from that group about the various inter group problems that exist in our country, the response I get is vaguely sympathetic and sometimes confused — with high percentages of people thinking in vague ways that progress of some kind has been made on many of those issues and with some people from that group wondering explicitly why more people from our minority populations are not taking better advantage of the progress that has been made.

Surveys have shown that large numbers of the people in that group are vaguely critical of minority Americans for not doing a better job of utilizing the American Dream at a personal level. A significant percentage of that population believes that hard work can achieve dream activation for everyone, and they tend to believe that the people who do not take advantage of that opportunity have only themselves to blame.

They are a target market for me as an author.

One of my goals in writing these books is actually to help that set of White Americans to realize what the actual situation is relative to those issues and interactions. I strongly believe that well intentioned people make better decisions when they are better informed on key issues, and I very much want the currently cognitively oblivious people to know what the reality actually is on those issues and then to do the right sets of things to create both inter group trust and inter group support.

I am particularly hoping that we can persuade people to support doing the right things to give children from every group the best start in life for all of those key issues of learning and functionality.

Another Group of White People Wants to Do the Right Thing

The third set of White Americans that I have talked to understands the inter group issues, racism, prejudice, disparities, and discrimination. That third group of White Americans tends to have two subsets of beliefs. Both are positive.

One subset just plain wants to do the right thing from a moral and ethical perspective. That group believes that inclusion, fairness, democracy, and mutual support, and the other key and intellectually and emotionally enlightened values that we have as a nation are the right values and the right behaviors that we all should support in order to be good people and lead good lives.

That set of people believes in doing the right thing just for the purpose of doing the right thing, and believes that what we have done to improve the status of women and minorities in this country is, in fact, the right thing, and should be supported and even improved.

The other subset has a deeply realistic perspective, and believes that we will be damaged as a people and that our children and our grandchildren will live lives of threat, conflict, and fear unless we do things now to create

a better future for us as a country. That particular subset of people is motivated by the risk and by the threat as much as by their enlightened values, and they believe that we will end up living in gated communities at war with ourselves at the inter group level, just as more than 100 other countries do today — if we don't fix some of the key issues now.

Those people understand what is happening on inter group issues in the world around us and fear having those same behavior patterns take over communities in our country.

Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and even major parts of South America all have groups of people who hate each other in their various communities — and that set of White Americans believes with very good levels of insight that those same kinds of extremely damaging inter group behaviors can far too easily become our approach to each other in far too many of our own communities and settings, and that the risk of that happening is immediate and real.

Some people hold both sets of beliefs.

We have always had some good people who have wanted to do the right thing for the right reasons.

The core set of people who have strong ethical underpinnings for their thoughts and behaviors and who have always wanted the inter group situation to improve in this country have generally been believers for a long time in extending the American Dream to all Americans.

Instincts give each of us choices. The choices are very real and very important.

We Are All Saints — and We Are All Sinners

We all have the ability to be saints — and we all have the ability to be sinners — and we each get to make choices about which set of behaviors will guide both our lives and the groups we live in.

The saints have had a good impact for that subset of our population.

A number of people from that group of White Americans have worked very intentionally and very persistently over extended periods of time to support that full and inclusive access to the Dream and to help expand and protect people's civil rights, freedoms, and opportunities. That subset of White Americans who do want to make progress relative to our inter group problems and to our various inter group issues has had, some real successes in recent decades, and that success actually also gives us the foundation that the people who want to avoid future inter group conflict can use to achieve their goals.

Great progress has been made in some important areas.

The subset of White Americans who have collectively and persistently believed in the shared humanity of all Americans have made slow but sure progress over unfortunately extended periods of time to move us as a nation to a point where civil rights laws now allow everyone — regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender — to vote and where laws allow all Americans to be free from direct and intentional legal discrimination.

Civil rights laws exist today that did not exist only a few years ago for both minority Americans and women. That is not an insignificant set of accomplishments.

Real successes have happened in a wide range of areas largely as the functional and linear result of actions and beliefs relating to that set of enlightened people.

The Civil Rights Movement has succeeded because of the efforts of heroic, dedicated, and persistent activists from minority groups who pushed the movement and because of support from the subset of White Americans

who want Civil Rights to be the basic value set for America and who have supported the agenda of the Civil Rights activists.

Progress in those key areas has involved and required both sets of people.

We very legitimately and appropriately celebrate the fact that Jackie Robinson integrated baseball — and we need to remember as well that the White men who owned and who ran that particular baseball team actually made that integration of that particular sport by Robinson functionally possible. We need to celebrate that entire set of people when we look at that success. It took both sets of people for the progress we have made to happen. We need to remember that there was anger and stiff opposition by many White Americans to each key step of that progress when it happened and that there was support and acceptance of that progress from other people whose support was needed to make the new approaches the new expectations for America.

We Should Celebrate the People Who Made Progress Happen

Those White people who supported those initiatives and who achieved those goals took enlightened action that was not supported by a number of the people who they identified with and cared about. They were hated and attacked at multiple levels by other members of the group they perceived to be Us — and they acted anyway in enlightened ways.

That entire set of enlightened people who actually did do the right things in so many key areas should be celebrated by us all today.

We should clearly celebrate the Supreme Court ruling on *Brown vs. the Board of Education* that transformed our expectations and our rules about who should be in our schools. We generally celebrate and honor the brilliant and articulate Black legal counsel and legal team who argued the case before the court. That celebration is well deserved and entirely appropriate. We also need to all recognize and remember that every single Justice who actually voted to make that enlightened decision and then write that key ruling was White. White and male.

Earlier generations of Supreme Court Justices — also all White and also all male — had done very negative rulings on key and important inter group issues. It took more than a persuasive argument by a brilliant advocate on a great day in court to achieve that positive and important vote. It took individual people on that court who made the individual and personal decision to do the right thing in that setting to make that ruling the law of the land.

They Were Not Forced into That Decision

That particular set of White Justices who ruled on that particular case struck a major blow for enlightenment. They weren't forced into that decision. They wrestled with their conscience and they made that positive decision at a time when many people become deeply angry with them for what they had done. They should be celebrated for their courage and for their enlightenment.

As I have looked at the role that has been played by White Americans relative to a very wide range of inter group issues for our country, it has been clear to me that all three of those baseline categories of White Americans have existed for a long time and it is clear to me that all three of those sets still exist today. I can see that progress is still being made on key inter group issues with strong support continuing from group three and with at least mild support on many issues from group two.

I can see that group one still hates that progress and still wants us to be a country that does negative things to our minority populations. We need to convert those people to more enlightened belief systems when that is possible to do. Conversions can happen. We need to welcome those conversions when they occur.

That is an important point for us to understand and accept.

We need to believe that people can change — and we need to work hard to make personal change and growth happen. The likelihood that any of us was actually perfect in our beliefs and in our behaviors from the point of birth on is close to zero. We all start somewhere — and that somewhere is always short of perfection.

We all go through learning processes. We should make our learning processes both a top priority and a commitment, and we need to welcome learning and share it and celebrate it when it happens.

People sin.

That behavior and those thoughts are often either unintentional or not understood as a sin, when they initially happen. We all need to grow ethically and intellectually in our lives — and we need to make increasingly wise and informed decisions about not doing the things that are sinful and damaging in our settings and lives.

Growth should be our personal goal and actual continuous improvement should be our ideal, our commitment, our strategy, and our belief as individuals and as a country.

The core set of foundational beliefs for us as a country that is outlined later in this book very explicitly includes continuous improvement along with inclusion, fairness, honesty, democracy, and full opportunity for everyone as core values that we should build into our nation to give us both alignment and success.

We need to celebrate and support people who become better people in each of those areas as a result of what they learn — and we should each make personal and community growth both strategies and goals so that we always improve both who we are and what we do.

The hard reality is that we will need to make most of our progress for the next set of inter group interactions using the support of all of our sets of people at this point in our history. We will definitely need both of those more enlightened groups to be supporters for creating needed win/win levels of inter group Peace in America, and we need all groups of people to help us solidify and protect the progress that we can make.

I am optimistic that we will see that support happen from all groups of Americans who look at those values and make that commitment and that we can create a culture of inclusion and values-based behaviors and beliefs as a foundation for the world we need to have as we become increasingly diverse as a nation.

We Need to Build on the Progress We Have Made

There have been some obvious heroes for civil rights and enlightened behaviors for each of the groups of people in this country.

The fact that we have multiple streets in a number of cities named after Cesar Chavez and named after Dr. Martin Luther King makes a clear statement that those heroes exist and that those heroes are being recognized and honored by at least some Americans for their celebrations.

I take huge pleasure every year from the fact that we have Martin Luther King Day as a national holiday of recognition. His “I Have a Dream” speech has been framed and displayed on my walls both at work and at home for decades. I love that speech and the clear and wonderful message about inclusion that it conveys.

The civil rights movement in this country has had an array of heroes who put their lives on the line — and sometimes lost their lives — to help create higher levels of equality for all Americans. We need to honor the achievements of all of those heroes and we need to build on what each and all of those heroes have achieved.

I had a chance to spend some time with Delores Huerta, a co-leader for the migrant worker campaign with Cesar Chavez. We both had been given lifetime achievement awards for our work in diversity issues in health care by a minority group medical education association. I was able to have dinner with her and I heard some truly horrible stories about the internal resistance from local employers to her work with those workers. She was damaged for life by a beating she received in the process.

Today, she is an icon. At that fairly recent point in history, people with power in that setting made her a situational victim — and the fact that she received community support as she refused to remain a victim is one of the reasons I am optimistic about the direction we can go as a country now.

When we look at the print and video history showing us what each of the groups in this country have faced — and when we look at the heroes who have led the way for each of our groups who have made real progress for us all — it is a humbling and inspirational experience. People have done some very heavy lifting. It is clear, however, that we still have more heavy lifting to do.

We Can Move Past Those Old Differentiation Anchors

Knowledge is Power.

Now that we understand that those basic underlying patterns of discrimination for our country and now that we recognize and understand the levels of direct discrimination that has happened against anyone who looked different or sounded different than the White majority American Us, we can make new choices. By both rejecting and understanding that particular powerful and long-standing pattern of inter group discernment, we can make better decisions about how we can work together to improve our future as a country.

We have proven that we can look past those factors in enlightened and positive ways.

As a first step in that process, we need to begin a dialogue between all of the groups that make up the fabric of America — and we need that dialogue to begin with a clear sense of where each group is today.

We need people from all groups in America to agree to support and commit to our core values — and we need to understand how each group got to where it is today as a result of those basic inter group instincts and behaviors and then use that foundation to get us to the success as a nation that we all want and deserve.

When we think about conspiracies, we need to recognize that they do not make it impossible for us to do the right thing now, because our macro behavior in all of those patterns on all of those issues was created by our instincts — not by secret and powerful people sitting in conspiratorial settings to steer that reality. We need to understand that many conspiracies that were created and guided by those instincts did happen, and we need to act in more enlightened ways now to make sure they do not happen again.