

CHAPTER THREE

Create and Sustain InterGroup Peace with Win/Win Outcomes for All Groups in America

BEFORE DISCUSSING WHAT I learned in all of those other countries about the impact of instinct sculpted and instinct influenced inter group behavior in the next several chapters of this book, I thought it might make sense and be useful in creating context for this book to briefly discuss the relevance of those patterns of behavior on us as a country and to describe in practical terms what we need to do to keep all of those damaging and dangerously seductive patterns of inter group behavior from shaping our future as a nation and as a people.

We have a long and sometimes troubled history of Us/Them instinct influenced inter group behavior as a country. The InterGroup books discuss that history for us in some detail. We very functionally invented the term White to be a tool that Euro Americans could use to exert group dominance over other American Groups and then we used that tool for a couple of centuries for exactly those purposes.

We set up laws, customs, regulations, expectations, practices, processes and cultures to support that dominance by Whites over other American groups. The InterGroup books describe how that approach worked and why it was done.

When we look clearly at our national history, it is absolutely beyond dispute or question that we have had societal patterns that particularly favored White males — with major levels of discrimination extended against White females and against both males and females from all other groups for a couple of centuries. Several chapters in these books discuss and describe both what those behavior patterns looked like and why they happened.

At this point in our history, we need to collectively understand those processes so that we can effectively avoid having them continue to damage us as a nation and a people in the future.

We are definitely not as bad today as we were for several centuries in all of those areas, but our progress has been imperfect and we have not managed to entirely solve those important instinct triggered inter group issues. We need to make significant progress in a number of areas if we want to be all that we can be as a nation and as a people and we will only be able to do that when we understand more clearly what we are doing and why we are doing it.

We actually have made major progress in almost all of those areas of inter group behavior today that we should celebrate and build on going forward.

Several areas of progress are clear and extremely important. We now have very well intentioned and increasingly effective laws that explicitly forbid and outlaw many levels and categories of discriminatory and damaging inter group and inter gender behaviors that were normal behaviors for us as a nation for the first centuries of our existence.

We have also changed many aspects of our cultures to create both higher levels of inclusion and acceptance of people from every gender and group into full protection of the law and into the expectation that the benefits of the wonderful and enlightened American Dream should be extended to us all.

Those new laws and new expectations that we have been creating over the last half century through both our civil rights movement and our women's movement are much more enlightened at multiple levels — and those new and better laws are based at their core on extending our definition of Us to a much broader and more inclusive group of people.

The prison camp guard example that was described in the prior chapter of this book — and the vast number of examples that I saw of damaging and even evil inter group behaviors that created problems for people in all of the other multigroup countries that are described in the next several chapters of this book and in both *Primal Pathways* and *The Art of InterGroup Peace* — make

it absolutely and irrefutably clear that those are universal patterns of behavior. That universe includes us. We are at significant risk of damaging tribalization behaviors and emotions today, in spite of the progress we have been making over the past couple of decades to be more enlightened and inclusive in key areas.

We are at huge, high and immediate risk of having a future of inter group conflict in this country that will badly damage the future for our children and for our grandchildren and for their children if we do not take advantage of the progress we have been making over the past half century and go several steps beyond that progress to very intentionally and effectively create a sense of Us that extends the protection and the ethical guidance of our best and most beneficial instincts to us all as a country and as a people.

That extremely important extension of being Us at the most inclusive levels will not happen on its own.

The Moral Arc of The Universe can extend to very enlightened behavior — but that extension will only happen in our country at this point in our history if we functionally understand and value the Arc, and if we steer it very intentionally and very deliberately in the right directions.

I have spent a lot of time looking at our own recent successes and failures in inter group behavior and at both best practices and various negative inter group conflicts, divisions and damaging inter group interaction failures that we should very explicitly avoid from the 40 other multigroup countries that I have visited in person and from the 60 other countries I have studied through my research into functional inter group instinct issues over the last couple of decades.

We are on some very good paths at this moment and time — and we are also at high risk in a number of areas. To avoid the high risk, we now need to understand more clearly what those best paths are and we collectively need to understand at a clear intellectual level why we need to continue to support and implement several positive and beneficial behaviors and beliefs that we have recently been embedding in our laws, cultures and expectations as part of who we are and what we do in our settings.

We need an additional level of self-awareness of our individual and collective behavior patterns to give us the best chance of success in our current state of inter group stress, tension, anger and division.

We Need to Understand and Manage Instinctive Behaviors

That is why these books have been written.

I believe that we have reached a point as an increasingly diverse country where we all need to understand at a clear and explicit intellectual level the impact of our instincts on our thoughts, emotions, values, and behaviors. I believe that we need to make the clear, intentional, and very explicit decision now that we want to become a successful, safe, prosperous, creative, inclusive, and continuously improving American Us and that we will each do what we need to do to make that enhanced sense of Us succeed, prosper, endure, survive, and thrive into the foreseeable future.

Simply making that commitment to become an Us at an intellectual level is not enough. We need to make that commitment real. It needs to be both functional and believable for us all. We need to do very real things as a country that will help people in very real ways to give us that collective future of both being Us and believing that we are an Us.

We need to have our behaviors prove that we want that future to happen.

There is inherent risk and vulnerability in that strategy and approach of understanding our instinctive behavior for each of us. We can never be free of our instincts. We will always have our instincts at the core of who we each are.

When we do make the decision to expand our sense of Us to more people, there is a fragility to that process. We have strong instincts to never be a traitor — so we will need to create that sense of Us in a way that does not make us feel like a traitor to our most fundamental definition and sense of Us.

Even when we make that decision to expand our sense of Us, we will always be on full alert about the risk of extending and expanding our sense of Us

from our basic family, group, ethnicity, culture, and community settings and alignments into that broader and more inclusive American Us.

Our instinctive perception of our own most basic groups will always put each of us in the position where any real threat that we perceive in any setting to the group we personally hold most dear to our hearts and most dear to our identity as an Us will be functionally perceived as a very relevant and important personal threat and that perception of risk will make us less likely to be part of the broader Us in in that setting and less likely to do the things we need to do to have that broader sense of Us succeed.

We have important choices and decisions to make if we want that effort to succeed.

We cannot succeed — and our grandchildren and their children will not have good, safe, and successful lives — if we simply tribalize in various very emotionally seductive ways now and if we decide now to choose a future of inter group conflict along those tribal lines instead of creating and building new and renewed inter group alignment for America.

We need to understand how seductive those most negative behaviors and those deeply felt emotions are at an instinctive inter group level in any setting — and we each need to make the decision at an intellectual and fully informed level to rise above those instincts to create and believe in a more inclusive, powerful, and accepting sense of Us.

As part of becoming an Us that we all believe in and support, we need to each agree now that we each individually and actually do want us all to succeed and then we need to do some real things to prove that those are our commitments, values, beliefs and behaviors relative to our shared sense of Us.

That commitment for mutual success needs to include us all and it needs to be both real and successful. Mutual success is extremely important to having a future at Peace. We need to collectively make a commitment to have all groups in America prosper and thrive or we will not be able to fully function as an

American Us and we will always be at very real risk of having the most seductive levels of inter group division engulf us in their impact and power.

We need everyone to win. We all need to be helping one another succeed as groups if we want to achieve true inter group Peace in America. And that commitment needs to be real or it will not succeed or be believed.

We Need a Commitment to Win/Win Outcomes for Us All

Win/Win is key.

We need to adopt a clear and explicit and believable commitment to win/win results for all groups as a value, a goal, a behavior, a skill set, a strategy, and a commitment we all explicitly and knowingly make to each other.

As *The Art of Intergroup Peace* points out and describes in more detail, this is the time for us all to be collectively committed to a win/win set of intergroup outcomes and to win/win interactions for all groups of Americans. We all need to want each other to do well and to prosper as part of the American Dream.

Our children should be our top priority and our success in helping our children can be our most credible proof of our good intentions and our real commitment to have every group actually win.

We need to start that commitment to having everyone win with a clear and explicit commitment to helping children from every group. We to use the best new science to structure that commitment to our children.

Beginning are extremely important at a developmental level for every child.

The InterGroup books explain in multiple places that children from every group go through the same entirely biological brain development processes in the first three months and first three years of life. Those books also explain that the problematic and high impact brain changes that happen at age four for all children. We do not have the opportunities after age four that exist before age four, so we need to help every child from every group before that age.

The age four part of the brain development cycle for each and every child needs to be understood by us all because that growing body of medical and

developmental science points us to approaches that can help give the best start in life for each child in the time frames when those efforts can actually have the highest level of success for our children.

The *Three Key Years* book that was published by The Institute for InterGroup Understanding explains that science and those processes. That book and the website that supports it are both included in the inter group Peace library and tool kit because helping children end some key disparities has a huge and long-term impact on inter group Peace.

I did not understand any of those issues back in the early 1990s when I began work on inter group interaction and instinctive behaviors. I have since added both developmental and epigenetic science to the overall tool kit because we need to look at the entire processes that are relevant if we want everyone from every group to do well and have inter group Peace.

The numbers and patterns are clear. Children who do not get the right levels of interactions in those very first key months and key years of life are far more likely to drop out of school and those children who drop out of school are also far more likely to end up in prison.

Prison is highly relevant.

Sixty percent of the people in our jails have dropped out of school. We can now know by age three whether people are on the path to dropping out of school.

Other countries have similar incarceration patterns. A study in Scotland just showed that 80 percent of their prisoners in Scottish jails can't read well. People who can't read here and in other countries disproportionately end up in prison because dropouts have a very hard time being employed in any setting.

Having all children with strong and well-exercised brains that keep them from dropping out of school and that can help keep them out of prison is clearly a win/win strategy and outcome for every group.

We need to do the things that are outlined in the *Three Key Years* books for every child from every group. Doing those things for every child should be part

of the Win/Win commitment we make to each other and the fact that we are doing those intentional and important things for our children in those time frames can be powerful and clear proof for each other that we want every group to do well.

Having good schools for all Americans and having good health for all Americans should also be included in our shared goals for one another.

We need to eliminate health care delivery disparities as well. We have real and unacceptable disparities today in multiple levels of care and in multiple care outcomes. The book *Ending Racial, Ethnic and Cultural Disparities In American Health Care* points to very practical things we can do to have those disparities go away, and that book is also available on the Institute for InterGroup Understanding website.

We Should Intentionally Avoid Both Win/Lose and Lose/Lose Processes and Strategies

We will need all groups to succeed in key areas if we want a future of inter group Peace for America.

We need to look at the current situation for each group in each American setting and we need to figure out how to help groups improve their situations. We need to very carefully and skillfully figure out positive and effective ways of creating Win/Win results in key and important areas for all groups. We need creating Win/Win outcomes to be a skill set in our communities as well as a commitment that we make to one another.

We also need to avoid intentional Win/Lose outcomes and — even more damaging and impactful — we need to completely avoid intentional Lose/Lose outcomes, in our inter group settings.

We need groups to avoid being damaged.

We know from looking at inter group behaviors in all of those other very real and very immediate settings that are described in this book that there is a real fragility to inter group Peace and that the anger and damaging behavior that

springs up quickly with major reinforcement from our primal instincts can be triggered far too easily when any clear inter group damage occurs in any setting.

We need to guard against that situation and that behavior package. We clearly need to not have any sets of goals, aspirations, or behaviors that involve losses, setbacks, or disadvantages for people from other group who are part of our American “Us.”

Too often our inter group interactions in the past in a wide range of settings have been based on win/lose thinking — with each group trying to succeed at the expense of the other group.

Many people feel great comfort thinking in terms of win/lose outcomes — because that is the approach we usually use and because it feels to many people like the natural outcome of inter group interactions.

Sadly, too many angry and divided people in too many settings in our country and in a number of other countries are going beyond win/lose outcomes and those angry people are actually intentionally and deliberately aiming for lose/lose outcomes — trying to achieve outcomes where all parties in the setting are damaged and where every group loses.

Lose/Lose outcomes in any setting are a very sad, dysfunctional, damaging and unfortunate set of outcomes and strategies, but that approach happens far too often. My experience in both our own country and in multiple other countries has been that some people hate the other party or the other group in a setting so much that they would rather lose at some level themselves rather than have the other party win at any level.

That was a set of strategies I did not expect to discover or uncover when I began to study inter group interactions. Unfortunately, once I realized that lose/lose strategies do exist, I began to see them in both our traditional inter group situations and in a number of political settings and I began to realize that we need to work very hard not to have those strategies and goals hurt us here.

In deliberate and intentional lose/lose settings, the people involved in those specific inter group interactions hate the other group so much that they develop

and use very intentional lose/lose strategies — with people willing to take a loss themselves and to suffer damage for themselves or for their own group if they can do more damage to the other group in the process.

Lose/Lose Strategies Can Be Damaging

Lose/Lose can be an extremely damaging set of strategies. People strapping a bomb to their own body and being willing to die so that they can kill more people from the other group is a Lose/Lose thought process. Thousands of those bombings are taking place in the world today — and some countries have people attempting to kill other people in those ways every day.

In other less violent settings and situations, there are too many people who are willing to take economic setbacks or to suffer some kinds of functional hits in various ways if the other party in that setting who they hate deeply suffers more as a result of that activity of behavior.

In the very worst cases, people who hate deeply are willing to take on large damage levels themselves and are willing to absorb real and significant damage to their own group and to themselves personally just to do even a low level of damage to the group they really hate.

That seems hard to believe and strategically and functionally improbable, but the world around us shows too many settings where that level of lose/lose category of thinking is happening and is currently affecting behaviors and thought processes. That approach is extremely dysfunctional and extremely unhealthy for all parties and it has a growing number of advocates in too many settings.

This book — *The Art of InterGroup Peace*, *Primal Pathways*, and *Peace In Our Time* — all have examples of those behaviors.

Some Politicians Use Lose/Lose Strategies

That can be particularly relevant, today, because we are increasingly seeing versions of that thinking and those damaging thought processes in our political arenas, where people hold political beliefs that function like us/them value systems for inter group war — with the other party in that political context and setting perceived to be evil rather than just being either politically incorrect or ideologically inaccurate or wrong.

Those are both dangerous and damaging ways of thinking about the other group.

When politicians find themselves in the most damaging kinds of demonization- centered, lose/lose, us/them instinct-sculpted thought processes about other groups of people, it can feel right at a very visceral level to do damage in any way possible to whoever is perceived to be the other side in that situation.

The other side, in our worst-case us/them political situations, is literally demonized. Demonized, denigrated, and dehumanized — with rhetoric in too many of those situations based on calling the political opponents in that setting evil instead of simply calling them wrong.

Very primal thoughts, values, and behaviors can become extremely relevant.

Ethics and moral standards are too often suspended by politicians when political settings activate us/them instincts to that extreme degree.

Truth becomes irrelevant as an expectation when those instincts are fully activated.

Some politicians and their followers will deliberately and intentionally say things that are not true and will feel justified at a deep instinctive level in saying those untrue things because they believe their evil “Them” will be damaged by those specific untruths and they believe that any act that damages “them” is a legitimate and appropriate thing to do.

The ends do seem to justify the means for those politicians who have their own most primal us/them sets of instincts activated to the highest degree.

The ancient *The Art of War* sometimes becomes the template for political intergroup interactions in an ethics-free political context. The art-of-war guidance from Sun Tzu 2,000 years ago says that deceit and intentional deception are appropriate ethical, appropriate, and highly even desirable tools of war when survival or victory is at stake for your side in a conflict.

Unfortunately, too many people in political situations today and in multiple other countries where inter group instincts are fully activated feel that same highly situational Sun Tzu ethical standard is legitimate for political survival as well as for wartime survival and those people who share that belief in all of those settings are too often willing to lie, spin, distort, cheat, mislead, and deceive people without guilt in the interest of their political goals.

In some cases, the people who are saying deliberately untrue things for political advantage have so much hatred toward the other group that the ethics of their behaviors are both invisible and irrelevant to them. They are swept up in the heat of combat against “evil” and people who have those instincts dominating their thinking feel that defeating evil justifies any behavior.

Hating Other People in Political Settings Can Be a Very Primal Behavior

It took me several years of looking at inter group interactions to realize that the energies and thought processes for some people in political positions function as though politics is an amoral game of some kind with fierce competitors who feel very right doing both heroic and evil things to each other to win the game.

The approach used in that political mindset for thinking about other people is very primal. It has people who trigger us/them instincts in a political context perceiving the other side in a political process to be a worst category of “them” — perceived to be evil at the core in ways that justifying the most unethical behaviors to ensure the other sides defeat.

The InterGroup books describe why people who ordinarily are ethical people can simply tell outright lies and feel entirely justified in their falsehoods if they do damage to their “Them” in that situation and setting by telling the lie.

We can tell that those us/them instincts are triggered at primal instinct-linked survival levels when people in political settings clearly communicate that they hate and oppose one another at a core and primal level instead of just communicating to us that they oppose one another at a political, programmatic, or even ideological level.

Hatred at a visceral level is obviously not the kind of political interchange or context that will give us the best political outcomes as a country for most of our relevant issues.

We need to avoid leaders who lead from visceral hatred instead of leading from the perspective of helping people in any setting come to win/win solutions and mutual successes.

We also need people in each setting and in each political alignment to understand when their leaders are proposing lose/lose or even win/lose situations that it is far better for us all when we can all — for both the short term and long term — achieve win/win outcomes.

We also need to avoid having our various cultural, racial, ethnic, economic and community group differences triggering those same levels of thoughts, beliefs, ethics and behaviors.

That was one of the most important things I learned in the process of doing this research, writing these books and working on these issues. We cannot afford to behave in the most negative ways that our Us/Them instincts direct us to act or we will do permanent damage to us in our communities and as a country.

There are nearly 200 inter group conflicts going on the world today — as the InterGroup books describe in some detail. All of those conflicts trigger, activate, utilize, and channel those inter group instincts, and they all create dangerous and damaging inter group beliefs, emotions and behaviors.

We need to abandon win/lose thinking for our own inter group interactions as a country and we need to make win/win strategies real and successful in our American communities and settings.

We Live in a World of Plenty

That can be done.

Win/win outcomes can happen. We actually live in a world of plenty. We live in a world and a nation of ample resources where all groups can do better when all groups do better. A thriving economy helps all people. A rising tide lifts all ships.

We need to create a rising tide for America. We need to make our growing diversity into a strength and an asset rather than a threat or liability.

I believe that turning diversity into a strength rather than a liability can be done because I have seen it done. I have also done it.

I have been more than a theorist relative to inter group issues over the past couple of decades. I have been both an experimenter and a practitioner in actual functional inter group settings on all of those issues.

I have set up health care systems in several multi group countries and I have been the CEO of care delivery systems in several settings in our country. I used those opportunities as a strategist, manager, process architect and designer, systems operator, and senior organization executive to learn how to make diversity a strength and asset in the real world.

One of my experiences included serving as the CEO of one of the largest and most diverse care systems in the world for more than a decade. We had 10 million very diverse patients and we served our patients with an even more highly diverse staff and care team through clinics, hospitals and hundreds of care sites that we actually owned and operated.

I can say from experience that when our extremely diverse staff of more than 200,000 people was aligned around patient care and aligned around collaborative continuous improvement approaches — with more than 100,000 of our workers

directly and intentionally organized at the front line into unit-based teams with union components deeply and fully embedded in each team — we were able to provide world leading care and we were able to provide those high levels of service and care with internal morale levels for that very diverse staff that were among the highest measured at the time among care systems when those measurements were done.

That very diverse care team was 59 percent minority. There actually was no majority group of any kind in that organization.

The senior executives for my management team in that setting were also extremely diverse. We had three group presidents. One was an African American male, one was a Chinese American male, and one was a White woman.

We had eight regional presidents. Only two of the eight presidents were white males.

The very diverse health care organization that was led by those very diverse leaders had the highest quality scores and the highest service scores in America for Medicare, both as a health plan and as a hospital system.

The organization that has been served by that very diverse staff and by that very diverse leadership team has also led both J.D. Powers and Consumer Reports in achieving the highest rating levels for their areas. Number one results happened in all of those areas of performance because diversity in that organization created value, operational creativity, mutual support, and functional responsiveness and strength.

Nearly three-dozen health care quality scores for health plans and for Medicare plans had Kaiser Permanente as the number one score for the entire country.

Those results were very clear. They also told me that the agenda outlined in these books is on the right track.

I know for an absolute fact from that functional setting that diversity can create synergy and creativity. I know for a fact that meritocracy and inclusion can be a powerful and effective combination for an organization or setting. I

know for a fact that when that entire very diverse care team was focused on — and committed to — win/win work settings and win/win work efforts — that combination can create exceptional results and great service and care.

When people from all groups in the entire chain of command of an organization can look up the organizational ladder and can see leaders in that hierarchy who look just like them, that is a clear signal to every employee and to every team member that there is a real meritocracy in place and that hard work and great care can result in advancement, recognition, and both individual and collective success.

Diversity Can Be a Great Strength

I very intentionally and explicitly used all of the alignment creation triggers and the instinct linked inter group tools outlined in these books to create a sense of Us for the people in that organization — and I know for a fact that those tools worked in that setting and in half a dozen other settings that are described in *The Peace In Our Time* case studies book that supports the three instinctive behavior books.

So I have been both a student and a practitioner. As I was doing the research that brought me to the 40 countries that are described in this book, I was also using those insights and approaches very directly and openly in the organizations that I led to get important things done.

It has been very rewarding and highly reinforcing to work on very specific and real world sets of inter group issues as a researcher, writer, and practitioner for two decades. I loved the fact that each of those settings achieved the results that we set out to achieve using those tools.

I predicted to the Board of Directors when I was hired in the organization with more than a hundred thousand employees the day I was hired that we would become more diverse and that we would use those explicit approaches for instinctive alignment and we would go from being a very good care system to

one that scored number one on dozens of quality and service results because of our diversity and our sense of alignment and culture.

We increased revenue by nearly \$30 billion and we increased staff by tens of thousands of very diverse people at every level during my time in that position — and we achieved all of those goals because of our diverse synergy and our shared values and collaborate processes and approaches.

I believe that there is a wonderful level of creativity and customer responsiveness that can happen when highly competent and very diverse leaders with great personal values work as a team. I also believe that success in that 50-billion-dollar care system was functional proof in a fairly large and complex setting that American communities can go forward to turn our diversity into synergy and into a win for all groups if we decide to make that our goal and then do the right things relative to instinctive behaviors to get there.

The high levels of care quality and service levels that can result from a highly diverse staff working as a team with explicit shared values and expectations to meet the needs of highly diverse patients should counter the belief of those people who believe that ethnic and racial work force diversity leads inevitably to dysfunctional consequences and to dysfunctional and damaging internal division in any setting.

Having a shared, values-based culture was key to that success. Culture is even more important than strategy in achieving great results and that is particularly true in multi group settings.

We had some very positive results that did not happen in any other place because the culture we put in place supported those results.

Having a number of hospitals that did not have one single pressure ulcer in an entire year requires a culture of people who are focused as caregivers and as caring people on each and every patient. The book *KP Inside* explains the functional reality of that values based and patient centered belief system, process, and culture.

Other hospitals across the country and across the world all have had many of those ulcers. Those ulcers have damaged and even killed people in many settings. Our culture of focus on each patient and our culture of continuous improvement for our care processes brought those numbers for our hospitals down to extremely low levels and even eliminated them from some settings.

Having perfect scores for a quality of care function for any care setting takes a culture and a commitment to work as a team in the interest of every patient who trusted us with their care.

It also very much takes the kind of process-based continuous improvement approaches that I have learned to love and that I strongly believe we need to use now to help us resolve and avoid negative inter group interactions for our country.

We Need to Make the American Dream Real for All of Us

The last chapter of this book points out how we can do that kind of alignment based on our shared beliefs and culture for our entire country. We are at serious risk if we do not make the decision to go down that path and we will not succeed unless we very intentionally and effectively cause our culture to grow in some key areas of beliefs and behaviors.

My own sense is that we could seriously screw up our inter group interactions in many settings very badly at this point — but that we should not let that happen. We should all do what we need to do now to have everyone win and to make America the place we all want it to be.

We need at this point in our history to make the American Dream real for all of us. Win/Win.

For Everyone.

We also need to recognize that we all still have our instinctive reactions that will always tend to trigger a sense of “them” relative to anyone who looks different or who sounds different than our “us.” We all are hard wired at a very influential level to be aware of people who are different from Us in any way

— and we need to very intentionally and deliberately overcome that sense of differentiation with more powerful alignment triggers that also are supported by our instincts that allow us to move past those divisive perceptions to a higher calling that will end up with us all mutually supporting our Us in each setting.

Those instinctive reactions that we all have to each sense of group identity will continue to point us all in a potentially divided and conflicted direction. But when we each know and when we each understand exactly what those primal perceptual intergroup delineation points are and when we know at an intellectual level that the way we look and the way we sound subconsciously influences the way we think — then we can choose to override and divert the impact of those negative and divisive instincts and we can choose instead to create a more inclusive and enlightened level of “us” based on our beliefs and our explicit shared values.

Every Country That Had People Who Looked Different by Group Had Group Division and a History of Local Conflict

In country after country, I saw that when the groups of people looked different from one another at a very basic level, there tended to be perpetual inter group tension, distrust and conflict.

I also saw that when people sounded different from one another because their tribes and their ethnic groups had different languages, those differences also triggered the same problematic instincts and the divisions and conflicts also tended to extend for centuries in each of those settings.

I could not find a setting where those kinds of differences in either appearance or language did not trigger those kinds of instinctive reactions between groups and in people’s hearts and heads. That cannot be avoided — so it needs to be addressed and even transcended in very intentional ways.

We are no exception to those reaction patterns in our own country. We know what we have done. We have differentiated in our country based on skin color for centuries — and the reactions clearly followed instinctive patterns that we

have grown to understand as we look at those behaviors, reactions and thought processes.

Having different languages in some American settings has clearly triggered those kinds of Us/Them instincts in the people who speak each of the relevant languages, but the major discrimination and differentiation pattern in our country has been appearance. We have very consistently discriminated since our first days as a nation against every group that did not look White — and the people doing the discrimination were fully supported by those packages of inter group differentiation instincts and felt right to those people.

Everyone who was discriminated against hated that behavior pattern and the people doing the discrimination felt like it was normal behavior. We see those same patterns today in Fiji and Sudan and Nigeria and Sri Lanka. They are ugly and they hurt people wherever they happen — and they happen whenever they are activated and feel right to the people with local power who are damaging the other group.

As the *Primal Pathways* book points out, those instincts clearly influence and even channel all of us — but the extremely important thing that we Americans need to know and understand is that those instinctive reactions do not need to define us. We can and should and, frankly, must choose at a fully informed intellectual level to rise above them and to reach a higher sense of who we are as Americans and as members of each of our communities and settings.

We can be a strong and successful and mutually supportive people united by our shared beliefs and by our shared and enlightened values instead of being divided by our tribes and our political separations and intentionally damaging people we should be helping to succeed.

The planet we live on is in trouble — and that, alone, calls for us to help each other survive — and being Americans together should call for us to go beyond survival and beyond basic safety and have us all collectively Thrive in our own country and our own communities.

So that was what I learned doing the research in all of those settings for this book. We need to enjoy, celebrate, and utilize our diversity as a nation and we need to learn to overlook those divisive sight and sound differentiation factors in favor of all embracing the lovely blended world that we get to be part of when we are very diverse and when we are very good at being diverse.

Being diverse is more interesting, more creative, and much more engaging than just being one kind of anything.

As I keep writing — I know that approach works and I know that approach to being extremely diverse and yet unified is wonderful because I have been there and I have done that. My most recent work site epitomized and utilized that diversity and it was highly energizing in that functional setting to be both diverse and an Us at a very mutually supportive level.

The American Gymnastics Team Often Epitomizes Us

One of my very favorite times in my life happens every four years when the summer Olympics are held. My favorite event in the Olympics is the gymnastics team competition. I love that competition because the American team is always so gloriously American.

The Chinese team always looks very Chinese. The Russian team always looks very Russian. The Japanese team doesn't create any doubt about the origin of each team member.

But the American team is a rainbow of American diversity. The glorious diversity of our women's teams, in particular, generally takes my breath away.

Almost everyone else from almost all of the other countries in the world shows up at the Olympics as tribes. We show up as people. Wonderfully diverse, lovely, extremely talented very hardworking and highly achieving people.

We need to hold on to that magnificent diversity from our Olympic team and we need to make it a template and a model for everything else we do.

When I went into our highly diverse Kaiser Permanente work settings and care sites, it felt a bit like being with that magnificently diverse and talented

Olympic gymnastics team. I knew that we would have the lowest death rate from sepsis and the lowest death rate from pressure ulcers and the best survival rate for HIV patients in the world because we focused on the diversity of our patients with a culture of continuous improvement and we celebrated the diversity of our skills and thoughts and commitments to each other in that setting.

That approach works. Diversity can create real strength. We need to make functional and successful diversity our commitment and our strategy and we need to not let ourselves be divided in any way in our communities based on more primal divisions that we should rise above.

We also very much need to adopt continuous improvement as a goal and a commitment for our country. *The Art of InterGroup Peace* book explains how to make our inter group interactions a continuously improving process and a core competency for us as a nation.

We need our commitment to win/win outcomes for all groups to anchor that entire process.

Winning is good. We all want to win. We need people from every group to want people from every other group to win as well.

When every group wins — and that is possible because we actually do live in a world of plenty — the groups are all stronger and the collective success for everyone allows us to reach even higher levels of success for us all as a country.

We clearly need to understand the things that do divide us today.

We need honesty and we need to recognize exactly where we have been and why we were there.

We need to recognize our history and we need to understand the fact that we do have levels of intergroup division and intergroup anger in multiple settings today and that we need to deal with those issues in very real ways now to build the future of inter group Peace that we want for us all.

We can't start with a clean slate — but we can do a restart now that is based on who we are today and we can take all of the learnings that we see from all

of the inter group damage going on in all of those other countries in the world and we can add that knowledge to our own sense of awareness and caution about how bad things could get here if we allow ourselves to go down the slippery slope to inter group conflict and damage that afflict so many multigroup countries today.

Check out the next chapters of this book. Look to see if you think any of those observations or conclusions that I have reached over the past two decades about what is happening in all of those setting is wrong.

Then join in a Peace Movement for America that can help keep all of those very innate and instinctive behaviors from damaging us here.

We need to be very open to learning from what is happening in all of those settings — and we should take their mistakes as a gift to us to keep us from creating that same future here.

The people of Sarajevo did not see that disaster coming. The Hutu and Tutsi did not see that disaster coming. The Haitian people living for generations in The Dominican Republic did not see that disaster coming. Primal instincts created evil and horror and damaged people badly in those settings and people in each of those settings the day before the disasters began had no sense of their impending impact.

The next chapters of this book discuss those situations because we actually need to understand that those instincts are also all part of who we are here and we need to steer them to a very different outcome for our own country and for our own children and grandchildren.

The future starts now. Let's point it in the right direction.