

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

# What Should We Do Now?

WHAT I HAVE concluded after studying all of those intergroup issues for all of those years in all of those settings is that we need to build a culture of intergroup trust and intergroup support if we want to build a culture of InterGroup Peace in America.

We clearly need people from all groups in America to want all people from all groups in America to succeed. We need to be a people who want all of us to do well and who want all of us to prosper and to share in the American Dream.

To achieve those goals, we need a culture of intergroup alliances for America. We also need a culture that celebrates our diversity and very intentionally turns our diversity into an asset and a benefit instead of having our diversity be a risk or an impediment to our future and a threat to our collective safety as a people.

We need to create that culture in every relevant setting — schools, communities, workplaces — and we need to work in each setting to do the things we need to do together to make that reality real.

To achieve that level of alignment in all of those settings, we need to have a collective sense of being an American Us. I believe to my core that we need our sense of us as a nation and our sense of us in each setting to be based on our shared beliefs, our shared ethics, and our shared values rather than having each of us basing our individual sense of us on our race, ethnicity, culture, ideology, or religious alignments and then acting accordingly.

We need to accept, understand, and embrace all of those basic differentiations and then we need to have all of them become part of the

glorious and complex fabric of who we are in our American entirety, rather than having those sets of factors divide us.

We need to appreciate and celebrate all of our diverse components, and we need to link all of us together with our shared values and with our shared commitment to each other as the fellow believers in both American values and the American Dream.

The next chapter of this book outlines a set of very specific shared values that I believe can be used to unite us. I did not invent or create that set of core values. I have basically simply compiled and sequenced a list of the key values that have already anchored the best parts of who we are and that have already united us as shared beliefs in many ways at many times in many settings in our collective past.

The values that I included on that list are based on the core and long-standing sets of basic beliefs that have made our country strong and safe up to now and that have given us our best and most enlightened guidance in the past as a people and as a nation.

My belief today is that we need to very clearly and explicitly reconfirm our support for that set of values and that we need to build very explicitly and directly on that foundation to create a sense of who we are as a people united by our beliefs.

To do that well, we need to collectively understand those values. We also need to collectively and explicitly commit to those values.

We then need to trust each other and we need to help each other make those values and their benefits a reality for all of us. We need to act and do what we need to do to earn that trust and to make our levels of trust continuously stronger.

## **We Need to Extend the American Dream to All of Us**

As a core strategy, we need to extend the benefits of the American Dream to all of us. People benefit from being included in that Dream. The American Dream of inclusion and opportunity has great power to enable people to succeed. The American Dream has great power to help people prosper, thrive, create, build, and innovate.

The American Dream has given us strength as a country in the past and I believe strongly that our strength as a country and as a people will increase when we expand our reach and very intentionally bring all of us into full inclusion in that Dream.

The value of that Dream has been proven to us by our past success.

If we have somehow managed to do as well as we have done as a country at this point in time — and if we have had all of the success that we have had as a country up to now by bringing only a subset of our people into full inclusion in that Dream — then I believe with great confidence we will be able to do even better as a country when we bring all of us into full inclusion in that Dream.

I have had literally hundreds of conversations over the past two decades with people who have come to this country from a wide range of other countries. When I ask those people from other settings why they have come here, what I hear over and over again in fairly clear and surprisingly consistent language is that people are drawn here by the opportunity that is embedded in the American Dream.

We who were born here tend to take that dream for granted. The people who see it with new eyes — and foreign eyes — treasure it deeply and many people have left their places of birth to come here to share in that dream.

## **We Have Damaged People Perceived to Be “Them”**

As we go forward to build our next level of American “Us,” we need to collectively understand how much damage and evil have happened in our country under the influence and the direction of the worst and most dysfunctional aspects of our instincts to divide the world into us and them.

We also need to understand how much we will all benefit when we extend and expand our collective sense of who is our Us to be the People of America — the shared believers in American values and the shared participants in the American Dream.

We need to be open about who we want to be and about who we need to be — and we need to be equally transparent about who we are and about what we need to do.

### **We Need to Avoid the Slippery Slope to “Them” — Peace by Piece**

We need to build Peace piece by piece — with each setting working to be in alignment with our core beliefs and with each setting working to achieve win/win solutions for all of the groups who make up the fabric of who we are in each setting.

We very much need, in each community and in each setting, to work very hard and very intentionally to avoid and prevent activation of the instincts, the perceptions, and the intergroup beliefs that cause us to define each other as “Them” in any setting.

It is a very slippery slope to first thinking about other people as a “Them” and then acting accordingly. As long as we are a multi-racial, multi-cultural country — and that will be forever — then the easy triggers that point to those instinct-linked perceptions of “Them” will always be with us.

We need to very carefully and intentionally avoid having basic kinds of instinctive divisions activated in each setting.

We need to each understand how damaging and how dysfunctional and dangerous it is to allow those perceptions and instincts to be activated in any setting and we need to take steps when activation is imminent in any setting to situationally deactivate and defuse those “Them” related thought processes, emotions, and behaviors.

As a core strategy for our collective success, we need to create a sense of “Us” very intentionally in each community, school, and work setting and then we

need to protect and enhance that sense of who we collectively are in each setting — to keep us from slipping into divisive and damaging intergroup behaviors in each setting.

*The Art of InterGroup Peace* book and the *Primal Pathways* book both explain clearly why we need to avoid having any internal sense of “Them” in any of our sites or settings. We need to choose not to create that “Them” perception about anyone and we each need to work to defuse, defeat, and derail that perception whenever it raises its dangerous, divisive, and dysfunctional and damaging head into our world in any setting.

### **We Need to Do Real Things to Build Trust**

We need to build trust between groups by figuring out what we need to do in each community and each setting to make life better for all groups in each setting, and then by collectively doing those positive things intentionally and clearly in ways that prove and demonstrate our collective commitment to one another.

We need everyone to be safe, for example. To help create that reality of safety for all of us, one of the things we will need are police forces in each setting who are trusted by each community and who are perceived to be a trusted and embedded part of the community “Us.”

We all need to be safe against abuse, physical damage, sexual harassment, and theft. To live well, we all need to be safe. We need our police departments to be an asset for everyone’s safety.

We need laws in every setting that extend protection and opportunity to all people in order for all of us to be safe — and we need law enforcement people who earn the trust of the people in each of the areas where they enforce the laws so that those laws actually can protect all of us.

If police departments in any setting are perceived by the people in that setting to be “Them” and if police departments actually function in real and visible ways as a “Them,” then the police add much less value — and can even

do real damage and harm. Police departments that are perceived to be “Them” cannot functionally create the safety we need for all of us and for our children.

We need police departments in all settings who reach out to the community in respectful and inclusive ways — and who can clearly be trusted by all of the people who live in each setting.

Police departments in too many settings do not have the trust or support of some portions of their communities. Where that problem exists, each community needs to figure out in clear and explicit ways what steps can be taken to create that trust and maintain it.

## **We Need to Focus on Our Children**

We clearly need our communities and particularly our children to all be safe. We also need all of our children to succeed.

Every group of people loves and treasures their children.

I strongly believe that one of the best ways for us all to prove that we do care about one another and to prove to each other that we truly do want all groups who are part of the fabric of America to succeed is to do very direct things at several levels to help all of our children from all of our groups succeed.

Our children are our future. We all love our children. We need to collectively create the best futures for the children of all groups in America and we need to make it clear that we all support the success of all children.

We can do that if we focus collectively in several ways on our children. One area of huge potential is very clear. We now know from current biological science that the first three years of life are incredibly important for the development of each child. We now know that we need to give each and all of our kids the best possible start in those crucial early months and years because those are the key months and key years when neurons actually connect in each child’s brain.

That piece of neuron development and neuron connectivity science was one of the single most important things that I have learned over the past years

as I have been working on those issues. It was an incredibly important part of learning about his whole set of issues for me.

I now know that we need to very explicitly and very intentionally support brain development for all of our children for the first years of each child's life. Brain exercise builds stronger brains. The children who do not get their brains exercised in those first months and years of life miss that window of opportunity and those children have fewer neuron connections and brains that are not as good at learning basic skills in number of areas.

After those three key years, the brain begins a pruning process and eliminates many neuron connections that were not used.

To succeed as a nation, we need every child from every group to get the best possible start in life. We now know that the best start for each child requires us to understand and appreciate the powerful science and the actual functional processes that are involved in building each child's brain in those early years.

Learning gaps that exist between groups of children in kindergarten, elementary school, and high school all are based on the brain exercise levels that happened for all of those children in those first key years.

### **We Can Predict That Performance by Age Three**

Sadly, we do have some major learning gaps in our American education system today. Academic performance levels vary significantly between groups of people. Far too many children in this country either read poorly or can't read at all. There are major learning gaps in many school settings in too many communities today.

Those gaps are unacceptable. They are very destructive, very damaging, and very preventable. We need to make our learning gaps disappear in every setting to help our children from every group succeed.

In reality, we functionally need to keep the learning gaps from forming in the first place in our children. We need to make sure those gaps do not exist so that we can all benefit from what our children can become and so that we can

all benefit from what our children will be able to do for us all as our own future inevitably unfolds through their lives and through their destinies.

What I have learned in the last few years is that we can now predict with a very high level of accuracy by age three — and with a significant degree of accuracy at 18 months old — which children will be headed down the negative paths to having difficulties with their learning.

I wrote a book — *Three Key Years* — to deal with those exact issues for our children. Please read that book if you care about the children of America.

### **We Need to Strengthen Neuron Connections for Infants and Babies**

The biological issues are clear for every single child.

Medical science now tells us very clearly that in the first three years of life for every child, vast numbers of neurons connect in a baby's brain. When the brains of babies and the brains of infants get the right level of input and the right levels of mental exercise in those first years of life, the brains that get that exercise grow strong — with millions of additional neuron connections.

When our babies and our infants do not get sufficient direct brain exercise in those first three years, however, the babies without exercise do not have those neuron connections happen — and those children not achieve their brain development potential.

Significant performance gaps result for those children in multiple areas. Those gaps are measurable and they are very real and very damaging. Those babies with lower levels of early childhood brain exercise have much lower vocabularies in kindergarten.

Those children without that exercise in those first years only know hundreds of words in kindergarten rather than knowing thousands of words. Those children who only know hundreds of words are much less likely to learn to read, and they are much more likely to end up with a number of very negative life consequences.

## **The Impact Was the Same for All Races and All Ethnicities**

Studies show that the children who are behind in their reading in early grades are 40 percent more likely to get pregnant in school, 60 percent more likely to drop out of school, and nearly 70 percent more likely to go to jail by age 18.

I was stunned, shocked, and horrified to see the statistics and the linear processes that linked lower vocabulary in kids entering kindergarten to the percentages of children who go to jail.

Those differences and those consequences were true for all races, ethnic groups, and economic levels for children. When children from all groups receive early brain exercise, they end up with more capable and stronger mental and learning processes. The children whose brains do get that basic exercise do well from all groups.

Children from all groups who do not receive that early year brain exercise support tend to do badly. Those are not racial differences. They very clearly are differences in the support that is given in those very early years to each individual child.

Biology is biology. Timing on those key processes is biologically identical and developmentally identical for all children from all groups.

The children who don't receive that level of brain exercise in those early years miss the pure biological time when our neurons develop. It is extremely difficult to catch up later if that first few years of life opportunity is missed. After that time, it is much more difficult to build those key capabilities.

We have three times as many people in jail as any Western country. That fact has always horrified me. I was horrified as well to learn more recently that nearly 70 percent of the people who are in our jails today either read poorly or can't read at all. Too many people who are in jail and who can't read are on a path for their lives that is very hard to escape.

The prisoners who can't read can't even fill in job applications when they get out of jail — so far too many of those freed prisoners who have major reading problems re-enter a life of crime and simply end up back in prison.

The only infrastructure that accepts and includes those particular sets of people in the community is gangs and crime. Gangs are growing in their impact in many settings. Gangs have a major presence in our prisons and our communities, and the reasons for their influence and growth are increasingly clear.

That whole painful and dysfunctional cycle for those children was, when I learned more about the basic biological childhood development issues — both sad and shocking.

### **Toxic Stress Syndrome Adds to the Problem**

I was also shocked and jarred into new thought processes about our children when I learned about toxic stress syndrome in children.

Very capable and important researchers have shown that infants, toddlers, and very young children who are abused or who are even just ignored and individually isolated in those first years of life when the brain is developing for each child tend to build up a set of negative brain chemicals that create what medical science calls toxic stress syndrome.

Medical scientists can measure the pure biological impact of that toxic stress syndrome on the brains of children.

The children with no brain exercise who are also individually isolated and who are left with little or no direct interactions with adults in those early years tend to end up with some neurological damage that also pushes too many of those children down a very negative and damaging path for their lives.

The children who have measurable toxic stress levels in their brains also end up dropping out of school. The toxic stress children also tend to have higher levels of violent behavior and the children who suffer from toxic stress are significantly more likely to get pregnant at an early age.

The most challenged sets of children we have in our country today are often the children who have had very low neuron exercise levels and who also suffer from toxic stress syndrome.

## **We Can Increase Neuron Connectivity and Buffer Toxic Stress with Basic Daily Interactions**

The very good news is that we can prevent toxic stress in children and we can increase and improve the neuron connection levels in children using the same very basic interactions and approaches for each child.

It doesn't take a lot of time. A half-hour a day of direct interactions by a caring and trusted adult with each child actually has the potential to make a real difference in the life of each child.

Reading, talking, and singing to very young children can all have a major positive impact on brain exercise levels for each child. A half-hour each day of reading time with each child can make a huge improvement in the neuron connection levels for each child.

Asking each infant 20 questions a day can also help create the needed and safe connections with an adult that can buffer and reduce levels of toxic stress. Scientists have shown with good data that a half-hour of daily support time from a trusted loving adult for each child can actually neutralize or buffer the toxic stress chemicals in a child's brain.

Those support activities for each child need to happen in the first years of life. We can keep children off the most damaging paths by interacting directly at an adult level in those key years with each child.

We can prevent both sets of problems for almost all children by simply having a loving adult interact with each child for at least a half-hour a day and by reading and talking to each child in ways that create growth in the brains.

Children benefit significantly by having a direct set of interactions focused on the child by a caring adult each and every day. Positive interactions build trust and improve the learning skills for every child.

## **We Need To Save Every Child**

We need to save all children. We actually can, I believe, save all children. We can actually save children one at a time, because those issues and those opportunities are specific to each child.

If you are reading this chapter and if you know someone with a baby, share this information with them.

Each child we save is a child we save. Each child we save is a miracle in itself, because that is an entire life that will go down a better path if the child gets the needed support in those key months and years.

So we need to save every child we can save. We also need to save all children, and we need to make saving children a priority for us as a people.

As a matter of win/win outcomes for all groups, we need all children from all groups receiving the right brain exercise in those first years for strong brains.

We also need all children to get the buffers that each child needs in those key years to avoid toxic stress. Creating that support for children is a very powerful win/win set of priorities for all groups that we should all share.

## **Parents Need to Know That Exercising a Baby's Brain Creates a Stronger Brain**

We need strong brains and we need safely buffered brains for all infants and babies, and we need to make that a reality for children now.

To do that, we need all parents to understand what those opportunities are for their children. All parents love their children. But we know that very few parents today actually know about the basic steps that can strengthen their child's brain.

I have helped support some recent research on that topic in my role as First 5 Commission Chair for the State of California that showed us an almost complete lack of knowledge about those issues among large numbers of new

parents who we surveyed about the opportunity that exists for parents to strengthen their children's brains.

We surveyed many parents using focus groups to discuss those key issues. Almost no one who was surveyed knew that their children's brains could be strengthened. But that knowledge was very much appreciated by the parents when it was shared.

Both mothers and fathers told us in the survey groups that they loved learning that information. Both mothers and fathers told us that they would look at their own children's care and upbringing differently now that that the opportunity to make their child's brain stronger was understood.

We need all parents everywhere to understand those issues. We need the equivalent of a public health campaign to help every parent understand the opportunities and the risks for those first years of their babies' lives.

That set of goals needs to be a shared intergroup agenda for all Americans. We need to figure out creative and supportive ways to do that support for children in every setting.

We need all mothers and we need all fathers of their children to know and understand those opportunities and to know about those huge dangers and opportunities for their children.

### **We Need a Public Health Campaign for Infant Brains**

Now that I know those realities about early childhood brain development to be true, I am personally focusing heavily on that particular aspect of early childhood development. I currently do chair a commission for the State of California that helps and supports children from birth to five years old.

I also chair a task force for the lead businesses of the San Francisco Bay Area that is also working to help those children in that area — and I am participating in several other group that are focused on those issues.

I am currently working to get that information about the opportunities and the damage levels that exist for our very youngest children out to our broader

public policy and to the public media world. That's why I wrote the book — *Three Key Years*.

## **We Need to Stop Sending Disproportionate Numbers of People to Jail**

I also believe that we will not succeed in creating win/win levels of intergroup Peace for all groups in America if we keep sending disproportionate number of minority Americans to jail.

As I started looking at the issues that relate to incarceration, I was shocked to learn that we currently have over 10 percent of all African American males in their 30s in this country in jail. We have nearly 6 percent of our Hispanic males in jail. We have less than 2 percent of our White males in jail.

When we look at who is in jail, it is clear that there are layers of reasons why those higher rates of incarceration exist.

There are clearly racist patterns of imposing prison sentences in some courts. There are negative patterns of police activity in a number of settings that lead to discriminatory numbers of arrests for minority people in those communities.

When we look at all of those interactions, it is clear that the playing field is not even for all groups in all settings relative to incarceration.

## **Bias, Biology, Behavior All Create Disparities**

In my book, *Ending Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Disparities in American Health Care*, I point out the three paths to health care disparities that exist in our country today. The three paths are Bias, Biology, and Behavior. All three of those factors are important. We need to deal effectively with all three paths to end disparities between groups of patients in our country.

I point out in that book that when doctors are half as likely to give a painkiller to an African American male who is having a heart attack, that represents clear and absolute bias. Bias, the book points out, does happen and people can be damaged by biased care.

I also point out that each group has its behavioral issues — like obesity or inactivity — that change the number and percentage of people who actually get a number of the chronic and debilitating diseases like diabetes.

Inactive people are much more likely to become diabetic — and that is true for all groups of people.

Biology happens as well. I point out that Kaiser Permanente research uncovered the fact that African American women are significantly more likely to have MS — and that we are not aware of any level of bias or any kind of behavior that creates that specific disparity for that set of women for that particular disease.

We need to use the same kinds of process improvement methodology that I described in my disparity book as a way of addressing the higher levels of incarceration and as a way of addressing the brain exercise issues and neuron connectivity problems for infants and babies.

Read the disparities book to see what those systematic improvement processes and tools look like for those types of disparities.

We need to apply very similar sets of thought processes now to our infants and our babies and to the larger issues of who is imprisoned. Even though there are many factors involved in those issues, I believe that we can have a significant impact on some of the key factors and I believe to my core that we need to collectively have that impact for those babies to make a real difference in people's lives.

We need to all understand that the impact for the babies of getting that early support is very real and we need to each understand that each child we save is a child we save.

We need to make that issue of helping all children an American priority and we all need to help those children succeed — or we will not succeed in creating InterGroup Peace over time.

## **We Can Create InterGroup Trust with InterGroup Support for Children**

Each community needs to do what each community can do — and we can also earn intergroup trust by having clear and obvious intergroup levels of support for all children from all groups.

Each community needs to look at that set of issues in each setting and figure out what kinds of support and interaction is needed to help all children in each community.

Educating each mother about those key issues has to be a priority number one for all settings. Volunteering to help mothers — and bringing books and support materials to each setting can also have a major impact that can change children's lives.

We also need other people to support the mothers of very young children. Families and fathers need to be a first level of support when fathers or families are available.

In addition to family; neighbors, religious groups, community organizations, and volunteers can all help those children.

We need each community to understand those full sets of opportunities and those very real risks and we need people to figure out creative ways of helping and supporting those needed activities for each child.

We need the leaders from every group to make sure that the mothers in every group understand those key issues and that group members help the mothers in their group meet those needs for those children in those key months and years.

## **We Need to Eliminate Disparities and Create a Culture of Health for America**

We also do need to deal with the very real issues of health care disparities in this country. We clearly need health care for everyone that is based on best practices, best science, and the best care processes for all groups.

My two most recent health care books have dealt with each of those issues for all Americans. There clearly are health care disparities for a number of areas in this country today.

My disparities book explains how we can eliminate health care disparities in America if we make it our priority to systematically eliminate those disparities and then put the specific processes in place that we need to do that work. We need a process improvement approach to eliminating those disparities in each community and as a nation.

Eliminating disparities in care delivery for our country actually will not cost more money. It will cost less money for us all to eliminate disparities.

I say that because I know from my practical and functional experience in care delivery processes done at a large scale for a large population of people that care almost always costs less when you actually get it right. Weak cancer care, weak heart care, weak asthma care, and weak and inadequate diabetic care are all far more expensive than getting care right for each of those conditions.

### **Walking Reduces Disease Risk**

We also need a collective and shared commitment to the overall health of us all. That is another area where we can all demonstrate to each other that we support one another in an area that is important to us all — our health.

We need to be committed to population health as a country and we need to work as teams in each of our communities to make needed activity levels and healthy eating the paths we are all on.

HEAL — healthy eating and active living — needs to become part of the culture of America. Chronic conditions create 75 percent of our health care costs as a country — and we can cut those cost in half by changing some behaviors that are actually very possible to change.

Walking is key.

New medical science tells us that the single most effective and useful thing we can do to improve health from a population health perspective is to get people to walk.

That particular piece of information and that growing package of science often stuns people. The benefits of walking to improve health is a powerful science-based insight into what creates health that most people do not know or even suspect.

Walking can be almost magic in its positive impact on health and most people have no idea that walking is even relevant to health.

### **Walking 30 Minutes Can Cut Diabetes Risk in Half**

The human body is designed to walk. The truth is that the body needs to walk to be healthy. The numbers that relate to the impact of walking or not walking are astounding.

Walking 30 minutes a day every single day can cut the rate of diabetes in half. Walking a half-hour each day can reduce the levels of several cancers by nearly half and can also significantly improve some cancer cure rates.

Walking even doubles the effectiveness levels of some anti-depression medicines.

Walking for just a half-hour a day has cut the level of plaque build up hugely in the brains for patients who are at high genetic risk levels for Alzheimer's.

The final chapter of my most recent book on health care costs in America — *Do Not Let Health Care Bankrupt America* — covers those benefits of walking in much more detail — explaining both the science and the research. I won't repeat that full set of information here. I do, however, recommend that particular

chapter of that particular book highly for anyone who wants to know what we can do to reduce overall American health care costs by a third or more.

People who want to make health care more affordable for America should take the time to read that chapter of that book.

But I will say here in this book that we do need to work together to create healthy and safe walking environments in our communities.

Working as multi-group teams in each community to create the right way safe walking zones is another area of focus where we can work together across all groups to make healthier environments happen and to help us all have better health.

Better health is a wonderful thing for us all to have.

## **Aligned Diversity at High Levels Created Top Performance**

Cultures need to be a key part of our overall strategy at this point in our history, for both our beliefs and our behaviors.

We need to create a culture of health and we need to build a culture of both inclusion and continuous improvement. We need to be a culture of continuous learning — beginning at birth for all of our children.

We need to have a shared belief that we can all be accountable for improving our health and we need to have a shared belief that we can all embrace everyone succeeding in our increasingly diverse settings.

We need to have a culture of inclusion — and we need to make being inclusive a core competency as a country.

I believe to my core that we can have our diversity be one of our major assets and biggest strengths.

I don't offer that thought about diversity creating strength as an ideological, hypothetical, or theoretical speculation. I have seen diversity function as a major asset and the results were irrefutably solid and successful.

## **I Have Seen Diversity Succeed at the Highest Level**

The last organization that I served as CEO, Kaiser Permanente, was rated the top employer in America for diversity by *Diversity Inc. Magazine*. Kaiser Permanente is a very diverse place to work.

Fifty-nine percent of the nearly 200,000 employees who worked there when I retired from my job as Chair and CEO a year ago came from minority groups.

Our diversity was a major strength. We were rated as the second best employer in America as a happy place for employees to work by the CareerBliss National Survey in December of 2013.

That organization also earned the Chrysalis award as a best place in the country to work for women and it received a perfect score for the LGBT action group Human Rights Campaign health care index.

*Diversity MBA Magazine* put that organization into its Diversity Hall of Fame as its first hall of fame member.

## **KP Was Rated Number One Nationally for Quality and Service**

The extremely diverse organization that received those levels of recognition as an employer and as a great place to work was also rated number at the very top level on performance, service, and quality of care for its customers and its patients by JD Power, *Consumer Reports*, and Medicare.

*Consumer Reports* gave the organization top scores in each of its service areas. The Medicare rating system for service and quality rated more than 500 health plans on 55 measures of service and quality. They granted one to five stars for performance. Only 11 health plans in American received all five stars. All eight Kaiser Permanente Regions were included in that top five star level.

We were able to be rated number one as a place to work and we were also rated number one as a care provider for care quality and we were also rated number one for service to our patients and our members because we actually were an inclusive meritocracy at very real levels and because we had the culture

of that very diverse organization aligned with the goals, the strategy, and the mission of the organization.

We were extremely diverse. We were extremely good at doing what we did and we constantly celebrated our diversity and benefited from our diversity.

My pilots and my functional worksite experiments for the past two decades in combining an enlightened and inclusive culture focused on best practices, continuous improvement, and clear patient centered values have been successful in ways that give both me optimism and confidence that we can reach that level of enlightened alignment and those kinds of success levels for us all as a country.

I have been personally learning in all of those settings how to create the right set of mechanisms and the right set of approaches so we can use those approaches and skills and those alignment strategies for our larger communities and for various other intergroup settings.

I do believe we can use those approaches for the country at large now because we all have the same set of behavior patterns to guide who we are and what we do.

## **We Need to Appreciate the Problem and Condemn the Evil**

To use those approaches across all of those settings, we need people to recognize at an intellectual level the power that instincts have on our lives. We need to recognize that some of the negative intergroup behaviors that felt right to people in the past were wrong — structured and influenced in negative and dysfunctional ways by sets of instincts that we now need to steer in better directions.

At a higher level, we need to recognize now how much of our history as a nation has been influenced in both negative and positive ways by our basic and primal packages of instincts and instinctive behaviors and we need to decide collectively that we are going to build on the positive side of that reality from this point forward.

We need to acknowledge the damage that has been done. We don't need to dwell on the damage or focus on the damage, but we can't deny the damage and we should not pretend it didn't happen. It did happen. We now need to stop doing those damaging things.

We need to recognize that various groups of people in this country who have been damaged in the past by issues like discrimination laws, slavery, ethnic cleansing, and negative prejudicial intergroup behaviors all have very clear group and individual memories about that very negative history.

We also need to recognize that there are significant problems today for many people in our country that tie to those same sets of discriminatory behaviors today. We are better, but we are far from perfect.

We can't just start fresh today and pretend that the past didn't happen or that the present has achieved perfection. We need to acknowledge and regret the bad things we have done as a nation in our historical past and we need to reject both those behaviors and anyone who wants to continue doing them today.

We also need to deal with the issues and the history that is relevant to each setting. We need to make Peace piece by piece — and that means that we need to create efforts, activities, and communications in each setting to achieve intergroup alignment and Peace in each setting.

That focus on each setting gives us great local opportunities — because we don't need to wait until the next state or the next city works out its own local alignment.

We can reach alignment in each setting piece by piece, and then we can work hard to stay aligned and to protect alignment once we have achieved that status in any setting.