

**Chapter Fourteen — The Art of Peace For America Needs to
Turn Our Instincts Into Assets And Give Us The Tools We
Need To Defeat Our Common Foes**

The goal for of *The Art of Intergroup Peace* strategy for our country is to make key realities about our growing diversity into assets, benefits, and pathways to prosperity, safety, and intergroup Peace.

We need to build a future for our country that turns our growing diversity into a growing strength. We need an overarching strategy that creates intergroup understanding and intergroup trust so that we can create a culture of Peace that is supported by all of the groups who make up the rich and complex fabric of our people.

We need to be on that path now.

Our diversity as a country is growing every day. The majority of births in this country this year were to our minority mothers. The majority of students in our public school system next year will be minority students.

The majority of new workers into our workforce by the end of this decade will be minority workers.

We need to become very good at being diverse because we are very

quickly becoming very diverse. Diversity in far too many settings around the world leads to intergroup conflict and intergroup dysfunctional behaviors at multiple levels. This book has outlined and described some of the major problems that are happening today in a number of multi-ethnic, multi-racial countries that are now at war with themselves.

We Do Not Want To Be Another Diverse Country At War

With Itself

Civil wars are everywhere. Internal conflict abounds in multiple settings. We do not want to end up just another diverse country at war with itself. That future would damage us all badly — and it does not need to happen to us.

Every group, every segment, and every portion of our population would be damaged if we allow ourselves to tribalize to any significant degree and then activate the array of negative intergroup instincts and damaging intergroup behaviors that internal tribalization in any setting can far too easily invoke.

That would be the wrong path for us to be on. We should do what needs to be done to be sure that is not going to be the path we are on.

If we, instead, decide to become a high performing, high achievement, highly inclusive, and highly diverse American us — we can then harvest the best features of the American Dream and we can harvest the benefits of that Dream even better and more successfully than we have ever done it before.

We will benefit more now because we will now have all parties in this country finally able to participate fairly and fully in that Dream.

We Need To Utilize Our Instincts Strategically To Achieve Our Goals And Create Intergroup Peace

Our instincts will continue to guide our lives. We can't escape the emotional and mental pull of our instinctive behaviors. It is impossible for any of us to be instinct free.

Since we can't escape our instincts, we will need to utilize them very strategically to achieve the enlightened goals we want to achieve.

That, in its essence, is *The Art of Intergroup Peace*. Instead of being damaged, divided, and then destroyed by a growing sense of being us and them, we need to bring ourselves together to create a viable, functioning, real, self-reinforcing, and clearly enlightened shared sense of us that lets us

all be at Peace with ourselves.

At this point in our history, we now need to build an American Us that is grounded on our American ideals, our highest and most honorable American values, our basic American belief system, and our very best American ethics.

We need to create a level of collective and shared enlightenment on key issues and values that will help us define ourselves to each other as an American Us and then help us all help each other succeed in a very intentionally inclusive and mutually supportive American way.

We need to very explicitly and very intentionally create an American Us as a major and foundational step in that Art of Peace process outlined in this book, and we need to continue to focus on maintaining and protecting that sense of “Us” going into the future.

The truth is — we are only safe as a country when we are an “Us” as a country. Our safety and our success as a country depend on us creating an “Us” who is defined and guided by our key and shared beliefs.

We each have choices to make.

If we each allow ourselves to be defined primarily as an ethnic us or as a

racial us or as a cultural or tribal us or as any other separately functioning and instinctively divisive and divided subset of us — and if we each allow that divisive definition of us to create and shape both our own personal functioning every day sense of us and our own individual sense of who we each are, then we can fall very easily into the dysfunctional and damaging trap of being a tribalized country at war with itself.

Becoming A Tribalized Country At War With Itself Is The Wrong Approach

We do not need to allow that to happen. But that negative outcome has a very high likelihood of happening if we do not strategically intervene in the process of becoming who we are becoming. We are more diverse than we have ever been and our diversity increases daily.

Those facts and numbers are beyond dispute. We now need to face, understand, and accept both the reality of our extensive diversity and the inherent consequences that will result from our diversity.

Our rapidly increasing diversity will inevitably force us down one of two very different paths — division into our separate pieces or alignment around our shared beliefs.

We can divide or we can unite. We should choose the path of alignment that leads us together to Peace, safety, survival, and shared success.

Some people who look at those issues believe that level of concern about the potential consequences of our diverse future is exaggerated and overstated.

A significant number of people today believe in a very positive way that we have somehow evolved as a nation, as a people, as a world and as individuals past the point where those kinds of very basic and very primal instincts can have any significant levels of negative impacts on modern people's behavior. That is, unfortunately, not an accurate belief.

People With Modern Technology Are Acting In Very Primal Ways

Anyone who believes that people living today have reached a modern age of some kind where we have moved past and evolved beyond the direct and very real impact of those primal behaviors and those primal instincts only has to look at Sri Lanka or Syria or any of the 200 other settings on this planet where those instincts are causing modern people with full

modern knowledge and full modern science and full modern technology to be damaging, torturing, abusing, killing, and cruelly uprooting, and displacing other equally modern people in very primitive, evil, and cruel ways.

Those basic and ugly packages of negative and dysfunctional intergroup instincts continue to be very real for people living today. People do very sinful and damaging things to other people with no sense of guilt or shame when those instincts are activated.

We need to be very careful to not activate those primal us/them instincts here in their most negative forms in our own country today or at any time in our future.

The likelihood of us activating those instincts here is clearly increased significantly by our growing internal diversity.

As our cities become more diverse, there is a growing risk of having neighborhoods and communities within cities that create their own intergroup conflicts at very local levels.

Instead of activating those horrible, damaging, and destructive intergroup instincts in any of our settings, we should all make the intellectual decision to come together in a higher calling to be collectively aligned and mutually

bonded together around our collective sense of being a values-based us. Creating a values-based alignment as an American us can give us the safety net we want and need for our own collective success and safety.

Coming together as a mutually supportive us can give us communities that are at Peace with themselves and that function to benefit the people who live in each setting.

That coming together as a values-based us is the single most important strategic step embedded in the Art of Peace.

We need to be bonded by a higher calling in a way that causes each of us to feel drawn to a higher collective purpose and to be motivated in a very real and functional way by a higher level of shared common good.

We can do wonderful, caring, supportive, and even loving things for other people when we know that the other people are an “Us.”

We have ethical standards that are activated and relevant when we are an “Us” — and we step up in caring and supportive ways to help each other when our “us” needs us to be there for them.

It is a very good thing to be an “Us.” We need to expand our sense of who we include and who we bring together in intergroup alignment to create

our American “Us.”

We Face Real Danger If We Don’t Become An “Us”

To start that process and to feel that it makes sense to be an “Us,” we now need to use the alignment trigger pyramid outlined in Chapter Seven of this book.

All of those factors on that pyramid that create alignment are relevant to us today. The alignment pyramid that needs to be used by us collectively in very intentional ways at this point in our history to be a key functional component of *The Art of Intergroup Peace*.

We need to use that pyramid to create a sense of “Us” in our communities and we need to use it in our various organizations. We need to use it in our work places and we need to use it in our schools.

We need to use it with the leaders of all of the groups who make up the complex set of groups that co-exist in this country today.

We need to activate those six situational alignment triggers locally and we need to activate them as a nation.

We Are Actually In Danger

Danger anchors that alignment trigger pyramid. That’s a good place to

start. Danger is a real issue for us all today. We need to recognize the very real dangers we will face if we do not become an American “Us.” The dangers are real. A very basic set of dangers are created by our instincts any time multiple groups co-exist in any setting.

Many people in our increasingly diverse country will feel right going down that conflicted instinct-guided and fundamentally negative path to intergroup anger, intergroup stress, and intergroup conflict.

The patterns of damaging instinctive behavior that can result from groups triggering instinctive negative reactions against other groups can be extremely seductive. The negative behaviors that can spring from those instincts can be both highly persuasive and very attractive to many people at a highly emotional level.

People can be energized by negative intergroup behaviors when those negative intergroup instincts are activated in any setting.

It can feel very right and it can feel invigoratingly partisan in an instinctively, emotionally rewarding way for people to go down that “Us/Them” instinctive conflict path in too many situations and settings.

The temptation that exists today in many settings to feel those

feelings and to think those thoughts is significant. Angry demonstrations and even mobs that we see spontaneously form when those instincts are triggered tell us how much underlying intergroup anger exists in many settings today.

Chapter Fifteen deals in more detail with those issues. Intergroup anger and conflict is a path we often take and it is a path we have often taken.

We can each identify ourselves very easily with our own subset of America and we can simply identify other subsets of America as being “Them” in some highly instinct-provoking ways.

The cold and dangerous truth is that we face a very slippery slope to us/them thinking, us/them values, us/them emotions, us/them beliefs, and us/them behaviors when those packages of instincts are triggered.

Highly Partisan Behaviors Can Be Exhilarating

Highly partisan and negative intergroup behaviors can sometimes be emotionally exhilarating and collectively reinforcing when they are situationally invoked.

When we choose teams in any setting, we can commit team energy for

our “Us” into wanting “our team” to win at any cost.

That can be a good thing when those team instincts bring us together — and it can be a dangerous and divisive thing when those team instincts cause us to want to defeat and damage another team.

That whole process of choosing sides can put us in danger from damage that might be done to us by another team in any setting.

We can channel emotionally absorbing and invigorating anger into our intergroup energy levels when our energy is directed against “Them.” We can feel very right hating and hurting the other teams that we define as being the teams of “Them.”

Protests, demonstrations, mobs, and even riots can and do happen in American settings and the people who are acting collectively in those settings can find the collective behavior to be invigorating and self-reinforcing.

Basic intergroup mobs and even intergroup riots are just the visible point of the intergroup conflict and ‘anger iceberg’ that exists in many settings now. We have deep-seated intergroup anger in a number of settings. That level of conflict that can spring from that anger can grow in too many settings and in too many situations if we allow

ourselves to go down those very seductive and very instinctive paths into negative levels of “Us/Them” intergroup anger.

Our instincts reward those behaviors with neurochemicals that create almost addictive negative behaviors for some people. Very negative intergroup behaviors can feel very right to people at a very basic and personal level — because our instincts cause whatever behaviors are aligned with our instincts to feel very right to each of us as we do them.

So the danger is real. That entire set of risk factors presents us with a clear and present package of danger.

Collective Risk Increases In Economic Bad Times

We also will face a higher risk of collective intergroup danger at points in the future when we enter into times of economic downturn and enter those downturns as an increasingly diverse country.

That will inevitably happen. Economic downturns do occur.

We can expect as a country and as communities to need to deal with new and relevant downturns at future points in time. Some downturns can be very damaging. People can turn against people easily and quickly when economic times are bad. Negative us/them instincts that can be activated in

those time frames and difficult situations can increase the damage levels that happen to people in those intergroup settings.

If we are in a level of high intergroup stress and intergroup anger in this country and if we then face any kinds of major setbacks as a country, the consequences of the setbacks can be very damaging.

If we face an economic depression or an enemy-induced collapse of our infrastructure — or any significant challenges to our basic water supply — or even if we find ourselves facing a time of extended drought — and if we find ourselves in a time of potential panic and significant logistical deprivation as a result of any of those downturns — then the resultant instinctive intergroup behaviors that could be triggered in any of our groups relative to our other groups in that time of collective crisis could be destructive and highly damaging.

The intergroup responses that we might see for those future crisis could be negative to the point of being crippling in some communities.

The responses to those threats could be negative to the level of triggering evil, dysfunctional, and highly damaging behaviors with dysfunctional and damaging intergroup consequences that are relevant to

the challenges that we face.

Hard times can bring people together to find collective solutions and hard times can tear people apart — exacerbating division and increasing the level of anger that exists between groups.

We need to be so unified as a people that our future downturns and hard times will unite us rather than divide us.

Hard Times Can Bring People Together Or Tear People Apart

The survival instincts that we all have for our own groups to survive in a crisis can cause us to do serious intergroup damage to each other if the entire country faces any kind of collapse and if the people in this country in the context of that collapse turn against one another in anger instead of turning to one another for protection and support.

Sun Tzu, in *The Art of War*, wrote that when the men of Wu and the men of Yuen — mortal enemies — found themselves together on a sinking boat, they all worked together to save the boat. He pointed out that survival needs for individual people can trigger collective situational cooperation instead of war.

We do need to have our own future collective dangers and our

own future national economic and functional setbacks bring us together as a country instead of having them tear us apart.

We could go either way. Both paths can be triggered by the same events and by the same circumstances.

That potential for intergroup damage that will exist in a time of crisis is a real risk to us all — because negative circumstances of some kinds at future points are inevitable ... whether the crises are triggered intentionally by enemy forces or triggered circumstantially and situationally by either environmental or economic forces that we can't control.

In times of crisis, we need to be together on our path to survival and to success. We need to collectively understand that very real future level of risk and we need to plan ahead to deal with it.

Some People Do Not Want Us At Peace

We also need to recognize as we go down the path to intergroup Peace that another danger we will need to face is that there are people and groups of people who want us to fail in that effort.

Peace has enemies. Outside our country, there are people who very

much want America to fail. Inside our country, there are some people who want America to succeed, but want Peace to fail.

Some of those people from other countries who want us to fail as a nation flew airplanes into the World Trade Center and into the Pentagon. They set bombs off at the Boston Marathon. Those people hate us and those people very much do not want Peace in America to succeed.

There are other people who are leaders of people inside our own country who prefer to have their groups in a state of conflict with other groups in our own country instead of having their groups allied with other groups in our country.

Some people in our country and in other countries actually hate the people from other groups. That isn't speculation or theory. We know that to be true.

The Internet is full of sites that preach, teach, and attempt to incite intergroup fear, intergroup anger, intergroup conflict, and intergroup hatred.

The Internet Has Sites Hosted By People Who Hate

Those people prove their existence to us simply by proving their existence to us. We can't pretend they do not exist or hope that they will not

be real.

The Internet is one of their major platforms. We can see what those people who hate believe and we can see what they want to do by going to their websites and seeing what they actually say.

What they want to do can be very ugly — evil, damaging, divisive, destructive, and ugly. There are people who want racism to be the reality for America.

There are people who are misogynistic and bigoted and ethnically hateful.

Those people who preach division inside our country clearly do not want to see an inclusive and accepting America where everyone has full access to our best values, full equality, freedom, and inclusive access to the American Dream.

Some of those people who want us to fail — both inside our country and from other countries — have enough hatred in their minds to take their own steps to create real and functional crises for America — trying to destroy various elements of our infrastructure or cripple our economy.

The next chapter of this book deals with some of those risks. When those kinds of setbacks happen, we will need to function as an American “Us” to respond successfully.

That has, in fact, been our practice. Both Pearl Harbor and 9/11 brought us together with great collective clarity and angry against our common foe at that point in time.

Common Enemies Are Also A Threat

Common enemies are the second step on the alignment pyramid.

It is clear beyond question that we actually do have common enemies who we need to resist, overcome, defuse, and defeat.

We need to defeat them by creating an America that achieves the American Dream for all of us in the most inclusive way and that responds to each crisis collectively and collaboratively instead of having our various crises dividing us into warring groups who then do damage to one another in the name of survival.

We need intergroup trust, intergroup collaboration, and intergroup alliances that bring us together and that give us the chance to celebrate and embrace our common humanity ... so that we can all help each other

succeed and thrive as a total and inclusive American “Us.”

The people who produce those websites that are so rich in hatred and so steeped in angry and evil intentions are a common enemy to all of us who want Peace.

The people who would rather lead their groups to angry division rather than to Peaceful alignment are common enemies to Peace.

The people who deliberately undermine our processes of shared understanding so they can keep us functioning as warring tribes are also all common enemies to Peace. Peace has its common enemies — and we can identify who they are by what they do and how they do it.

The common enemies of Peace can be found at the international level and they exist in each of the communities where we have people who live to keep us apart.

People in communities who hate betray their feelings and their intentions with the fruit of their hatred. We need to bring each community to feel a collective sense of “Us” — a sense that we want all of us in the community to succeed.

We need to make sure the common enemies in each setting do not

divide us and trigger intergroup anger in seductive and persuasive ways.

Common enemies exist. We need to know who they are and we need to defeat what they do.

We Need Teams To Improve Safety, Health, And Our

Children's Future

We also need to use our team instincts to bring us together.

To create the levels of intergroup interactions that can bring people together in the face of that opposition to Peace, we need to function now as teams at multiple levels.

Teams are the third step on that alignment trigger pyramid in Chapter Seven. This book outlines a number of areas where we can work together as teams in the common good toward common benefits and common wins.

We need to be clear on the common wins we want to achieve in each setting and then we need to use teams in each setting to help us achieve those common wins.

Health, for example, can be a common win.

We need to function in teams in various very practical ways in multiple communities and multiple settings to improve our collective health.

We need teams in place to do that good work, and we need to feel the collective mutual support that team members have for one another in the context of those teams doing that work.

To help bring us together and to support both alignment and Peace, we need teams who have real goals. Our teams need important things to do that bring team members into alignment as team members, or that alignment will not happen.

We Need All Of Our Children To Get The Support They Need

Taking care of our children ranks as a top priority and an extremely important focus for our team activities.

Focusing mutually in team-based supportive ways on our children is an important shared goal that can serve that purpose of unifying us and creating trust between groups of people in multiple settings.

The science of brain development for the first months and years of life for each child points us in a clear and crucial direction.

We need to have teams in place in every community who work to maximize and optimize the neuron development in our youngest children from every single group in this country.

To succeed as a country for our collective future, we need high performing children in every group in America. We need all of our children to be able to succeed.

That will not be possible unless we make sure that our children in every setting get the biological and functional brain exercise that is needed by each child in each child's first months and years of life. The brain exercise need is specific for each child.

Every child we serve by doing the right things in those key months and years is a child we save. Every child counts. We need to help each child get the brain exercise needed in those first couple years of life so that each child has the best hope for success.

We need to function as teams to also create and support the best education system in the world. We need all of our children to have the education needed to be in great jobs.

We need great education systems to give us a work force that can prevail in the face of workforce challenges that we face now and will face in the future from the rest of the world.

We need teams of people in each setting to be doing that work of helping our children together — and we need to appreciate each other's

common humanity in the context of doing all those activities in the context of teams.

We Need To Be An Inclusive, Values-Based American “Us”

Creating a shared sense of “us” is a key goal and a key tool for the entire Peace process.

We need to now bring all of our collective agendas together in the context of being an American “Us.” We can and should each continue to identify with — and celebrate — all of the various racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious groups that make up the rich and complex fabric of America.

We also need to add another key layer to all of those identities that brings us together through our shared values and through our shared beliefs to be a functioning and very real values-aligned American “Us.”

We need to do that work at a very explicit and intentional level. We need to be a belief driven “Us.”

The final chapter of this book outlines a set of 12 common values that we can all share now to help us define and align those beliefs. Other values can be added later to that list. It isn’t a perfect list. But it is a highly functional and legitimate list.

That list included in the final chapter of this book is based on our current set of values that have been the bedrock belief systems for America. We use those values now — but not as a package and not in a way that lets us make a shared commitment to them in ways that can help us use them to define us as an “Us.”

We need to be that “Us.” We need to trigger our us instincts and our perceptions to include all of us who believe in that specific and explicit shared set of beliefs to be included in our American “Us.”

We Need To Add A “Layer Of Us”

In that same way that we can feel a sense of our family us and can also be part of a clan “Us,” and can also identify with each other as a tribal us — we need to continue to each identify ourselves as a racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, religious “Us” with whatever sets of people fill those roles in our lives, but we also need to simultaneously relate to one another at another very valid and very powerful higher and more inclusive level as an American “Us.”

We need to add a layer of “Us.”

We need to build a level of shared belief that lets us trust and support

and celebrate one another as a real and functioning American “Us.”

When we do that, we create a context that allows us all to work together, play together, enjoy life together, and prosper and thrive together — with our America “Us” as the group that thrives and prospers in ways that create Peace for ourselves, and Peace for our children and Peace for our grandchildren.

We Will Leave A Legacy For Our Grandchildren

We will leave a legacy for our grandchildren. That is inevitable. Legacies happen. Grandchildren happen. That is how life works.

What isn’t inevitable is exactly which legacy we will collectively leave to our grandchildren.

If we succeed in creating intergroup Peace and if we create a collective, values-based sense of “Us” and if our grandchildren inherit both that Peace and that broad and inclusive values-based sense of us, then their lives will be much better than they will be if we leave them with a legacy of destructive and dangerous intergroup conflict and damaging intergroup anger.

Our grandchildren will benefit from us expanding our “Us.” We

need to extend that inclusive sense of us to our children and to our grandchildren in very explicit ways, so their lives can be lived in the context of intergroup Peace rather than intergroup conflict.

We Need To Model “Us” Behaviors And We Each Need To

Reach Out

As part of the sharing and teaching process for those values, we need to model those values-based behaviors in our own lives.

We each need to reach out across group lines to create friendships and we each need to build the kind of interpersonal interactions that build and maintain personal and group understanding and trust.

We need all of our people to be able to relate to each other as people and we need people to not feel a sense of being a traitor in befriending people from other groups. We need to model those reaching out behaviors for our children and for our grandchildren, because they will believe what we actually do to be more relevant than what we simply say. We need to show our offspring how intergroup friendships work and we need to show our offspring how intergroup trust begins and is sustained.

When our children aren't bound and isolated by the usual sets of

divisive and separatist instinctive behaviors and feelings, then intergroup trust and interpersonal understanding can anchor intergroup Peace at a very basic and personal level for the next generations as well.

We Need Role Models For Inclusive, Interacting Behaviors

We need to teach those values in our schools and we need to teach and preach and achieve those values in our various communities.

We need to teach those values to our children and we need to teach them to each other. We need also to live those values and model them though our personal behavior in order to make them real and to give them the foundation they need to shape our future as well as shaping our world and interactions today.

We need role models for those behaviors. We each owe it to our children to model those behaviors.

We also need our community leaders, religious leaders, and even our political leaders to model the behaviors that build and support intergroup trust.

We need our various heroes from sports, entertainment, and public life to teach and model those behaviors as well.

Celebrity endorsement for intergroup trust can have a huge positive impact on embedding those values in the new American culture of Peace that we need to create and support. We need a culture of Peace that makes Peaceful behaviors our cultural expectations in each setting.

We need our most respected leaders from each group to not only model those behaviors — we need those leaders to be able to go to the crisis spots when crisis happen to help resolve the relevant issues and to calm people down in ways that people understand and trust.

Crisis and conflict situations often tend to be very local — but sometimes the solutions to local situations call for additional resources, credibility, and expertise to enter the crisis site to calm the crisis and avert the intergroup explosions that can potentially occur.

We need community, group, and religious leaders in every setting who are willing to step into that role in their communities when needed.

The Benefits To All Of Us Are Significant

The benefits to us all of going down that path of inclusion are significant. The fifth step and penultimate incentive factor on the six-step alignment trigger pyramid is to offer mutual benefit and mutual gain

to people in order to achieve mutual alignment in a setting or situation.

Mutual benefit is very relevant to intergroup Peace in America.

We actually have prospered as a country for hundreds of years because the American Dream has allowed people here to invent, create, produce, invest, and succeed in a wide range of areas.

We have great music, great art, and we have a very powerful economy anchored on having hardworking people creating products and services that benefit each other and also benefit the world.

The heart of our economic success and the heart of our economic engine has been to enable many people to produce and to succeed.

We have managed all of that success and all of that beneficial production in a handicapped and limited way — because we have only allowed a subset of our population full access to the American Dream.

Only White Americans have had consistent access to the American Dream and the best opportunities in this country have been primarily limited to White males.

We Will All Be Better Off When We Are All Better Off

Expanding our access to the American Dream to all groups and to all

genders will give us an even more powerful engine for economic growth and success as a nation. We will be stronger, better, and more secure when everyone can bring their talents and their skills to our common good and our common goals.

The consequence to America of going down the other path — of tribalizing, splintering, and denying full Dream access to entire groups of Americans — will result in major portions of our people underperforming with many people in poverty and in major situational failure.

Major segments of our population are facing economic challenges and experiencing negative economic situations today.

We need to directly deal with those issues. Building our overall national success and protecting our national security with growing numbers of our people failing has its own obvious failure consequences as a nation and creates its own obvious, real, and dangerously high levels of risk as a strategy and as a pathway.

We can achieve those goals of mutual success and inclusion with clear laws that make discrimination in some key areas — like employment — illegal. We can also achieve those goals by helping people who want to create their own businesses and who want to set up their own economic

engines succeed.

Government progress that creates access to both resources and education for all Americans needs to be part of that strategy of economic inclusion.

People will be better off economically when we are collectively in better health. Health disparities have damaged groups of Americans in very real ways — but those disparities can be eliminated if we take some key steps to make them disappear.

Healthy people are more likely to prosper in other ways.

The primary reality is this — we will experience significant mutual and collective gain when we expand the American Dream and when we create a broader set of people whose successes can strengthen us as an economy, as a nation, and as a people who want each other to succeed.

Peace does lead to prosperity if we steer it in that direction.

We Need To Commit To And Use Shared Values As A People

The final chapter of this book deals with the top step on that alignment factor pyramid that was outlined in Chapter Seven.

The top step on that alignment pyramid is to have a shared mission —

a shared vision — and a shared belief system.

That particular alignment trigger also very clearly works to motivate, align, and inspire people in multiple settings. It is true that we can be unified and be united by our beliefs.

Some of the most powerful human movements that have ever existed have been based on shared beliefs.

We need to go down that path here and we need to go down that path now. We need to mutually commit to our key sets of basic values and to key sets of enlightened behaviors.

The set of shared beliefs that are explicitly outlined in the final chapter of this book are not new. Freedom, democracy, inclusion, fairness, equal rights, and all of the other shared beliefs on that list are each embedded now in various parts of our belief system and our history.

But that full set of values have not been the composite reality in the past for all of us — and they haven't been explicitly collected in the past into a functional working set of beliefs that we all to share and that we all to agree to use in an inclusive way for each and all of us as a people.

What we need to do now is to pull our various key beliefs together

and weave them together as a shared package of shared beliefs — with each of us collectively agreeing to that specific package of shared beliefs and each and all of us committing to work together to make them real for all of us.

We Need To Discuss, Understand, And Enhance That List

There may be other beliefs that we can add to that values list. Adding additional key values could obviously make the list stronger.

Some people may be able to improve and enhance the list in various ways. That enhancement approach can clearly be a good thing to do.

Those are discussions that we need to have as a country and discussions that we need to have as individuals with one another.

As we expand that dialogue and those deliberations, we can use this list in the last chapter of this book as our working set of core beliefs. That can be a valid and legitimate thing to do because this is a list of a dozen key beliefs that we actually use to guide us as a country now.

The list wasn't invented. It was compiled.

The specific list outlined in Chapter Fifteen is intended both to tee up

wider discussions and to also give us an explicit and functional starter set of current shared beliefs that we can all commit to use to help us go a step down the process path of becoming a values-centered American “Us.”

Ask Leaders If They Agree To Core Beliefs

It is a good idea to share and use this list of beliefs with other people. Ask leaders in each setting if they believe in that list and if they, as leaders, support those key beliefs.

Use the list as guidance in any intergroup setting to help structure behaviors, interactions, and decisions.

We need to go to each of our political leaders now and ask our leaders to work for a commitment to work on intergroup Peace.

We need to ask our leaders to agree to those core values and to set up open dialogue and communication about the real intergroup problems that exist in each community and setting.

Some political movements in this country have already asked our community leaders and our elected officials to sign pledges to do various things in office. Tax-related pledges exist, for example.

What we need now is a set of leaders who commit to intergroup Peace

and to helping create the support needed to have our children educated, our people healthy, and to have everyone from every group given full access to the American Dream.

There is no political leaning to those issues. These are all human issues — not doctrinal or ideological issues. Each leader in each setting can use the tool kit of their own ideology and political leanings or their own religious or philosophical beliefs to create support for this set of goals.

Creativity is welcome.

We Need An Explosion Of Creativity In The Internet Of Peace

Creativity is more than welcome, in fact. We can be incredibly creative people.

We need to trigger our creativity now to figure out ways of both achieving those values and enhancing our success levels, insights, and behaviors in each of those areas. We need an explosion of creativity in the service of Peace.

The next chapter of this book deals with some of the risks we face in both creating and protecting Peace. We also need to trigger our creativity to figure out ways of mitigating all of those risks.

Before going to that list of risks to Peace, it makes sense to look again at some of the key strategic directions for creating Peace that have been included in this book.

Sixteen Steps To Take To Peace

The summary list below repeats sixteen of the key Art of Peace strategies and belief points that have been included and discussed in prior chapters of this book.

Sun Tzu wrote lists of direct advice to his war leaders in *Art of War*. This is a parallel set of advice points for Peace leaders from *The Art of Intergroup Peace*.

Each of the points on that list are guidance tools that are part of *The Art of Intergroup Peace* strategy. Each of the guidance points stems from specific strategy points that were outlined in various places earlier in this book.

The following advice is embedded in *The Art of Intergroup Peace*:

- 1) Avoid triggering and activating us/them instincts in a negative way in each setting. Make that avoidance a major priority and do it constantly and well.

- 2) Activate us/them instincts in a positive way.
- 3) Base intergroup relations and intergroup interactions on mutual winning — with win/win outcomes both a commitment and a shared value for all of the people in all of the groups.
- 4) Select leaders who want Peace and who believe in the 12 core values and in win/win intergroup interactions.
- 5) Mutually and individually commit to the 12 shared and fundamental values and core beliefs that are outlined in Chapter Sixteen of *The Art of Intergroup Peace*.
- 6) Make friends, build relationships, and create personal interactions across group lines to build intergroup trust and to create intergroup understanding at a personal level.
- 7) Do not insult, attack, demean, disparage, antagonize, or cast aspersions on other groups of people — and do not do things to intentionally create intergroup discomfort for other people.
- 8) Have open discussions about the key issues and the key beliefs that are teed up for discussion by *The Art of Intergroup Peace*. Be prepared to help resolve the situation if other people are clumsy and unintentionally offensive in their commentary and discussions.

Guide people rather than condemn people when that kind of problematic communication happens. Safe discussions are needed. We all need to help to make our discussions safe.

- 9) Recognize that forgiveness for past sins is not the approach needed now. Some sins can never be forgiven. What is needed now is a restart with everyone now being held personally accountable now for behaviors and for events that happen beginning now.
- 10) Use a blend of understandings, agreements, alliances, teams, functional integration, and cultural values interweaving with strategies to achieve the intergroup goals and intergroup interactions needed in each setting. Understand each of those intergroup interaction option and use the one in each intergroup setting that is most likely to meet the needs of the group and achieve intergroup Peace.
- 11) Celebrate our legacy group identities and group cultures and make them a key part of the total America — building on that whole array of cultures and group identities rather than erasing or replacing them. In building on those cultures, embed in those cultures the key beliefs that are needed to create and sustain values-based Peace.

- 12)** Make the Internet a major tool of enlightenment, understanding, and use it as a vehicle for creating alliances and defusing anger and crisis rather than having the Internet help to destroy intergroup Peace and function as a tool that is only used for inciting intergroup anger and creating conflicted intergroup behaviors. Make the Internet a powerful and effective tool for Peace.
- 13)** Commit collectively to creating a setting of safe communities where every child from every group gets the support needed by each in their first years of life to achieve their full potential. Make that effort successful and make it clear to all groups that we all want all of our children to succeed. Do that in an honest and effective way that creates intergroup trust.
- 14)** Avoid leaders who clearly trigger intergroup anger and intergroup conflict. Select leaders who have the status, standing, creativity, and skill set to create Peaceful intergroup interactions.
- 15)** Be aware of the instincts we have to be very uncomfortable and to feel stress when we find ourselves in a situational minority status. Those instincts can trigger discomfort, stress, anxiety, and even anger when any of us is in a minority status — and those feelings

and perceptions need to be anticipated, understood, and mitigated wherever possible.

- 16) Commit to include everyone in the American Dream — knowing that we will all be stronger when we each are strong — and knowing that we will be economically powerful when economic success extends to us all.

We can turn diversity into a great strength by giving everyone full paths to success and by aligning those paths in an inclusive way with the American Dream.

We Need Shared Beliefs

Those sixteen guidances from *The Art of Peace* can all be useful if we implement them in a context that is created by having all of us with a shared set of key beliefs and a shared commitment to making those beliefs the way we function as individuals, as communities, and as a nation.

As we move forward to the point where we have a mutual agreement in place to build intergroup Peace in America, we will often need to take the steps that are necessary to actually protect the Peace we create. Defending Peace can be as critical as creating Peace.

Then next chapter of this book deals with the risks we have for Peace and what we need to do to mitigate them.

The chapter after that deals with the kinds of intergroup explosions that have created major issues in a number of American communities. We need to know why those explosions happened and we need to know how to either prevent them or effectively resolve them.

Then we need to focus on our core beliefs. That process is key to *The Art of Intergroup Peace*.

The final chapter of this book includes those beliefs.