

What's It All About Alfie?

Chapter Two

MORALITY, ETHICS & COMMON SENSE

Moral Crisis

The United States of America is facing a moral crisis. We the People need We the People to take responsibility for our own well being. We the People need to help others in need. We need to teach others how to help themselves. And we need to provide a way to accomplish this.

Of yet greater importance, We the People need to demand and enforce that businesses and government officials adhere to the highest ethical standards and begin to exercise plain old common sense.

Common Sense

According to Merriam-Webster.com --- “common sense is sound and prudent judgment based on a simple perception of the situation or facts and equates to the knowledge and experience which most people already have.”

According to Cambridge Dictionaries On-line --- “common sense is the basic level of practical knowledge and judgment that we all need to help us live in a reasonable and safe way.”

Common sense will tell you that the leaders and authority figures in this great nation are hypocrites. This is not new and goes way back to when I was a kid, probably before. We always heard them telling us one thing and then doing another. They continue to display their hypocrisy every day in every way. They bait and switch and tell half-truths and outright lies. Such things are travesties of basic moral and ethical codes of conduct. Their conduct shows great disdain for We the People.

Folks, we all have a sense of what is moral and that there are different degrees of morality. We know what good ethics are and we all have a sense of common sense. We know that the latter has been missing from our government for a long time and that it is to a very large degree absent from the law. I am unaware of any common sense either in our written laws (save for the U.S. and perhaps some state Constitutions) or in the practice of law and the administration thereof. The legal system as a whole is sorely lacking in common sense. Consider the legal fixation on detail as in “ignoring the forest for the tree.” Folks, a *just* legal system *must* permit the use of common sense throughout and we’ll get into all that in Book II, Part 3, and the chapter on System of Jurisprudence.

Morality, Ethics & Standards

According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (First published April, 2002; substantive revision March, 2011): ““morality” can be used either

1. Descriptively to refer to some codes of conduct put forward by a society or,
 - a. some other group, such as a religion, or
 - b. accepted by an individual for their own behavior, or
2. Normatively to refer to a code of conduct that, given specified conditions, would be put forward by all rational persons.

Among those who use “morality” normatively (according to standard norms), all hold that “morality” refers to a code of conduct that applies to all who can understand it and can govern their behavior by it. In the normative sense, morality should never be overridden, that is, no one should ever violate a moral prohibition or requirement for non-moral considerations. All of those who use “morality” normatively also hold that, under plausible specified conditions, all rational persons would endorse that code.”

According to Merriam-Webster.com: ““morality” is conformity to ideals of right human conduct. An example: The decision may be legally justified, but I question its morality.”

Let us now touch on “ethics.” Elected officials shall act with honesty and uphold the highest “ethical standards” so that public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of government are conserved and enhanced.

According to encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com: ““ethics,” in philosophy, is the study and evaluation of human conduct in the light of moral principles. Moral principles may be viewed either as the standard of conduct that individuals have constructed for themselves or as the body of obligations and duties that a particular society requires of its members.”

Following are the last two paragraphs of an article that appeared originally in *Issues in Ethics* IIE V1 N1 (Fall 1987).

What, then, is ethics? Ethics is two things. First, ethics refers to well-founded standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually in terms of rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues. Ethics, for example, refers to those standards that impose the reasonable obligations to refrain from rape, stealing, murder, assault, slander, and fraud. Ethical standards also include those that enjoin virtues of honesty, compassion, and loyalty. And, ethical standards include standards relating to rights, such as the right to life, the right to freedom from injury, and the right to privacy. Such standards are adequate standards of ethics because they are supported by consistent and well-founded reasons.

Secondly, ethics refers to the study and development of one's ethical standards. As mentioned above, feelings, laws, and social norms can deviate from what is ethical. So it is necessary to

constantly examine one's standards to ensure that they are reasonable and well-founded. Ethics also means, then, the continuous effort of studying our own moral beliefs and our moral conduct, and striving to ensure that we, and the institutions we help to shape, live up to standards that are reasonable and solidly-based.

Moral & Ethical Problems

Now that we know what morality and ethics are, let us consider that moral and ethical problems are behavioral problems that need to be corrected. Moral and ethical standards *are the essence* of how a society functions and We the People demand that the whole of our society, including business, politics and law, function according to the highest moral and ethical standards. This is something our constitution ought to address by providing the necessary assurances.

Folks, you are going to see that moral and ethical problems are contributing factors to *every single problem* facing this nation. Indeed, as you wend your way through this Manifesto, you will see these issues weave their way throughout. They are that pervasive.

The Nub

When you read the following extract from: The Huffington Post | Harry Bradford Posted: 05- 3- 11 10:03 AM with regard to the 12th Annual Harris Interactive U.S. Reputation Quotient Survey of roughly 30,000 Americans, feel free to replace the word “company” with “government.”

“A company's reputation is formed not only by the products it sells, but by the decisions it makes in times of crises...”

“Notorious scandals like the BP Gulf Oil Spill and Goldman Sachs's role in the sub-prime crisis seem to have lingered in American minds, and companies with the worst reputations scored especially poorly when rated on whether they have "*high ethical standards*" and could be "*trusted to do the right thing.*"

That is the nub of it all.

Reasons for the Re-declaration of Independence

And you know what folks? The law is for us --- We the People. The laws of our nation exist at our constitutional behest. And, while we also have to deal with laws that are external to us and seek to impose its views on us such as International Law, never forget that it is We the People that rule. As long as we are on high moral ground, We the People do not have to accept dictums from the outside. We the People deal according to what is in our own best interests. And

remember that we exist to be and all that we give rise to is of, by, and for us, We the People. We can accept no compromise in that regard.

However, we deserve to suffer the consequences if we know our government has stepped out of line and we do nothing about it. We do not deserve to suffer the consequences and are not legally liable if we were prevented from doing something about it or if our government has taken some covert action and kept it from We the People. We the People can take this stance because we are a sovereign people and as a sovereign people we gave rise to sovereign states and a sovereign national government. Parts 2 and 3 of this Manifesto will bring to light the dearth of evidence (factual and circumstantial) of unforgivable government wrong doing.

That our government has taken some wrong turns in the past is the reason why it has had to systematically financially bleed We the People over the years so as to continue its way of doing things. All will be addressed in subsequent chapters including such things as the income tax, confiscating gold from the people, the Savings and Loans scandal, the TARP program, etc.

As of June, 2011, just about every state in the union was in terrible financial trouble. Localities were in financial trouble. Why was this? This was because the federal government has brought another financial debacle down on the people. Some may blame Wall Street but, Wall Street is what it is. The government that is supposed to protect We the People simply blew it as usual.

It is all the result of the "ripple effect" as was discussed in Chapter 1. It is the combination of actions and inactions by the federal government that has done all this to us. They see things only one way, their way, and to perpetuate their way they need to bleed us, again and again. Strong words, and yet, as you keep reading, even stronger proof awaits you. Folks, the financial problems we face have really very little to do with Social Security and Medicare. Indeed, I will touch on entitlements further on in this chapter. As I said in Chapter 1, *the establishment exists for the preservation of the establishment.*

That there are moral and ethical problems with the government and politics in general is obvious:

- Five presidents lied to us about the Viet Nam War
- George W. Bush and Dick Cheney lied to us about Iraq
- Bill Clinton lied to us about some dalliance and god knows what else.

That they all lie does not make it acceptable. It is patently unacceptable regardless of whatever good they may have accomplished. There are ways and there are ways. Lying is not one of them.

Additionally, there are people in and about government that enjoy *honors*. There is a strict constitutional ban on *honors* that will be discussed in the chapter on The Original 13th Amendment. This includes things such as gifts, free rides, immunity, etc., all based on one's position. This is not only unconstitutional and therefore illegal, it is patently unacceptable. Included among the group of offenders are lawyers, judges (from the Supreme Court on down), IRS people, elected officials, etc.

We the People cannot allow such misconduct to perpetuate any longer. It is finally time for the game changer---This Reclamation Manifesto.

Conduct and Entitlements

Morality and ethics have been compromised. A Moral code and code of ethics with allowance for common sense must be devised. The code that will be described below is highly moral in every sense. And yet, as I mentioned earlier, the way the economic game is played today, aspects of the code are impractical because they would not be affordable. Ergo, Book II, Part III, the chapter on The New Economy explains how it can all be made to work for We the People.

All people, not just We the People, by virtue of their simple existence on this planet, by virtue of being sentient beings, by virtue of a shared spirituality and consciousness, without regard to outward appearance and physical or mental functionality, are entitled to simple dignity and respect.

Such entitlement commands reciprocity in the form of aid and comfort to anyone in need. There are other aspects of morality that need to be codified for posterity so as to provide a degree of assurance. And because these tenets and the adherence thereto are absolutely critical to the success of the nation and the well-being of We the People, there ought to be set in place a method to oversee all activities that in and of itself is overseen.

Before defining the tenets or the method of overseeing, let us consider context. What we are talking about is a spiritual morality, a higher morality. It is something inherent in all religions and yet transcends them.

Code of Conduct

According to Alexander Hamilton in 1775 --- *The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments, or musty records. They are written, as with a sun beam in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.*

In full accordance with the objective of pursuing the *absolute betterment of the human condition*, this is about how to create an environment to facilitate life. A safe and secure environment in which all are permitted to flourish, in which all are permitted to be. All are free to be whoever, whatever, however we choose to be. This is also what it's all about Alfie.

Wisdom

Everyone at one time or another in their lives has met someone who is good and who is wise. Good and wise not because they belong to a particular group but simply because they are. Wisdom, in a sense, is a manifest state of being.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

““Wisdom” is a deep understanding and realizing of people, things, events or situations, resulting in the ability to choose or act to consistently produce the optimum results with a minimum of time and energy. It is the ability to optimally (effectively and efficiently) apply perceptions and knowledge and so produce the desired results. “Wisdom” is also the comprehension of what is true or right coupled with optimum judgment as to action. Synonyms include: sagacity, discernment, or insight. Wisdom often requires control of one's emotional reactions (the "passions") so that one's principles, reason and knowledge prevail to determine one's actions.

Philosophical Perspective:

A basic philosophical definition of wisdom is to make the best use of knowledge. The opposite of wisdom is folly, a practice our government exercises all too often.

In the Inuit tradition, developing wisdom was the aim of teaching. An Inuit Elder said that a person became wise when they could see what needed to be done and do it successfully without being told what to do.

Nicholas Maxwell, a contemporary philosopher, advocates that academia ought to alter its focus from the acquisition of knowledge to seeking and promoting wisdom, which he defines as the capacity to realize what is of value in life, for oneself and others.

Psychological Perspective:

- A wise person has self-knowledge.
- A wise person seems sincere and direct with others.
- Others ask wise people for advice.
- A wise person's actions are consistent with his/her ethical beliefs.”

Some interesting quotations:

“To enjoy good health, to bring true happiness to one's family, to bring peace to all, one must first discipline and control one's own mind. If a man can control his mind he can find the way to Enlightenment, and all wisdom and virtue will naturally come to him.” --- Buddha

“Just as treasures are uncovered from the earth, so virtue appears from good deeds, and wisdom appears from a pure and peaceful mind. To walk safely through the maze of human life, one needs the light of wisdom and the guidance of virtue.” --- Buddha

“Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.” --- Thomas Jefferson

“I hope our wisdom will grow with our power, and teach us, that the less we use our power the greater it will be.” --- Thomas Jefferson

“The attempt to combine wisdom and power has only rarely been successful and then only for a short while.” --- Albert Einstein

Simply put folks, to me, wisdom is the proper application of knowledge for the common good.

Enforcement of the Code

What we need is a cadre of modern day secular Solomons, wise people, acting on behalf of We the People, to oversee all activities --- political, sociological and economic. They would serve as spiritual leaders and teachers and would be the final arbiters with regard to questionable acts relative to the new moral tenets and higher morality in general. Each one would be an overseer and collectively oversee each other. Their authority would be absolute but for We the People and they will arise from the people themselves by general consensus. There is an other-worldly sense about this and that is as it should be.

Let us now deal with that which they will oversee and the basis upon which they will make their determinations and offer guidance. Wisdom and common sense shall rule.

The Moral Tenets

Since all of existence is constantly in a state of being in or about equilibrium, mankind shall not perpetrate anything to affect this equilibrium. Mankind must recognize that it is but one small part of a greater whole and has no more rights than any other living thing including this planet. Yes this is our planet and it is alive, but it is not our planet exclusively. Nor is the planet exclusive as it is but one of many in this solar system alone. Nor is the solar system exclusive, and so on . . . The entire universe is alive.

What we are talking about here, put in the context of modern day terminology, is ecology and respect for all living things. Mankind shall not alter but rather live with its environment. Mankind shall use only that which it needs. Excess in any quarter shall not be permitted as it will affect the natural equilibrium of things. Mankind has already exacerbated naturally existing cycles on this planet as witnessed by the ongoing global climate change via the emission of greenhouse gases,

Two of the moral tenets are therefore 1) *respect for all life* and 2) *moderation in lieu of excess*.

Mankind's noble intention to help certain species is oftentimes truly a perversion. In their misguided zeal to help certain species survive overcrowding so that there will be sufficient food, mankind culls the herd. Mankind takes it upon itself to randomly kill animals. Mankind takes it upon itself to determine which animal shall live or die. Let us consider why mankind takes this action. It is to assuage the guilt that is felt for having been the cause of the disappearance of the animals' normal range. The disappearance was the result of mankind's need for additional space

to live because of overcrowding or mankind's need for land to cultivate more food in the form of vegetation or livestock or mankind's need of land for contrived economic reasons.

There are other reasons as well. What has always struck me as a curiosity is the arrogance of mankind. Why is it that when mankind becomes overcrowded or there is not sufficient food, why is it that mankind does not cull its own herd? If it's good for the goose, it's good for the gander. Such arrogance can no longer be permitted. In actuality, mankind has come up with a way of culling its own herd. It's called war --- and it is nasty and it really doesn't do the job. Consider that there is nothing moral about the initiation of war. What may be considered moral is retaliation in self-defense. Mankind fancies itself a creator and yet it is a destroyer, a destroyer of the very planet that gives life. Mankind must get past its arrogance and use its creativity to limit its numbers and increase its food supply, now. One more moral tenet is therefore 3) *no arrogance*.

Right to Life as an Example

In today's world there is conflict between those who believe that the issue of "right to life" is an absolute and those who believe it is personal and situational. Consider that the "right to life" as an absolute cannot be a core value. It does not respect all life in all situations because, in today's world, it focuses strictly on the unborn. To insist that something come into being and yet not provide for its dignified existence is arrogant. It is arrogant to try to force others to live by your belief system. "Let he who has no sin cast the first stone."

The Absolute Betterment of the Human Condition

While the first three tenets set the stage, a bit of wisdom actually comes from the Torah in how it teaches man to honor God. Simply put, help others. You honor God by honoring people, by giving them the dignity and respect they deserve as human beings, by helping them if they are in need of help and help comes in many forms and guises as will be explained in Part 3 of this Manifesto.

What is today referred to as human rights are really moral imperatives --- imperatives which are essentially embodied in the preamble and first ten amendments of the United States Constitution. These are high moral imperatives that ought to be considered as moral tenets and as you will see Book II, Part 3 where they are referred to as entitlements; they are far more than that.

These tenets are 4) *all shall have sufficient food*; 5) *all shall have protection from the elements in the form of clothing and shelter*; 6) *all shall have a proper education both temporal and spiritual*; 7) *all shall receive proper health care rooted in the concept of wellness as opposed to "dis-ease;"* 8) *all in need (physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally) shall receive help from any and all*.

The latter reminds me of an old saying "United we stand, divided we fall." We shall be united because "all is one and one is all." This leads to 9) *the rights of the individual and the rights of the aggregate are one and the same* and 10) *no one shall be denied the freedom to choose or to go, what or where they want*. Number 10) is actually the key to an environment that provides for the self-actualization of every single individual as will be discussed in Part 4. Subordinate numbers are the foundation thereof.

In the living of these moral tenets, wisdom and common sense shall rule. Following is a recap of the recommended tenets:

1. Respect for all life;
2. Moderation in lieu of excess;
3. No arrogance;
4. All shall have sufficient food;
5. All shall have protection from the elements in the form of clothing and shelter;
6. All shall have a proper education both temporal and spiritual;
7. All shall receive proper health care rooted in the concept of wellness as opposed to "disease;"
8. All in need (physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally) shall receive help from any and all;
9. The rights of the individual and the rights of the aggregate are one and the same;
10. No one shall be denied the freedom to choose or to go, what or where they want.

Folks, I have no doubt that many of you will be thinking that the institution of these moral tenets and the overseeing thereof is totally idealistic and you will be right. But, what is wrong with pursuing an ideal? You cannot legislate morality per se but, you can establish a code of conduct. And, it has to come from We the People and it has to be impressed upon the government.

Consider that within any social, economic or socio-economic system there will always be those individuals that cannot function within that system. The reasons may be physical, mental, emotional, intellectual or whatever. If they cannot function properly, do you simply discard them? Or, do you do what you can to educate them, show them the way and help them. If you do all that you possibly can and it is to no avail; it is no longer the failure of the individual, it is the failure of society. When all else fails, what do you do? Do you care for them in a dignified manner or do you throw them on the scrap heap of humanity?

The Religious Connection

Permit me to address some interesting aspects of the three great religions of western civilization: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The fundamental principles of all three are Creation, Revelation and Redemption. While they agree on the first two, the latter is a source of dispute that has led to much conflict over the centuries. The difference is in the rituals and beliefs necessary to achieve Redemption. These rituals represent the relationship between Man and God which is

known as “Particularism,” since each set of rituals is particular to each religion. It doesn’t matter what the rituals are. It only matters that they are different.

Further, this relationship between Man and God is supplemented by a relationship between Man and Man, a principle that all three religions subscribe to and are in agreement with. This relationship between Man and Man is known as “Universalism,” since the aspects of this relationship are universal concepts common to all three. It is the synthesis of “Particularism” and “Universalism” that is required to achieve Redemption.

Now, the moral tenets that I have put forth fall within the relationship between Man and Man and are wholly proper for a secular nation. Indeed, whether you follow a specific religion or belief or none at all, the tenets apply.

Note that the above usage of the word “Man” is used in its generic sense as in “Mankind.”

Conclusion

Since all three religions agree with the relationship between Man and Man, let us agree to abide by these tenets. And, let us agree to disagree on the relationship between Man and God and leave judgment to the Almighty.

Folks, it is imperative that you do not lose sight of the fact that the purpose behind and the intent of these tenets and this higher morality is to help achieve the *absolute betterment of the human condition*. It is you who must take responsibility for your own freedom and advancement as well as all those around you. Morality, ethics and common sense will permeate the New America.

Coming up in Part 2 is a discussion of the root problem. All manifestations of the root problem that ripple throughout the systems of the United States must be resolved to begin the *reclamation process*.