

Note re new additions. Crises and the design principles

As we battle Covid-19 we are relearning a lesson humanity has learnt many times before. It is cooperate or die.

The lesson is quite clear – in countries where the virus has been taken seriously and all measures such as:

- distancing,
- hand washing plus general good hygiene and
- mask wearing where distancing is difficult
- adequate resources poured into medical and health personnel
- protective equipment
- testing
- contact tracing
- isolation and quarantining,

have been observed, numbers of infected cases and deaths have been lower than where this full on assault has not happened.

The critical factor in all this has been widespread acceptance by the public of the need to observe the rules and distance to stop the spread. Distancing is the main weapon we have at the moment, heavily backed up because of the inroads the virus has already made into our communities.

That conclusion comes from the science of coronaviruses which are only little parcels of RNA who can only survive by constantly infecting new hosts – so we stop them, QED.

There is another lesson in here and that is we only know how to defeat Covid-19 because we understand the way this family of coronaviruses work and thousands of scientists around the world are currently working out how this particular one works. The science is essential and we will return to this dimension of it.

The massive efforts some communities are making at the moment to cooperate to ensure Covid-19 dies out reminds us that although virtually all our systems are based on the first design principle, DP1, our basic instinct as humans is to come together and cooperate. Unfortunately, that is not enough.

We know that many times over, people start new organizations which are small and have simple DP2 structures. As they succeed and grow, they formalize into DP1 structures because they think they should, that this is what you must do. Far too often they start failing and cannot work out why.

Despite all our best efforts, conscious conceptual knowledge of the design principles is not widespread. Now more than ever before we need understanding of these forces on human behaviour. Unfortunately since the Industrial Revolution, our populations have come to accept that living and working in DP1 structures is normal, even necessary.

As OST practitioners know, that is not the case. Now we have a new publication that puts to rest one of the most influential, and indeed virulent, examples of the myth that dominant hierarchies are part of the human condition; that we are all savages at heart and only the veneer of ‘civilization’ saves us – *The Lord of the Flies*.

The first new paper here is a brief review and discussion of a real life case, not fiction as is *Lord of the Flies*. Once again as we have seen with the virus, we see that if there is any 'natural' predisposition, it is to DP2 not DP1. However, what we have learnt from all our research with the design principles is that they both exert powerful influences on human behaviour and our belief systems can either amplify or attenuate that influence.

This new evidence alerts us once again of the need to educate about the design principles and their effects. It is critically important as once we have averted the immediate crisis from the virus, we are going to face a much more serious adversary, astronomically more comprehensive in its effects and destructive capacity.

We must remember that as the battle with Covid-19 continues, climate change is worsening by the month and the year. This is a threat to our species unlike anything our current generations have faced before. We will not survive it unless we come together as a global community, a genuine species not any segmented or fragmented groupings.

That is why I am including a little paper I wrote years ago now discussing the role the design principles have played and can play in the fight to save the Earth as a habitat for human beings. It is called *Afterwards* because although we might just manage to pull back at the edge of the precipice, the damage we are going to incur is colossal.

We have started to see it already with almost weekly destructive floods somewhere around the world and if we needed a reminder about heat being a dramatic form of energy, the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 provided it, with the fires showing a phase change in behaviour. Some parts of the country will probably never recover in the sense of being roughly the same again. And yet, even now, the climate science deniers fuelled by the big dollars of the fossil fuel industries are attempting to stymie all ventures to meet the Paris targets.

The climate deniers only survive in an atmosphere of distrust which is a consequence of hundreds of years of living and working in dominant hierarchies where people must compete to survive. To survive, they must look after their own interests and neglect the collective interest. Self interest has become a way of life in cultures like ours but it is not a feature of human nature. Regardless of what you may read in the popular press, plenty of people around the world living in DP2 based communities do not put self interest first.

The second dimension of this problem is that our public education systems have been degraded so the general level of scientific understanding has dropped. This makes it easier for conspiracy theories and misinformation about climate change to flourish. Science itself has been approached and taught in reductionist fashion, not only discouraging interest but also denying people knowledge of the biosphere as a system. We could, however, overcome this if we had the requisite collaborative base for genuine practical and hands on learning.

Only sustained cooperative efforts at every level of community, nation and globe are going to save us, and for them to be sustained over time, we need some basic DP2 structures. Starting with communities is easiest and I believe the most effective diffusive vehicle we have at this time. We know how to do it but that knowledge needs diffusing through more educative action on the ground. I know many of you are out there in the field, best as you can at this time, so this is really a general plea to use every opportunity to build conscious conceptual knowledge of the design principles into everything you are doing. This is not 'academic'.