

# Ontogenesis of the Utopian Quest

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## Abstract

Evidence from the ethnographic record and data from a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, psychology, gerontology, philosophy, and evolutionary theory, suggests a way of life that creates new possibilities for the human condition and the environment we inhabit. That environment is one of a grounded environment that respects the laws and principles of evolution and survival in community.

In contrast to the ideal characteristics of people and environment it is useful to compare this on a theoretical level with those conditions that have created unhappiness, conflict, and violence at all levels of social and cultural complexity.

Specifically, we find that the universal personal qualities of spirituality, the ideal characteristics of the healer, recent research findings on happiness, and the conditions of longevity, here labeled orthogeriatrics, all dovetail and reinforce each other creating a synergy of high human potential. An evolutionary perspective on these various qualities suggests an orientation and direction for citizens of the human species to consider in their contributions to a new world order; a utopia that grows from within the heart and spirit of each human being.

Hypothesis: The ideal personality components of the healer and the qualities of spirituality and happiness, coupled with the cross-cultural orthogeriatric research data on the longest living people, provide for us a utopian program for well-being and self-fulfillment, integrity of person and community, and a healthy direction for cultural evolution.

1. Introduction. This essay does not intend to trace the literature on utopian movements. Rather, this paper is about *potentiation* and its actualization, on the levels of person, group, nation, and species. I speculate that at the dawn of sapientization, and very possibly before, we were endowed with certain capacities, potentials, that soared beyond normal personality structure and culture. And further, that there were individuals, men and women, oft-times considered “gifted” who stood out in the community and took on the roles of diviner, healer, mediator, fortune-teller, storyteller, and teacher. These individuals most often were regular citizens of their community making a living by normal occupations, yet performed their exceptional roles when members of the community appealed to them. We most often recognize them as *shamans* who reach out into hyperspace (Reminick, 2006) to receive

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This paper is dedicated to Sri Matha Amritananda Mayi Devi.

information that may ameliorate a condition, be it medical, personal, or social. No doubt, as we see today, there are those who play at these roles in order to further their living but have no actual “gifts” save their cleverness and skills in working with their community. The shaman mobilizes supernormal powers with the aid of a *spiritual technology* requiring the performance of ritual, the expression of love, and the establishment of grounding. This technology includes drums, rattles, music, chanting, entheogens, and the like—to be discussed in fuller detail later on.

2. An Evolutionary Perspective on Vitality and Aging: Steps Toward Spirituality. A million years ago our Homo erectus ancestors were already crossing the threshold toward humanity. The problems of adaptive survival were being worked out. In the works were a burgeoning cognitive brain and a family-based social structure. Life expectancy was 35–45 years. These beings had a great vulnerability to climate, accident, disease, and unexpected death; these issues were very real, palpable, and omnipresent.

I suggest that the heightening instincts of social life and language-based communication allowed for an emotional sensitivity to the exigencies, joys, and sorrows of daily life. In this context I speculate that a nucleus of emotionality evolved: fear, love, hope, the plea, and faith or belief emerged as a configuration that became a Gestalt for the nurturing of humanizing culture. The singularity of these separate emotional states became galvanized and transformed in the context of ultimate concerns, the penultimate of which was the realization of the *inevitability* of death. This synthesis of emotional states within the body of ultimate concerns emerged as a cultural revolution, giving birth to the institution of religion which provided answers and explanations to inscrutable questions.

Some of the “glue” that held people together in community was the empathic sense: the capacity to cognitively and emotionally understand the experience of another. The capacity for empathy lives in potentiation but must be learned and developed as a skill to be practiced within family and community. As we developed our humanity and civilization our longevity increased. The nuclear family and the 3-generation extended family became institutionalized as a highly adaptive form for survival.

It is normally around middle age that the capacity for the empathic experience becomes salient, if it is developed at all, in a particular individual. Women have this capacity to a larger extent and at a younger age. It is at middle age that a sobriety and maturity about life normally develops. And from the insight into one’s mortality one may develop a personal spirituality or a religiosity, given already in one’s culture and encouraged by one’s knowledge of one’s limited time on earth. Now, what we call mid-life was that very same time that normatively, was the end of life for persons in an earlier era.

Through language and culture the human species proved unique in having evolved an open system of growth and social and personal development. Aging after mid-life signals a new challenge for members of society. The social challenge is to learn or relearn the roles of grand-parenting and elderhood in community. The personal challenge is to remain healthy and joyful and a valued asset to family and community.

Aging after mid-life offers the challenge of recouping and rediscovering those human attributes that allowed our survival and growth and societal development from the very beginning. These attributes are the very qualities found in childhood, for human beings are truly neotenuous beings, having the capacity to retain those qualities developed in childhood (Montague, 1989, chapter 6). Montague posited 27 needs that humans had to satisfy to become healthy mature adults. For brevity I point out several of those human needs:

One of the most important of these, in my opinion, is the need to give and receive love. This is the foundation of relationship, of giving and receiving in an on-going dialogue and dialectic of complementary and oppositional forces playing out in continuous interaction from generation to generation.

The wisdom of accumulated human experience inclines one, if not obligates one, to teach the basic lessons of life. In society this is accomplished through song, poetry, story-telling, mythology, and oral history. It is through these traditions that love is mobilized and the art of loving is learned in human encounters.

This provides the foundation for satisfying the need for friendship. Friendship is the vehicle for the establishment of intimacy, so vital in mature conjugal relationships. Once, on a sunny pasture in highland Ethiopia, I asked a 14 year old shepherd girl (in Amharic) how she conceived of a friend. She replied, “One I can tell my deepest secret to” implying implicit trust. The quality of sensitivity, included in Montague’s list, certainly enhances one’s capacity for empathy and relationship.

Two very important adaptive traits are an eagerness to learn and the ability to learn from experience. The traits of curiosity and open-mindedness which facilitates the learning experience are closely associated with this. One’s disposition of playfulness and the quality of imaginativity certainly encourages the creative process, so critical in issues of one’s adaptation to their natural, social, political, and economic environment, as well as contributing to one’s recreational, therapeutic, experience.

One last human need Montague emphasized is the need for explanation. What we cannot explain through empirical observation we make up. This need for explanation is the foundation of mythology found universally in human culture. During a conversation about kinship and marriage I once asked a middle-aged woman in highland Ethiopia to explain menstruation. She said it was God’s curse. But not all curses are bad. God wanted to remind woman that she was the subservient servant of man, and just as the warrior sheds the blood of the enemy, God sheds the blood of the

woman. But the concept of enemy, in Amharic translation, isn't necessarily someone you hate or need to eliminate. The enemy is one who poses the challenge to the other. Without an enemy how may one actualize his mastery, his domination, his authority?

The adaptive functions of the grandparental generation contributed to the adaptation and survival of prehistoric and contemporary indigenous peoples and society.

A terrible incident in highland Ethiopia illustrates this point:

One cold, wet dawn morning mother Almaz had to go to the spring to fill her *gan* with water. When Almaz went to gather water or coffee cherries or when she went to the market she usually left little 4-year-old Kebebush with her own mother, Kebebush's grandmother. This morning grandmother had a bad stomach ache, a sharp pain that kept her in bed. So, Almaz took her little girl with her to the spring. As Almaz busied herself filling her *gan* with 40 liters of water, little Kebebush wandered off a short distance, as 4-year-olds are wont to do. Out of a clump of bushes and rocks on a little hill came a hyena who snatched up little Kebebush in its powerful jaws and ran off with her. The little girl's remains were never found because hyenas eat everything, including the bones of their prey. The screaming, the anguish, the horror of that incident lived in our village for months. The guilt of the grandmother and the mother appeared to be irreconcilable and they were inconsolable.

Because grand-parents and aging adults are free from the primary responsibility of the discipline of children and the emotional conflicts engendered therein, they are fit for being the best teachers of their grandchildren. Timeless traditions have shown grandparents to be the childcare providers, the music, dance, and sex educators, and the story-tellers that instill a sense of history and identity in their grandchildren. Aging adults are the best emotional educators. They can disseminate important information as living examples of what life holds for all in the end. They are the nurturers of the young, providing information, value, and culture. They are the "nurturing means through which the wealth of humanity is realized in the fulfillment of the unique potentialities of each of society's members" (Montague, *Ibid.*). Therefore, one of the elements of the utopian environment lies with the grandparental generation, but these skills must be learned from one's forebears lest the traditions die.

3. Centenarian Well-Being. Professor Murali Nair of Cleveland State University School of Social Work, has done research on the centenarians of Kerala, South India. His list of twenty-some-odd behavioral traits he found commonly among his respondents is highly complementary to those issues which are the focus of the utopian elements of this paper. Here I shall note several customary traits that contributed to their sense of well-being. There is no priority of salience here, but I note those that I believe are fairly critical for one's sense of well-being.

There is a nutritional component to Indian centenarian well-being: they are vegetarian, they pause before eating, they consume food in moderation, they do not eat less than two hours before going to bed, and they fast once per month.

Centenarians commonly engage in prayer before rising from their bed each morning. They often practice sun-gazing in the very early morning. They, as most Hindus do, practice *Namaste* taking the energy from the left and the right hands and putting it together to give to the one greeted. They ardently maintain their faith which includes filial respect and filial piety. Closely related to this is a holistic approach to the environment and a deep respect for the earth and all of nature's creatures.

There is a high value on keeping the mind active. Commonly heard is the dictum "Add life to your years rather than years to your life" and this is maintained by having a mission, a purpose, in life. This will help one stay happy and avoid anger. Their philosophical attitude can be translated as "take life as it comes" with acceptance and without resentment.

There is a value on spending a good deal of outdoor time with continuous physical exercise. Centenarians are commonly seen practicing acupressure on themselves throughout the day, touching areas of their body in a very relaxed and perfunctory manner.

Centenarians rise very early, often before dawn and go to bed fairly early. Before sleeping they may recall the day's activities and make plans for the next day. They customarily sleep with their head to the east so their body maintains alignment with the earth's magnetic field.

4. The Personal Qualities of Spirituality. The thesis of this paper is that the utopian life begins with the individual whose qualities are communicated and shared with the community, and from the learning and practice of these qualities the utopian quality of life can become institutionalized. Those qualities of spirituality, I believe, are integral to building a utopian life.

William James wrote that "saintliness... is the ripe fruits of religion" (Lehmann, Myers, Moro). For our purposes we can substitute his word, "saintliness" with spirituality. James asserted that this state of being is universal. It involves a group of spiritual emotions that form the "habitual center" of personal energy. It includes a feeling of being in a wider life than that of the world's selfish interests and a conviction about the existence of a penultimate power. And, there is a sense of the friendly continuity of this power with our life and a willing self-surrender to its control. This can bring on a feeling of elation and freedom resulting from the escape from a confining selfhood. There should occur a shifting of the center of emotions toward loving and harmonious affections; a move toward yes and away from no (*Ibid.*,203 quoted from de Ropp).

Spirituality is consistent, stable; does not fluctuate. There is an inner consistency which is manifest as a permanent set of values. And “there is an awareness of the presence of the power that some religions call “God” and this awareness is a source of repose and confidence” (*Ibid.*).

Let us compare the realms of science, religion, and spirituality: Science is the realm of empirically based knowing; religion is the realm of believing; spirituality is the realm of being. The aim of the spiritual life is to raise the level of being and consciousness of the engaged person; to understand the meaning of life in terms of direct personal experience. The fruits of this expansion of consciousness include indifference to possessions; a capacity for impartial, objective love; a capacity for compassion; indifference to physical discomfort; complete freedom from the fear of death; and charity – the greatest fruit of spiritual life. The concept of *Bodhisattva* (who regards sentient beings with compassion) has the same emphasis on charity (*Ibid.*).

5. Personality Attributes of the Healer. In my studies of healers around the world I found a certain configuration of ideal human qualities that would appear to contribute to a utopian community. Of course no one single human being may possess the totality of these qualities, but in conceiving of an ideal, an abstract utopian configuration of qualities, we may look to the healer, the diviner, the shaman; that extra-ordinary human being who lives a normal life in his or her community and serves when needed.

I believe the healer is one of the oldest of professions, along with the mid-wife (that other profession commonly called the “oldest” is really only about 5,500 years old) and may reach back before we were fully sapienized. The shaman stands alone as a special kind of person. The role of the shaman/healer is universal; found in all societies and cultures of the world. I believe it evolved with midwifery requiring special gifts or skills. I prefer to think of these practitioners on a skill/effectiveness-based continuum rather than a dichotomy of practitioner/non-practitioner. Just as we find great medical doctors, acceptable medical doctors, and poor doctors, we can conceive of particular shamans/healers on a gradient of effectiveness in terms of their influence on their clients and community as well as their effectiveness with maintaining their own level of spirituality.

Carl Rogers (1957) suggested three critical qualities necessary for effective therapy, in his case, psychotherapy. First is the quality of congruence, or genuineness and personality integration; secondly, unconditional positive regard; a warm acceptance and non-possessive caring for the client; and third, accurate empathy, understanding the client’s experience correctly.

Additional research (Wedenoja, in Moro, Myers, and Lehmann, p.231) has shown that effective healers are also intelligent, responsible, creative, sincere, energetic, warm, tolerant, respectful, supportive, self-confident, keenly attentive, benign, concerned, reassuring, firm, persuasive, encouraging, credible, sensitive, gentle, and trustworthy.

Since these 21 traits are based on American research they may not all be universal. Furthermore, each trait may be conceptualized on a continuum both synchronically and diachronically. That is, healers may be placed on a continuum for each trait from nonexistent, poor, through to highly successful. And a particular trait of a specific healer may place differently on this continuum from day to day depending on one's social situation, mood, or likeability of the client and difficulty of the condition addressed. Nevertheless, on an ideal plane, we can consider these traits convincingly important in the treatment of clients and community. We may also keep in mind that these traits may be highly beneficial to the person who possesses them.

6. Happiness. It is my conviction that generally happy people are involved in more fulfilling relationships and contribute significantly more to their communities than unhappy souls. The utopian ideal, I believe, must include people who are happy in their situation, relationships, and integrated in their environment.

There has been a growing awareness of, interest and research in wellness and happiness in recent years. This interest is seen in the authors from a number of disciplines who have contributed to the subject. For example the *Journal of Happiness Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum On Subjective Well-Being*, edited by R. Cummins, provides an outlet for this kind of research. A notable author on the subject is psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky, Ph.D., Stanford University, who explains why the study of happiness and well-being is important in human research:

“In short, because most people believe happiness is meaningful, desirable, and an important worthy goal, because happiness is one of the most salient and significant dimensions of human experience and emotional life, because happiness yields numerous rewards for the individual, and because it makes for a better, healthier, stronger society.”

Dr. Lyubomirsky's years of research has shown that chronically happy and unhappy persons are systematically different and normally conduct their lives cognitively and motivationally in a manner that supports their respective dispositions.

Are there benefits to being happy? Continuing research clearly reveals the implications for society synchronically as well as diachronically over both short periods of time and extended periods of time, which also spells out the implications for human evolution.

“A recent review of all the available literature has revealed that happiness does indeed have numerous positive byproducts, which appear to benefit not only individuals, but families, communities, and the society at large. The benefits of happiness include higher income and superior work outcomes (e.g., more satisfying and longer marriages, more friends, stronger social support, and richer social interactions), more

activity, energy, and flow, and better physical health (e.g., a bolstered immune system, lowered stress levels, and less pain) and even longer life.”

From their focus groups and studies and analyses of their case protocols Rick Foster and Greg Hicks have come up with a most interesting book, *How We Choose to be Happy* (Putnam, 1999). They define happiness as

“... a profound, enduring feeling of contentment, capability and centeredness. It’s a rich sense of well-being that comes from knowing you can deal productively and creatively with all that life offers—both the good and the bad. It’s knowing your internal self and responding to your real needs, rather than the demands of others. And it’s a deep sense of engagement—living in the moment and enjoying life’s bounty” (p. 3).

Their 9 parameters of happiness are (p. 6):

- Intention: the active desire and commitment to be happy and the fully conscious decision to choose happiness over unhappiness.
- Accountability: the choice to create the life you want to live, to assume full personal responsibility for your actions, thoughts and feelings, and the emphatic refusal to blame others for your own unhappiness.
- Identification: the ongoing process of looking deeply within yourself to assess what makes you uniquely happy, apart from what you’re told by others should make you happy.
- Centrality: the nonnegotiable insistence on making that which creates happiness central in your life.
- Recasting: the choice to convert problems into opportunities and challenges and to transform trauma into something meaningful, important and a source of emotional energy.
- Options: the decision to approach life by creating multiple scenarios, to be open to new possibilities and to adopt a flexible approach to life’s journey.
- Appreciation: the choice to appreciate deeply your life and the people in it and to stay in the present by turning each experience into something precious.
- Giving: the choice to share yourself with friends and community and to give to the world at large without the expectation of a “return”.
- Truthfulness: the choice to be honest with yourself and others in an accountable manner by not allowing societal, corporate or family demands to violate your internal contract.

7. Impediments to Happiness and Well-Being. The authors Foster and Hicks also suggest 35 ego defenses that may act as barriers to happiness. A sample of these are given here (p. 57):

Loss of humor, taking offense, playing dumb, being highly critical, needing to be right, wanting the last word, flooding with information to prove a point, endless

explaining and rationalizing, playing the victim, rigidity—“I’m not willing to change”, denial, withdrawal into deadly silence, cynicism and sarcasm, confusion, eccentricity, being too nice—obsequious, holding a grudge, inappropriate laughter, and self-deprecation.

8. Transformational Processes. On a more theoretical level I propose a relative deprivation macro-model of motivation. The first part deals with the causes of discontent that I believe accounts for a great deal of psychosocial phenomena, from stress-related illness to mass violence (Reminick, 1988). The second part deals with culturally determined modalities for the transformation of potentially destructive energy into socially productive and creative behavior.

I begin with a deprivation-derived model of motivation. As Abraham Maslow said long ago, a satisfied need is no longer a motivation. My model is a causal chain which is a chain of dispositions found in most, if not all, warm-blooded animals. It begins with a state of deprivation which leads to other stage-related dispositional responses:

Deprivation>Frustration>Hostility>Aggression>Modes of Response

Each of these successive states may be conceived as a continuum of emotional energy, from weak to strong, determined by the nature and strength of the stimulus, the life history of an individual, and the characterological structure of that individual.

Needs are either innate or derived. Deprivations create needs. For simplification we can posit a dichotomy of deprivations: absolute and relative. Absolute deprivations refer to basic needs for food, shelter, protection, nurturance, touch, cognitive and social stimulation, and the like. Traumatic experience at this level can engender long-lasting psychological infirmities.

Relative deprivation develops when feelings of frustration are aroused because one’s situation does not meet one’s expectations or desires. The basic categories of relative deprivation, as Aberle (1965) suggested, are possessions, status, self-worth, behavior, and power. These represent basic needs which are shaped by the culture in terms of the ideals and expectations of that culture. I suggest that the closer one gets to one’s goal the higher the motivation and the nearer the barrier to the goal the higher the frustration and the greater the sense of deprivation because of the a) nearness of the goal, and b) the amount of investment along the path across the barriers to the goal.

The anger, either conscious or unconscious, leads to certain dispositional modes of response. The first 5 response categories are fairly primitive: *impulsivity* or lashing out, *displacement*, *involution*, i.e., emotional depression or psychosomatic response such as sudden ailments or afflictions, *social isolation*, and *denial*. The sixth category involves creative responses to these deprivations or unfulfilled needs. In most cases

culture provides modalities for the shaping and expression of the energy needed in the investment. This includes all varieties of sports, verbal contests, law, literature/poetry, medicine, military or police, social movements, and lastly, for our purposes, spiritual movements. The last two categories are normally initiated with the recognition of *anomie* and the search for a greater meaning in one's life. The sources of deprivation are many and the options for alleviating the frustrations are many.

9. The Revitalization of Positive Consciousness and Well-Being. When a cohort of the population realizes that they are unhappy and that there is another, more satisfying way of life to welcome and the communication of this way of life reaches a "critical mass" they are ready for change. The first stage of this change is for that cohort of the population to recognize the leaders and teachers of that change. This often requires an intelligent charismatic personality who can communicate and reflect the ills of a people and offer a path to a more satisfying way of life. In America, the Black nationalist movement led by Elijah Mohammad and the Black rights movement led by Malcolm X; and the Civil Rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King are good examples of revitalization movements. In the contemporary world there are many teachers and charismatic personalities from many walks of life including yogis, new age shamans, psychologists, ecologists and environmentalists, physicians, nutritionists, cosmologists, psychics – including animal communicators; people who offer stress relief and show the way to happiness. This sets in motion a process that Wallace (1956) termed "revitalization movements" which appear to be universal and sporadically occurring in the various parts of the world since time immemorial.

Wallace's paradigm of 6 phases are not mutually exclusive. The initiation of successive phases may include the previous phases and operate simultaneously and reinforce each other. Then, as the earlier phases wane in response to the gaining momentum of the later phases, the movement approaches maturity.

The first phase of the movement is the *formulation of a code* where the intelligencia of the movement articulates the issues of the masses and articulates a pathway to a better life.

The second phase is *communication*. The ideology must be communicated; must be preached and evangelized through personal communication and the media. This communication must accomplish several goals: It must articulate the problem of the people; it must mobilize the sentiments of those involved; it must articulate the nature of the deprivations; and it must offer a way out of the commonly experienced problems. The communication must also offer material, social, and spiritual rewards that are expressed as a "superior way of life".

The third phase is *organization*. This phase is what I call the "politicization of discontent". The cohort of the population must realize their discontent and mobilize for change both on a personal level and a social level. They must access the avenues

to political power to assist them in actualizing their goals. The leader must recognize his or her disciples and these people must create an organization to communicate, fund, recruit, and legitimate their movement.

The fourth phase is *adaptation*. At this stage there is both an internal and external challenge. The movement most certainly adapts to the sociopolitical environment of the larger society yet keeps from being perceived as a threat to that society. Furthermore, the movement must adapt to the internal strains, conflicts, factions, and inadequacies and maintain internal integrity and development.

The fifth phase of the revitalization movement is *cultural transformation* which signals the transformation of a significant part of society to a new way of life; a way of life that is self-fulfilling and sustainable and can be offered to the next generation. It is the stage of “organizational maturity and efficacy” (Parenti, 1964).

The final phase of this process is *routinization* when pattern stability is achieved and the various aspects of the ideology, values, and social agencies become institutionalized.

## CONCLUSION: THE ARCHITECTURE OF WELLBEING AND THE REALIZATION OF THE UTOPIAN QUEST

At the society-wide level, it is the responsibility of the institutions of government to support and enforce an ecology that nurtures the populous and encourages a balance of nature while frustrating the narcissism and greed of the oligarchy. On a more immediate level we must have community leaders who are knowledgeable about healthy living of humans, animals, and plant life, and the earth, water, and air that support these living beings.

The utopian community must have educational institutions whose members teach healthy living, promote mind-building mentalities, including music and recreation and creativity of individual students. Proper nutrition is critical for growing children, and therefore, school food venues must serve items that help brains grow and eliminate those items that contribute to the mental and social ills of youth. At the societal level we must develop more far-reaching federally-funded parent socialization agencies that provide information for informed living and healthy childrearing.

Individual Well-Being and the realization of the utopian quest must include a mission, a calling, a vision and a commitment. One’s work must excite with the expectation of fulfillment. One can create an identity around the mission in one’s life. Satellite activities in life should be built around, and be in conjunction with the mission.

The seven parameters of individual well-being and community realization are as follows:

Nutrition: Know the foods and supplements that address the problems of aging. Antioxidants, calcium-magnesium, immune enhancers, herbal tea and clean water, and many other food supplements for specific organ functions. The major detriments to aging health include excessive caffeine, sugar, fat, alcohol, and nicotine. I believe the single-most important factor contributing to a U.S. epidemic of childhood and adult obesity and diabetes is high fructose corn syrup, present in processed foods and soft drinks.

Hygiene: Cleanliness involves all body/mind systems: Skin, hair, nails, sinuses, lungs, alimentary canal from mouth to anus, organs, and healthy thoughts and positive feelings.

Exercise: Aerobics for the cardiovascular system. Resistance work for adequate stress of muscle on bone. Stretching to loosen joints and tendons and disperse stress. Pubococcygeus work to maintain a powerful pelvic floor and sexual vitality. Breathing and meditation exercises.

Psychosocial vitality: It is important to maintain a positive attitude. Avoid fatalistic thinking. One must see barriers to goals or problems as challenges rather than threats. One must maintain self-reliance. To know one's self one must cultivate introspection through meditation. One must see each individual encountered as a world exciting to explore.

Social involvement: Community engagement in neighborhood activities and issues engender a sense of belonging, a sense of identity, and a sense of one's contribution to the greater whole. Relationships of intimacy among same-sex peers and opposite sex peers, who share a common mission, reinforce psychosocial solidarity and wider creative social organization.

Education: Consider the learning experience as a never-ending goal in life. Keeping the mind active will keep the brain active and vibrant, provided no intervening disease occurs. To do this one must develop continuous, on-going learning goals toward higher levels of consciousness. Realms of learning include the areas of intellectual pursuit, music, kinesthetic development, art, language-learning and poetry, arts and crafts, travel and ethnographic experience, teaching, psychotherapy, religious perspectives—including religious ideology and eastern spirituality such as yoga.

The Spiritual Quest: Finally, one must develop the practice of yoga and other meditative disciplines. This may normally occur in one's middle age or elderhood, because that is the time human beings begin to seriously consider their mortality.

This spiritual quest may normally develop through one's established religion, or, seekers of the spiritual life may adopt another discipline thereby evolving a transcendental perspective and life practice.

The ontogenesis of the utopian quest has, for centuries, been in its seedling form. However, with the onset and development of efficient mass communications, and especially with widespread access to the internet, the movement, seen in environmentalism, "New Age" culture, nutritional research, and sophisticated modalities of conflict resolution, has gained an inexorable momentum.

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