



52. Communal Emergence

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Future Sense is a podcast edited from the radio show of the same name, broadcast on BayFM in Byron Bay, Australia, at www.bayfm.org. Hosted by Nyck Jeanes and well-known international futurist, Steve McDonald, Future Sense provides a fresh, deep analysis of global trends and emerging technologies. How can we identify the layers of growth personally, socially and globally? What are the signs missed; the truths being denied? Political science, history, politics, psychology, ancient civilisations, alien contact, the new psychedelic revolution, cryptocurrency and other disruptive and distributed technologies, and much more.

This is Future Sense.

Nyck: We're talking today about community and communication. We thought we'd give you a bit of a back sketch, so to speak, of the structure of how we as we bring you a lot of the information and themes and stories and ideas here on *Future Sense*, and that movement between one part of the spiral of Clare W. Graves's work and how we move up through that spiral of layers and the different qualities that emerge from that.

Steve: Yes, what these sources do, essentially, is give us a map to understand the longer-term process that we're in the midst of at the moment, being a global paradigm shift. Really, any research into complex systems change dynamics is going to help us understand what's going on, and I guess one of the most important things to come out of that kind of research—and Clare Graves's work is one body of research amongst many—is this understanding that when complex systems go through change, it's not a linear process, so it's not a straight line from start to finish. It's actually a very divergent line and there's a lot of oscillation between extremes—polar extremes—during that change process, and that's what we're in the midst of now in terms of the global paradigm shift.

By global paradigm shift, what we're talking about is a change of values that's sweeping across the planet. This is nothing new—we've been through these massive large-scale value shifts before. I guess the ones that we have fairly well documented are the shift from the Agricultural era, which lasted for thousands of years, where societies were typically arranged in castes or classes—a class-based society when you were born into a class and that was your lot for life; you had really no chance of shifting your position within society, you just played out what was seen to be your duty within society, and

typically the moral codes were quite rigid and prescriptive. It was those fairly rigid and prescriptive moral codes which gave rise to our major religions, which are still very, very influential in the world today. Then we had an extended period of gradual change, and it's hard to really pin down where that started, but some of the early signs indicate that it certainly happened around the 10th, 11th centuries where we saw signs of clear changing values and different ways of being human emerging. Some hundreds of years later, of course, we had the Scientific-Industrial revolutions, which was where the rubber was really hitting the road in terms of new ways of thinking rolling out, and some fundamental shifts in the way that we understand our reality. One example of that was moving from a belief within the Agricultural era that everything in the universe rotated around Earth and we were central to the whole deal, to suddenly realising that, no, hang on a minute, we seem to be rotating around the Sun. That might sound simple, but actually it brought quite profound change to how we see ourselves in the cosmos and how we identify and understand who we really are.

We're going through another shift of that same scale at the moment, on the back end of the Scientific-Industrial era, as we move from what has been an individually-oriented era in this Scientific-Industrial period, and I guess the peak of it has last lasted around 300 years. Prior to that, the Agricultural era was community-oriented, so it was a communal way of being human, and now we're moving from the individually-oriented Scientific-Industrial back into a new way of being human with a communal focus again. So there's that fairly fundamental pattern that we see in the paradigms as they roll out, swinging between an individual focus and a community focus, alternatively.

Nyck: Just going back, I really like the notion of how we once thought we revolved around the Earth, then we thought we revolved around the Sun, which is more true—it is true—but now of course, with all of our science and all of the space exploration, all that we know out there, we also now know that our solar system is rotating around a Central Sun within our galaxy, so again, the picture has broadened out. And these are not just scientific facts or deepenings or better understandings, but they're also understandings of our consciousness, are they?; How we have oriented ourselves towards life, the universe and everything in a way.

Steve: They are. They're very much connected to our concepts of space and time, which really shape everything—they shape how we perceive reality.

The other thing that makes this particular shift quite interesting is that over history, we can see that these paradigms have gradually got shorter and shorter in length. It looks like a logarithmic scale and they're getting exponentially shorter now, so this community era that we're moving into on a global scale right at the moment is going to be relatively short-lived—my best guess at this point is probably just a couple of decades—and then, of course, we have what Clare Graves described in his research as the "momentous leap in consciousness".

Nyck: Ah, the momentous leap. Yeah!

Steve: Which is not just another routine shift between community and individuality, but it's actually an entire change of context in terms of how we are being. It will take us from what he described as a chapter in human history which has taken us from Hunter-Gatherer through to this emerging communal way of being—this Relativistic you might call it; the Postmodern era, perhaps—and that really is closing an entire chapter of human history. We're moving into the opening of a completely new chapter, which is beginning with a new individually-oriented era.

Nyck: Although you could say that individual era in the next tier of consciousness, as you're speaking, is a kind of integration between the individual and the collective, isn't it?

Steve: It's an absolute game changer—we're seeing a quantum leap in human capacity. The reason we know that is because the research has met and documented some people who have gone through this shift already and analysed how they work—how their brains perceive the world—and it is an absolutely integrated way. So where the shifting between individuality and community has absolutely been tied to a bias to left-brain or right-brain operation, in this next chapter, this momentous leap is taking us to a place of integrated operation where both left- and right-brain can engage and function simultaneously, which is a new way of being—an absolute new way of being.

Clare Graves described the First Tier—these six different eras from Hunter-Gatherer through to the emerging Postmodern—as being survival-oriented, so each one in its own way was seeking to answer the question: 'How do I survive in this world?'—how do I survive as an individual; and alternatively, how do I survive in a community in this world? In Graves's words, he says this new chapter that's emerging very soon, and was emerging on a small scale when he started, is taking us to a new fundamental question. Rather than 'how do I survive?' it is 'who am I being?' so a focus on being rather than a focus on just surviving.

Nyck: Off air, you mentioned the simple difference between self-service and community service. We live in an era of such incredible self-service. As I also said to you off air, in a way, when you call up one of the big companies to try and get some service from them—a bank or phone company, one of those—you're not really getting much service; you're not getting much community service. You kind of have to serve yourself, and often you don't get much. You might get through, you might get something, and that's almost the extreme of this kind of behaviour of self-service and self-servingness in the world, isn't it?

Steve: Absolutely. Graves described these individual ways of being human using the language 'self-expression' for the individual-oriented paradigms where it's all about you expressing yourself in the world. There was an external focus, so you were very, very focused on the material world, mostly, and how you might change that to suit yourself—to serve yourself, basically. It's interesting to see how that theme has trickled down to every aspect of life, and as you're saying, even just to go to the supermarket, there's an orientation trying to push you towards self-service; you go to the garage to fill up your car and you get out and serve yourself.

Nyck: Yes, what happened to the bloke cleaning the windscreen? I used to love that.

Steve: Absolutely.

Nyck: I don't mind doing it myself, but it was a nice service. Service is such a beautiful thing, actually—to serve another—and, we've lost so much of that. Bringing this up this morning, I really think about how, in my lifetime, that sense of service to each other has been lost so much in society. All of our leaders are clearly self-serving—most of us would pretty much say that about most of our political leaders--they're clearly self-serving people, claiming community, claiming service to the national interest and all those sort of things, but clearly, it's all about their own power, their own survival and so on and so on.

Steve: Absolutely, and so much of our world now is controlled by corporate structures, and the legal status of a corporate structure is as an individual, right? That is to save the backsides of the individuals inside the corporation so they don't get sued if something goes wrong.

Nyck: So a corporation is not a community by that definition.

Steve: It's all about self-service. But there's no right or wrong here. At this time when we're coming to the end of this individual era where it's running off the rails and it's all going to extreme, it's easy to say, 'well, that's bad, we need to get rid of that and go back to something different', but the truth is that there's a place for each of these different ways of being in the world and they complement each other beautifully, and each one is suited to a particular set of life conditions.

This change dynamic is a very, very simple and fundamental change dynamic that runs through our entire reality. It's beautifully captured in the tai chi symbol with the yin and the yang, and each of those, as it comes to an extreme, gives birth to the seed of the

other. Another simple way of understanding that is just thinking about a pendulum that swings from individuality to community and back again, and when you reach the extreme of individuality, then the seed of community is born and it starts to swing back the other way. It's a very, very natural, dynamic and natural process, and if we can understand these fundamental patterns of change, then we can actually start to draw ourselves a map to understand what's going on in the world right now. As we are now at the extreme swing of individuality at the very end of the Scientific-Industrial individually-oriented era, it looks pretty bad because everything's extreme, but if we can understand the pendulum, the more extreme it gets, the more likely it is to turn around and swing back the other way.

That is, I guess, a fundamental clue to how change happens in complex systems, is just to recognise simple patterns like that; and it can be extremely comforting to know that, because if you don't understand the progression of the patterns, then you tend to just look at what's happening right now and think, 'holy shit, is this it? Are we going to be stuck in this forever?'

Nyck: I think my perception in this region—of course, we do live in a bubble here—but I think, while there are difficult things about living in a bubble—you tend to not see things outside the bubble—the good thing about being in this kind of bubble is we are actually practising, in a sense, we are forging new ideas and new ways of being in community. We are starting to elaborate and to extend those capacities within ourselves and I see it in a lot of people who are doing exactly what you're saying. They're moving away from being against something which is bad, so to speak—'bad' in inverted commas, and there are many things you could say are bad on the planet, many things that have been done with this self-serving nature that we're talking about here—and yet a lot of people who've been very much against that and fighting back, are stepping back for just a moment in the way that you're talking about: 'this is not actually working to really change in the best way for me and for community. How do we actually operate from a different perspective to take a different stance with regard to all the issues on the planet?'

Steve: Yes, I think it's easy to put your energy into fighting the old at this point, and a lot of people are doing that. That's not to say that there isn't some usefulness in rejecting the old because it's that kind of energy which tends to turn the ship around to head in the other direction, but it's important to understand that there are always two sides to the story. There is always a bigger picture and there's always a dynamic and emotion that's occurring. If you can move with the pendulum swing, then you will be most effective, and you can actually, at this point in the change process, start building the new way of being human. Really, the fastest way out of this difficult time is actually to build what's next.

Nyck: Yes. Did you hear that folks? Isn't that great? The fastest way out of this time is to build what's coming next and take your part in that.

I should mention, too, as we always do, that we have a text line here that comes up on the screen. It's 0437 341119. A couple of texts have come in about the film yesterday. "The film was amazing", says one listener, thank you. "The most poignant moment for me was the scene right at the end showing the chap supporting his wife through her journey. It was hard to contain my tears." It was a very moving film yesterday, and thanks again for those who turned up.

Steve: For those who haven't seen the film, *From Shock to Awe*, that was one of the US war veterans who'd been on his own transformational journey through ayahuasca healing, and he was very, very mindful of the fact that his own trauma, and how that played out in his life, had had a massive effect on his family, and as he started to get back on his feet, then he supported his wife to go through the same kind of healing process, which was amazing.

Nyck: And that, in itself, is an example of moving from that self-serving, self-involved, that hole that one can go down into the self, especially when you're traumatised, when difficult things occur, and actually coming out of that and seeing your effect on your family, how your being is radiating out. Is it radiating positively or is it doing something negative in the sense of your trauma flooding the environment, so to speak? So that change is occurring in many people. It's very good to see.

Nyck: We're talking today here on *Future Sense* about community and communication, and essentially a change in value systems that we're seeing. Of course, we all know about morals and ethics, but values, to me, is a word that is not used as much, and I think it's a really very good word to describe actually what is really changing on the planet now—what needs to change on the planet now.

Steve: Yes, I think a lot of people find that term 'values' a little confusing when it's thought about in the sense of talking about what they value, but I guess one way to think of it is just relating to what you emphasise—what's important to you in life and where you put your energy. These are the things that you value, even though you might not think about them as values. As we're in this period now of shifting from the Scientific-Industrial to the next emerging communal system, the solution to most of the problems that are presenting is actually to build community and use the value and the energy of community in order to resolve these problems. I think it's really, really useful to understand these general themes like a compass needle pointing us in a direction—

it's having that orientation. It can be really valuable because we are coming up upon very, very complex problems that we don't necessarily have answers to—we don't have the solutions on hand—because these problems are growing out of the complexity created by extreme individualism.

One of the most obvious examples of that complexity is our electronic networked devices—the Internet, the systems that carry all of those communications—and the fact that they've been designed out of an individual mindset. So even though they are connecting us and they have actually been a major, major trigger in rebirthing community globally, they are structured around an individual mindset, so individually we get lost looking at the screen of our device in the process of connecting with people, which is so ironic, but it's a classic paradoxical dynamic.

Nyck: You can only laugh, but it's serious stuff because clearly it can't stay that way, that we're locked into our devices in this way and expect things to really change. We have to look up and find different ways to connect, or use them more purposefully and so forth. So it's good to have a bit of humour about that because it is a transition that we're in.

Steve: It is. This dynamic of increasing complexity is a constant right throughout history as far as we can see, and each time the complexity gets too much, the answer is always to move in the opposite direction, whether it be towards community or towards individuality. Of course, there will come a time, probably within the next couple of decades, where we need to move back towards individuality in a different way again.

Each swing of the pendulum is not a repeat of what came before. I can't remember who this quote is from, but somebody said, 'history doesn't repeat, but it sure does echo.' You hear the echoes of the previous paradigms and you see the same themes playing out, but they're not exactly the same. They are all different and the essential difference is that each one is more complex.

Nyck: A lot of people would contest that. Good people who are trying to make a better world would say, 'no, there's always war, there's always destruction, humans are always going to do this and going to do that', assuming that human nature is a kind of fixed position, but it's not, actually.

Steve: It's not. It really depends on how you conceptualise change and how you conceptualise those patterns. Steve Bannon, of course, who was heavily involved with Trump in the early stages of this campaign—and just as a quick aside, I just watched that documentary, *The Great Hack* on Netflix recently. Highly recommended—very interesting—all about the *Cambridge Analytica* involvement in the US election, and as I discovered by watching the documentary, they've been involved in a whole bunch of

elections in other countries around the world prior to that; and also, involvement in military psychological operations was how the organisation was born.

Nyck: A bunch of trials leading up to the big ones—Brexit and the US election and whatever was going to be next.

Steve: Yes. One of the revelations—and I really can't remember hearing this before I watched the documentary—was that Steve Bannon was actually the Vice President of *Cambridge Analytica* in the beginning. That was quite a revelation to me, but that was a little side-track. If you haven't seen that documentary, I highly recommend it. Very, very interesting.

Nyck: It's amazing. Just on one thing for me with that documentary was just the absolute self-involvement, self-service, self-focus, particularly of the leader, but all of them. I can't remember the name of the leader, I'm just trying to quickly look that up.

Steve: Alexander Nix, I think.

Nyck: Alexander Nix. Incredible how he presented over and over again, when you actually had him on screen or when they captured him here and there without him knowing, how completely oblivious he was to caring actually about the effects of what he was actually doing.

Steve: Yes, and I think that's a classic example of different values. He was very much immersed in individualistic values, and very focused on doing the best that he could in the role that he saw himself playing, and quite genuine in feeling that he was providing value and doing good work; and then, of course, absolutely shocked when all of the pigeons came home to roost and all of this backlash came against *Cambridge Analytica* and they ended up shutting the business down, of course. You could see his very, very genuine dismay around all of that because he'd bumped into a set of values which he wasn't expecting to bump into.

Nyck: And that's the thing, isn't it? Bumping into a set of values, which you just don't get, you don't see—you don't see the world through that lens and you can't see the world through that lens, so you can judge a person very strongly for what you don't agree with about that, but it's very difficult to judge them because that's where they're coming from and that's all they know. Yes, they can change, they may change, he may change, but you can't force the change, either, until people are ready for it.

Steve: No, they have to be ready for it, and this is one of the great dynamics of this First Tier of human consciousness. Whatever our dominant paradigm is, whether we're in a collective-oriented paradigm or an individual-dominant paradigm in terms of our own worldview, it really is shaping our perception of reality. It's shaping what we see as valuable and what we discard as not valuable, and it's shaping the way that we show up in the world, the way that we see ourselves as being part of the world. When we bump into somebody who's in a diametrically opposed worldview, it's very, very hard to make sense of, and typically, we just don't understand it. Most commonly we brand it as wrong.

Nyck: Reject it one way or the other.

Steve: Yes, and I often feel that this is the root cause of all human conflict within history up until the present time—this differing of value systems, different world views and the incapacity to comprehend and integrate an opposing worldview as such; and the inbuilt dynamic that we have to simply reject it. That's very, very common.

Whether we're looking on an individual scale in terms of personal development, or on a global scale, in terms of the playing out of eras and paradigms, typically once we move from one to the next, we strongly reject the previous one. We say, 'oh, no, that's really bad, we've got to get rid of that', and you hear this language so much now across the world—people saying that capitalism is the devil's business and we have to get rid of it. What actually happens in reality is that these old paradigms, they don't disappear. What they do is they slide from prominence and they take a background position, but it's important to understand that all of these systems are nested inside each other. It's not that we discard one and move to another, it's actually that we are growing a nested system of paradigms inside ourselves, and in the history of humanity.

Nyck: And essentially that means that everything has some value in every layer of consciousness. In every value system structure that we have lived through as communities, as a planet, as a nation, perhaps, there are valuable things within that, and other things must be discarded, rather like compost, for the new to arise from—not to completely destroy it and to discard it, but to actually bring forth, to transcend and include those things which actually may still be useful in terms of moving forward.

Steve: That's right, and even though for most of us, it's not a conscious thing, we do shift and change between worldviews in our day-to-day life, depending on the life conditions that we're presented with. I guess a classic example would be a corporate job where you're very much embedded in the Scientific-Industrial mindset where it's all about doing the best, being the best, working as hard as you can, being as successful personally as possible; and then a shift of life conditions can happen in the same day

when you go from that workplace back to a home environment where you'll start behaving in a communal way, and without realising the shift. It just feels like the natural thing to do because we are highly adaptive beings and we will adapt to the life conditions we're presented with.

One of the big changes that's coming with the momentous leap, which for some people has already happened—a small percentage of people on the planet, and for the larger percentage is coming within the next few decades—is that all of a sudden we will become conscious of the existence of these different paradigms or worldviews, and also conscious of our own dynamics as we switch and change, and we'll have the capacity to very consciously change our value set and our worldview and our way of communicating to fit with whatever's required in the moment. That is really a quantum leap that's coming in human capacity.

Nyck: The big one that's occurring now, of course, is what we've been talking about from the self-oriented Orange level in Clare Graves configuration, to the Green level—to the communitarian level, which is about seeking peace within the inner self and exploring with others the caring dimension of community. That that brings a lot to it, and obviously we can see that in this community, evolving into a new layer. I sort of inferred that a little bit before, I think. People changing towards seeing it that way and not just rejecting, but moving towards, 'well, how can we actually be with each other differently now?'

Steve: That's right, and the most useful tool set is simply rebuilding community. So for whatever challenge that we're being faced with in life in this moment, because of this general theme of change right across the world, most likely the solution will somehow revolve around rebuilding community and building resilient communities.

Nyck: Resilience is a word that's very strong at the moment out there in the world. You can see that it's a bit of a meme going on. It's a very good one, too, because it is clearly resilience that we're going to need in the face of the many challenges that we now have.

Steve: Yes, and one of the most common divergences, or even illusions at the moment, is that we simply need to apply our old ways of problem-solving to the new problems. That would have worked decades ago, but at the moment, because we're in this shift towards community, what we need is to actually change our toolset.

There are some really classic examples in the media at the moment. One that I picked up this morning is a commentary on Australia's military security situation and our future strategy. Of course, we have a relatively long history of being aligned with the United States, and, of course, there were very, very good reasons for that, because you could argue that they saved our butt during the Second World War by their presence in

the Pacific here. But things are shifting—the United States itself is shifting, of course, and its internal political dynamics are changing—and with the rise of China's strength, particularly from a trade point of view, a lot of people are simply looking at, 'OK, how do we take these old ways of problem-solving and adapt them to this new situation which is arising in the Pacific with the rise of Chinese power?' There's a fundamental error in thinking that we're going to move from the same old to the same old; that we're going to have one superpower which is dominating the world because that's the way it's been, and now we're just swapping out one superpower for another superpower. The fundamental flaw in that thinking is the absence of understanding that we're actually shifting into a new paradigm—it's a completely new way of operating that is community-oriented.

I think there's some commentary in the *ABC News* today that has been released by the *United States Studies Centre* at the *University of Sydney*, and they're saying that America no longer enjoys military primacy in the Pacific, and Australia really needs to reassess where we're at and who we're aligned with. Rather than choosing between the US and China, I would say that we really need to move to a new paradigm and start to think communally, and about how we build a secure community and help become a part of that, and perhaps even help lead the rejuvenation of a secure community here in Asia for our own immediate security, and also thinking about how that applies to the rest of the world. It's a critical time at the moment because the US is in the process of asking us to once again commit troops to the same old story in the Middle East and it's not a time for doing the same old, same old. It absolutely isn't. And what's hidden in that whole dynamic, too, of course, is that even though it doesn't sound like it, and it's not stated explicitly, the whole of the tension in the Middle East is very much connected to the rise of China and its trading power in the world and its plans to rejuvenate the old Silk Road, which, of course, runs from Asia right across into the Middle East.

So, as always with the old paradigm, there are underlying hidden agendas that are becoming more visible and we actually need now to start to expect to uncover these hidden agendas. Wherever we see the old way of thinking playing out, we ought to just remind ourselves that there will be a hidden agenda, because that is the way of the old paradigm, and power in the old paradigm actually came from obscuring the truth and hiding the agenda and looking for some way around the obvious obstacles in order to get what you want. So as we face these challenges by the old failing way of thinking, we really should remind ourselves, and also remind the people around us, that these old ways, they always have hidden agendas; there's going to be one there. The same applies to politics of the moment, because in a lot of Western countries, the dynamics in politics are also the old ways just playing themselves out to an extreme. There are always hidden agendas; never take things at face value.

Nyck: You mentioned China there a lot. The situation in Hong Kong is clearly a very big transformative moment in world politics, and challenging and changing the status quo and the value system of China. That's a very big one. We see, apparently, a million and a

half people in the last 24 hours or so in the streets of Hong Kong—all types of people—and some of the more radical elements not so present this time. Clearly, they're being smart about that.

Steve: Yes, very encouraging to hear that. Apparently, depending on who you believe, claims of crowds between 1 and 1.7 million people in the streets overnight in Hong Kong and apparently no violence, which is fantastic.

Nyck: Which is amazing.

Steve: That kind of community action is representative of the new paradigm, and the absence of violence—the peaceful approach—is a cornerstone. Wherever we see violence playing out, we should also suspect to the involvement of the old paradigm, and without knowing what's going on—and I don't even pretend to know exactly what's going on in Hong Kong—when I see violence breaking out there, what it tells me is that violence is not representative of the new paradigm, so it's either a minority group that's operating from an individually-oriented paradigm from within Hong Kong, or it may be, perhaps, assisted by foreign interference. You've got to then start to think, okay, who would like to cause trouble for China at the moment? I'm sure some of you out there listening can think of somebody.

Nyck: You can text in and let us know who you think.

Steve: And then who might want to cause trouble for whoever's causing trouble in Hong Kong? There was a group of Hong Kong people filmed recently in a protest waving American flags and singing the American anthem, and so you've got to ask yourself, okay, well, I guess it's quite possible that the US might want to stir up some trouble in Hong Kong because it wants to really make trouble for China generally, because it's trying to slow down China's rise to power and hang onto the reins, so to speak. It only makes sense that their security agencies, or their intelligence agencies or whatever, might want to stir up a bit of trouble so China's got a bit more to worry about. But would they actually organise people to carry the American flags and sing the American anthem in the street? Well, I guess at face value it doesn't make sense, but maybe another country that opposes the US might want to actually make it look like the US, or reveal that the US is involved, so, you know ...

Nyck: And no wonder we're all confused folks, and overwhelmed, because it's very difficult to know actually what's going on here.

Steve: Exactly. All I can say for sure is it's damn complex, and if you think you know exactly what's going on, you're probably missing something.

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