

Contents

Introduction: Got possibilities?1

Real movement begins with vision — with inspiration and engagement, with a pull and not a push.

1. **Work from a vision**9

Go beyond complaints and resistances and reactions. What truly motivates and inspires is a picture of what the world might be instead.

2. **Work from a whole vision**15

Envision changes that are mutually supportive, mutually necessary and mutually in flow. Paint the big picture.

To formulate truly new ideas we need to undertake new styles of generative thinking.

3. **Seeds**23

Nearly anything can provoke new thinking. Watch for suggestive facts: overtones, hints, clues.

4. **Sparks**27

No need to wait; we can actively generate new and unheard-of associations as well.

- 5. Stretches**31
Exaggerate, extrapolate, push beyond incremental changes to qualitative shifts.
- 6. Twists**37
For rougher provocations, deliberately rearrange and transpose ideas. Reverse expected relationships, think opposites.
- 7. “The problem is the solution”**43
What useful background conditions do our problems throw into relief? What might the very problem itself be a resource for?
- 8. What’s the next step?**49
Sustained creative rethinking takes many steps. Keep pushing to the next one; interject new associations; provoke ideas to morph and morph again.

Certain distinctive tipping points, vectors and dynamics make unexpected openings for creative change-making.

- 9. Inside tracks**57
Much of the change we want is already happening — only in unexpected places. Look for ways to join and accelerate change movements already in flow.
- 10. Leverage points**63
Look for the small interventions that can produce huge changes downstream.
- 11. Weeds**67
Aim for changes that insistently re-emerge on their own and that diffuse widely, wildly and almost irresistibly.

- 12. Wild cards**71
 Prepare, both conceptually and on the ground, for the proverbial crises-that-are-also-opportunities.
- 13. Hidden possibilities**77
 Systems have immense but unseen capacities for change and self-reorganization — only we may have to offer a certain kind of invitation up front to get things moving.
- Behind and beneath the salient social problems lie cultural norms, practices, structures, ultimately even worldviews. These in turn can be shifted and reconstructed. For the most creative leverage we sometimes need to work at the roots.*
- 14. Rebuild from the ground up**85
 Some problems virtually follow from the ways in which the world itself is built. Imagine rebuilding!
- 15. Cultures and practices**91
 Other problems are shaped by our prevailing values, assumptions and practices. Here too there can be dramatic room to move.
- 16. Worldviews**95
 Worldviews themselves shape our problems — through both practices and structures in turn. Can we re-imagine whole worldviews, then?
- Re-entering the struggle with creative momentum, let us rethink where and how we stand and with whom. What are we waiting for?*
- 17. Play to your strengths**103
 Optimism, celebration, freedom in expression, cosmopolitanism, good food, good music, imagination

itself — since these are our forte, let us start with them to make change.

- 18. Reclaim the language**109
The shaping of terms is also the shaping of thought. Re-create a richer and more critically edged language.
- 19. More new words**115
New and reclaimed concepts for environmental and religious thinking.
- 20. Ally everywhere**121
Look for commonalities and common ground; avoid thinking in pre-set oppositions. Speak to “interests” not “positions,” remembering that interests themselves are fluid and overlapping.
- 21. The Tao of change**127
The wisdom of the martial arts: don’t resist the onrushing energy of opposition, but let it rush by, use what you can, work cheerfully just beyond its reach.
- 22. Do it now**131
New kinds of communities, new governments, new kinds of art and new ways to live — none of this needs permission or consensus. We can practice do-it-yourself social change, right now.
- 23. Go for broke**.....135
Imagine not just two steps down the road, but all the way. Why not?
- Afterword**139
- Notes**143