

Michael: Well, Terry, it's a delight to have you as part of this series, *The Future is Calling Us to Greatness*.

Terry: Thank you, Michael. I'm really happy to be here with you. I love the title.

Michael: Me, too. These have been absolutely stunning conversations. Total there'll be I think 51 or 52. I think you're the 48th person I've interviewed. There ain't a bad one yet. These are kickass Buddhist, really amazing. Four of them actually moved me to tears. I was just like, "Oh my God."

I've been asking my guests at the beginning to just help us get who you are and what you're most committed to. I don't want to assume that everybody watching or listening to this is going to be familiar with you and your work. This isn't a time to be bashful. Help us really get you and who you are and a little bit of your story how you got to be where you are.

Terry: Okay, sure. Well, when I was six years old my parents moved to an intentional community outside Chicago founded by one of the peace churches, the Church of the Brethren. They had invited people of other races and religions to live together with them as a witness for peace and brotherhood in a cooperative community.

That attracted a really interesting group of people. There were mixed marriages, there were old lefties, there were a lot of pacifists, there were Japanese-Americans who had recently been interned in the camps.

I ended up having a lot of aunts and uncles who mentored me and I had a unique thing as well. I was the kid in the generation that came of age right as the Vietnam War was hitting. I liked to read the paper, I wanted to talk with my parent's friends about politics. As a result I more or less got mentored in being a revolutionary from cradle.

That had me very politically active and engaged in high school and then in college. I went to the University of Michigan and was very involved in a bunch of campus protests and taking over the ROTC building and several other buildings during the 1969-1970 at the beginning of my college career.

Then I began to realize that those of us who were intending to lead the revolution were confused and immature and arrogant. If there was going to be the kind of transformation I really wanted in my heart the revolution really had to begin with me.

That drew me more and more to at first it was mysticism and poetry kind of things, but ultimately to personal growth, the whole personal growth movement. That eventually drew me to find a teacher and I spent the first 15 years of my adult life in the Ashram of a teacher Adi Da. Really kind of reformatted my hard drive in the process. That was profoundly transformational.

Yet my heart still beat with the sense that my own transformation was in service of a larger transformation. I think I knew even very, very early on that I was living in a time that mattered. That there was somehow a disconnect between the business as usual mind of the public culture, which I now sometimes call the cult of this world, the consensus trance, the sleepwalking to Armageddon or sleepwalking period, really. There was always a sense that, wait, we need to wake up. I think I had that even before I was formulating it as a political matter or a spiritual matter.

Anyway, after my years in the ashram, as I emerged I did just in terms of my career I spent ten years building a business which I sold. I had my time of becoming a productive member of society and raising a kid and paying a mortgage and all that. Then had succeeded enough that I was able to spend some time writing a book, which I didn't publish, but it was essentially on what my life is about.

The working title of that manuscript was *Answering the Call of Our Evolutionary Emergency*. That was the subtitle. The title was *The Terrible Truth and the Wonderful Secret*. It's always been apparent to me that this is both an inner and an outer game. I think that my talents and my own capacities have suited me to help people find access to the nuclear powered level of inspiration.

It's more than inspiration. It's empowerment that can come from our deepest hearts and our relationship with the mystery that is greater than our knowing.

It has been through that that I've been working. What ended up happening for me was I brought that manuscript to the guy I respected the most in the world, the philosopher Ken Wilber, and asked him his opinion. His opinion was, "Hey, man, we're going to do something great here. Join me and let's do it together."

I went for it. I helped facilitate a series of seminars that the Integral Institute gave in 2004, 2005 and 2006 and co-wrote a book with Ken, *Integral Life Practice*, which is really a distillation of the mystical paths

and scientific knowledge about essentially recognizing that every moment of life presents us with choices. We can show up in each moment.

Where we put our attention, how we orient is always a choice. Really that's a deeply spiritual task. Spiritual in the sense that what really matters is always to some degree at stake. If we drop into our habit energy and we participate in a sense on automatic we betray a higher value. What it is to be truly alive is to be always growing. We are always practicing something.

In the neurosciences, the currency of our time, neurons that fire together wire together. That means that when you're vegging out watching TV you're helping yourself tend to veg out and watch TV more. When you're unconsciously participating in the moment you're tending to make that happen more.

This recognition, also it had to do with growing in my consciousness into a meta-systemic view, recognizing that in the fabric of life the world is not ruled by the rich and famous and powerful. The responsibility for our planet doesn't lie with people like Barack Obama or Ban Ki-Moon exclusively. It resides with all of us. Or Bill Gates or Warren Buffet. It resides with every single one of us. The fabric is holographic. If there's to be any kind of a transformational change it will be powered to some degree from the chair you're sitting in.

Michael: Wow, that's a great phrase, I love that one.

Terry: Where is the way of waking up continuously in each moment. That's what I teach. I teach integral life practice. It is an engaged practice that someone who's truly doing the inner work inevitably finds themselves also doing the outer work. There's tended to be a bit of a split. I've lived through the '60s and '70s.

At one time it seemed that the counter-culture was one thing and then it seemed like it bifurcated and we had those who were politically active, who could see that things needed to change in the outer world, and people who saw that the change had to begin with them and focused on their own inner work.

It's been my experience and my deepening realization that if you don't question yourself and put yourself on the line as a matter of personal transformation you're not really a presence that is magnetic and powerful in the best ways. To really fulfill the outer work you have to do the inner

work.

Michael: I remember doing a weeklong retreat with **Tiknet Hahn** back in 1994 for peace activists specifically. One of the things that he said is some of the most unpeaceful people he knows are peace activists.

That blend of inner and outer work, I know many people in the Eastern tradition spend a lot of time developing that habit of being able to witness their own inner state, their own inner conversation. Of course, that can lend itself to being over focused on that everything is all about simply witnessing yourself or your problems or your instincts.

That's one of the reasons why I was so grateful that the series you recently were focusing on is really bringing also our best evolutionary understanding of our instincts, our mismatched instincts and living in a world of super normal allurements. As you know, that's been central to much that Connie and I have done for the last five, six, seven years.

On the West there's often in the Christian tradition and somewhat, too, Jewish and Muslim, I'll speak to the Christian tradition because I'm more familiar with that, there's also been this focus on the text, the sacred text, studying the Bible, turning it over to Jesus, prayer and meditation and fasting, which is all good stuff. If one believes, East or West, that one needs to sort of perfect themselves first in order to be a blessing or contribution to the future and to the world, I think they're getting the cart before the horse.

We often find our wholeness recognizing that the universe needs our imperfections, the universe needs our shortcomings, that we don't have to get it all freaking together first in order to really find those places where our joy and the world's needs intersect and make a contribution in ways that are a blessing to future generations, which of course was what this whole series was about.

Terry: That's exactly right. There tends to be this error. Once we begin to question ourselves it can become a habit. We don't recognize that the clarities that we have need to be brought forth with force and conviction, even while we know that we are a work in progress. Yes, I'm a work in progress. Yes, my understanding isn't perfected. Yet I have to be a stand for the truth I see as best as I see it and not opt out of the game.

There are a lot of very immature people who aren't even committed to truth at all, who are very active in the outer game. If we don't opt in and

participate their voice ends up being determinative if we're not careful. That civic responsibility tends to be weak among people who are focused in the inner work and this is something I'm constantly addressing and even transforming in myself and my students.

Michael: When you also factor in that roughly one and a half percent of the human species is born without the mental capacity to feel empathy and compassion, sociopaths, psychopaths, some forms of autism, that's a lot of people when you talk seven billion people. These people often can be very charismatic. More of them tend to be men than women but there still also are sociopaths and psychopathic women.

Many of these men, especially, rise to positions of power and influence in religion, in politics, in high finance. We've got a situation now where most of the governments of the world are in the pockets, in the control of these multi-cellular organizations that we call multi-national corporations. If they are to be treated as persons they're sociopaths because they can't feel empathy and compassion. The question is what kind of persons are they?

How do we as citizens, how do we as people who has a passion, a commitment to a healthy future and to evolving ourselves in that process, how do we engage with these forces in ways that don't cause us? Some of the greatest evils in the world have been done, perpetrated, by those who were presumably trying to rid the world of evil. How to engage evil?

When I use the word evil all I'm meaning is self-interest that pursues its own financial or pleasurable self-interest knowing that in doing so it's harming the future or harming others. If anything deserves the word evil, I think that does. How to engage that in ways that don't cause us to also slip into what might be termed evil.

Terry: Well, we pretend to become like our opponents when we're involved in a battle. Can we fight fully and freely and powerfully and prevail without becoming like that which we oppose? It's a big issue.

Michael: Exactly, exactly. As Derrick Jensen, who I'll be interviewing actually later today, is fond of saying, is that whenever the destruction happens, whenever we end this destroying of the air, water, soil and life upon which we all depend, whether that's by economic collapse, ecological collapse.

The work of brave men and women or whatever, whenever that happens those people in the future 20 years, 50 years, 100 years from now, looking back they won't really care what our motives were. They won't care this,

they won't care that, they won't care that. All that will matter to them is do they have clean air, clean water, do they have a livable planet or not. That sort of re-frames a lot of things.

Terry: It's very important to keep those priorities clear and to come together. I think that the key here in the end, Michael, for us is forging a new way to be with one another and to be with really all people, including those who lack empathy and compassion, who seemingly are our opponents in this.

The systems view of this pattern is one in which you have to search for the resources that are already right here at hand, the unused energy that's ready to come forward. Where is that? One thing that I notice is that there is a fundamental goodness, a latent heroism even in every human heart. There's a willingness to step beyond self-interest in love and with courage and generosity that I encounter in people. There is a potential for us to get beyond our mistrust of one another and to begin to forge bonds of love and trust of a different kind.

One of the things that happened in the breakup of local community and the fact that we now belong to a networked world culture in which we don't know most people and many of them are not very much like us, so it seems that we've dropped to a lowest common denominator of the way we're related to other people.

We can only trust humanity as much as we can trust all of the humanity we can see. Now we can see so much humanity and so much of it is so different from our own experience that we drop into a place where it's as if we can't venture forth as fully from our hearts in our trusting relationships with others as we actually can.

At a more local level with the people that we actually can come together with, instead of building the trust that is possible we're kind of bumping up against the limits of what we can do on an international level. That's a big problem because there is a potential.

One of the things that I and a lot of other people are exploring right now is a mutual awakening, a higher inner subjectivity, a collective intelligence or collective wisdom that is truly possible. Some of these experiments have been done in the communities I'm associated with. I've led some programs and participated in others and explored this.

There's a way in which the private spiritual awakening that can inspire an individual doesn't really have to be private. There is the potential for a

great awakening, a spiritual renewal that is also a political movement. I don't think that we're going to see a transformational political movement that doesn't have an inspirational component, that is deeply nurturing to the human heart.

If getting politically involved means going to boring public meetings and talking angrily after having to wait your turn a long time, it's such a drag most people aren't going to do it. If we can come together with one another in a spirit of celebration and care and intimacy in which we're feeding off one another, in which the political movement becomes something of a celebration and a personal growth experience and a transformative opening into a new possibility, that's fun. That feeds us. That can be the beginning of something else.

This is one of the issues. I keep running against this. In some of my communities there are people who have had a bellyful of my rantings on about the urgency of the moment who are saying, "Hey, man, evolution has always taken place in the midst of crisis. Everybody who's ever lived has been in a life or death struggle. Every tribe who's ever lived has been in a life or death struggle. Every nation has at certain points faced life and death moments."

This moment we can see on a global level. The threats may be global but the conditions that people are under are the same. If you go to this grim, woe is me hand-wringing kind of an orientation leave me out. I don't want that. I don't want to just sit here and be told how bad things are.

I've had to engage a pretty vigorous debate with that voice that comes back with those objections. It's taught me a lot because I'm recognizing that things are too serious for us to lose our humor, that things are too sobering for us to lose our joy, that things are too real for us to lose the reality of our unreasonable hearts. It's really that that may be the key.

Just as any individual under really discouraging circumstances faces a spiritual task in finding their way past their anxiety, past their depression to say yes to life, at least in a fundamental way, that's a spiritual task. I think we're mutually facing something that is a spiritual task in which how can we inherit the incredible blessings of being alive in this time?

We have access to wisdom and information and fundamental ease and peace, those of us in western Europe and United States and Japan. We're not getting bombed or we're not under real threat. We have relative prosperity. Very few of us are wondering if we'll have enough to eat or if

we'll have a warm place to sleep. We have the potential to live such a great possibility.

If you go to a natural food store you're able to eat qualities of food that really weren't available to most kings and queens a few hundred years ago. We're under such benign circumstances with the coming together of science, with all the wisdom traditions of mankind and a conversation at a whole new level, with rational discourse. We're incredibly privileged not to live this possibility.

In other words, we have a chance to live lives that are so fully expressed creatively and so meaningful. If the measure of a human life is our opportunity to participate in something that has significance beyond our own lives then to be alive in this time during game time, when it's all hands on deck, when everything is at risk, where everything that we love is on a real level threatened.

Michael: Yes, that's the piece.

Terry: That's a threatened opportunity. That's exciting. If you take that in and you go, "Oh no, I've got to do this." That contracts the energy in a way that won't help us meet this challenge.

When we're called to greatness we're called to what's very best in us, which means a kind of, "Oh my God, I've been given an incarnation when it really matters. I'm getting to come to the plate in the bottom of the ninth with three guys on the field when we're behind by one point. Oh my God. My blood is surging. To do this I need you, I need to break past this place where I'm in my head and in love with the sound of my own voice, where I'm listening really deeply, when we're connecting, when we're coming together and becoming something that each of us alone can't be. Okay, cool." That inspires me. That's what I think our moment is about.

Michael: Yes, well I'm with you. I'm just sort of like amen corner over here. I love the idea of being up at the bottom of the ninth one run down and you're at the plate. The one thing that I wanted to say four or five minutes earlier is that I, too, have had some very engaged, very spirited conversations, one knockdown, drag-out fight with somebody in the integral community who I love dearly. We'll go unnamed.

I feel that I'm seeing an evolution of the integral movement and the integral community as a whole. It wasn't too long ago that my judgment would have been that many people within the integral community were

still very much in what I would call and what John Michael Greer and others have called the myth of perpetual progress, the idea that we don't really need to be engaged in any personal way that costs us anything because things are going to just keep getting better and better. After all, look at the last hundred years.

Of course, that's sort of the opposite end of the myth of the apocalypse, which is we don't need to be engaged or contribute in any way that costs us anything because the whole thing's going to hell in a handbasket. I think I'm seeing this evolution that, yes, all cultures, all societies, all times have had life and death struggles.

We are literally the first that is dealing with a situation where things are truly in the next 10 to 20 years irreversible on any time scale that humans have any capacity to deal with. We're talking about thousands and tens of thousands of potentially even longer than that years. That is new, that's new under the sun, we've never faced that before.

People living in the year 1,000 in Europe, if they didn't plant their fields because they believed that Jesus was coming back in the year 1,000 so who needed to plant your field in the spring of 1,000, they and their children and grandchildren may have suffered.

Terry: Or starved.

Michael: Or starved, exactly, but people 1,000 years from then didn't suffer. Whereas what we do in the next 10 to 15 years will, in fact, impact the quality of life not just for humans but for billions of other animals and life forms for thousands of years. It's that irreversible that we're talking about.

Terry: That's right, but we're probably the first generations who have had the capacity to understand and think about that and take it to heart in the way that we can. Not all of us can. This is one of the values that we get from the integral view, is an appreciation that part of our privilege is that we are thinking globally and metasystemically and in terms of seven generations ahead. The seven generations reference comes from Native Americans, so it isn't as though this never happened before.

Michael: Let's stay on that, though.

Terry: People who are desperate at a certain level don't connect to the future. They're not feeling that kind of responsibility.

Michael: Right, and I'm really glad you brought up the seventh generation because that's not unique to integral, of course. The Iroquois Confederacy and many indigenous tribal peoples lived with that sense of commitment and responsibility for at least seven generations out. Our decisions, our choices, what we do and don't do impacts the future in any event. To do so mindfully, to do so with consciousness is the only responsible thing to do.

In fact, if we act in the present in terms of what will serve us and ours without that sense of commitment to the future, we're participating in what might be called evil. This is where Thomas Jefferson spoke in a letter to James Madison, a very famous letter. He used a phrase that we don't hear much anymore, usufruct, U-S-U-F-R-U-C-T, usufruct. Usufruct is the concept that was common for most of the history of the West and the other parts of the world which is that you have to relate to the soil and the land and the life forms in a way that doesn't diminish the quality of the soil or the land or the life forms or the water for future generations.

If you are relating to the soil and the life forms and the land in a way that does diminish the quality of those commons for the future, you are sinning in the worst possible way. Yet we've lost that sense of usufruct. We have corporations come in and build huge factories, toxify the air, the water, the soil, get really wealthy. The top people get really, really wealthy. Then they move to some other country. Then that plant, which has already ruined that little section of the bioregion, just stays there. This is a violation of usufruct.

Terry: Or that mountaintop has been chopped off or that valley has been filled.

Michael: Exactly, or we've put our waste, namely carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere that will impact things for thousands of generations. Yes, some of us, a few of us got really wealthy in the process.

That's the kind of thing we're up against and that's one of the reasons why I'm so evangelistic right now about the one person who I can't get for this series, it seems, because she's just so damn busy right now. That is Naomi Klein's new book *This Changes Everything*, which I'm now telling everybody to read because I think it's the most important book I've ever read in my life in terms of the timing right now, *This Changes Everything*.

Terry: One of the things that I'm curious how you're dealing with this is that we have this gridlock in Washington, Democratic, Republican, red state, blue state divide. In terms of the issues that we're focusing on here the Republican party has pretty much gone AWOL and we really don't have

allies on that side of the aisle. Yet just weighing in in a partisan way and not finding a way to reach that other side of our brothers and sisters in the United States doesn't really work.

Yet I've been giving money right and left trying to keep the Senate from going Republican these last weeks. I am engaged and for me there's a sliding scale. That is even though I don't really like Democratic-Republican politics I work hard to help Democrats have some significant power because what happens in the short term matters a lot.

Michael: I understand, exactly.

Terry: On the other hand, I try to upgrade the discourse and to do what I can to break the two party monopoly because clearly that's unhealthy as well. In other words, you have to operate on multiple scales. Sometimes allocating your time and resources to the different important progressive causes that need our attention is tricky and doing it in a way that is effective and yet not too short-sighted, because deepening polarization is not going to get us where we want to go. We actually have to transcend it.

There are very good arguments to be made that we're not going to succeed in this huge issue of global warming. It's not merely global warming. It's sixth extinction, it's the fact that all the human institutions, international and national, are simultaneously in crisis. We're in a moment in which all of the buckwheat is hitting the fan at once and that is only going to be met according to certain analyses from the right. The fix could go to China. That argument is strong. How are you dealing with this?

Michael: I'm dealing with it with the recognition that our government, the United States government, and most of the governments in the world and their corporate masters because that's where we are now. They will not voluntarily make the kinds of changes that need to be made to the unfettered, unregulated capitalist extractive economy.

That's why most people, I interviewed Tim DeChristopher just the other day and, of course, Bill McKibben and 350.org. I'm interviewing Derrick Jensen, the whole Deep Green Resistance approach. I think Naomi Klein has nailed it.

I can't encourage you too highly to read Naomi Klein's book *This Changes Everything* because it's both hopeful and it's the most honest book in terms of climate and the converging catastrophes of the 21st century and economics and how to build a worldwide, global massive

movement from the grassroots up to force the kinds of changes that we're not going to get because the corporate overlords of the world's governments, it's not in their financial self-interest. It's just not.

How to do so as non-violently as possible. As Tim DeChristopher made the point, if you had to challenge Garry Kasparov on anything at all, set up a competition between you and him on anything at all, you wouldn't choose chess. You'd choose anything but chess.

To challenge the corporate overlords in the realm of violence, these are the most violent organizations that have ever existed. You're playing their game.

Terry: Plus the breakdown of social order.

Michael: Yes, exactly.

Terry: The first victims of it are going to be the most highly developed and sophisticated. It's the salt of the Earth, lower chakra strengths that tend to prevail under those conditions.

Michael: Exactly. What our times are now calling for are people that really haven't existed quite at this time in this way. Bill McKibben's playing an absolutely amazing role. In fact, so many of the people that I've been interviewing in this series are playing vital roles.

Two of my heroes are Katharine Hayhoe, who's an evangelical planet scientist who's really effective with evangelicals and Republicans. Bob Inglis, a Republican from South Carolina. People on the conservative end that are just absolutely heroes and heroes of mine.

What we need is I think a new Ghandi, we need a new Martin Luther King, Jr. We need people who are the mythic prophets and putting their lives on the line and moral authority on the line. That's why I love **Kathleen DuMore**.

Terry: We have to be those heroes.

Michael: We do have to be them, we have to be them.

Terry: We have to be those together.

Michael: Exactly.

Terry: The great line from **Tiknet Hahn** that the next Buddha may very well be a sanga is quite relevant here. I think maybe the next Martin Luther King, the next Ghandi, may well be a collective of us actually coming together in a way we haven't done before. I think that our collaborating and having this dialogue, you don't this series, these are good things. We're facing a koan.

One of my core teachings is to look at this crisis as a Japanese koan, an impossible riddle. The koans are questions like what is the sound of one hand clapping or show me your original face, the one you had before your parents were born.

The way this is supposed to work is that the monk contemplates this and it stops the mind, it breaks the consciousness open, it transforms the practitioner. It just can't be answered by you in the form you exist right now. You have to become a different level of yourself in order to actually meet what's before you.

The originator of Zen, a guy named Dogen, used to talk about the Genjo-koan. That's the koan that's given to you by your life, not by your roshi. We all who are alive right now have been given this massive Genjo-koan. I don't think that this Genjo-koan only functions in one way, that is you've got to have an answer and you've got to have it quick.

In other words, yes we do have to have an answer and we do have to have it quick, but who do we have to become in the process? What is it to give ourselves over to that question with such fullness, such aliveness, such commitment that we let it reformat our hard drive, we become different beings in the process of it?

Let the koan transform our consciousness and transform our behavior, transform our relationships to one another, let us become new beings. That is what is required here. I don't think that it's something that any of us can answer alone.

There's a quality of how we even are in our personality. I love you, Michael. We're good friends, you've sat in this living room with me. We've hiked and hung, you and me and Connie.

Michael: Gone skinny-dipping, even.

Terry: Yes, that's right. We're intimate friends and for us to do what's asked of us

we actually need to become better friends. We need to actually break down personality structures that prevent us from being anybody's beloved friend as fully as is needed by this crisis.

All of us alive right now have to become friends of future generations and other creatures. If we're going to be friends of anyone at the level that that asks we have to become deeply broken-hearted, open, friends even to ourselves and therefore to each other in a way that we don't know about.

This has got to do with the transformation of our whole personality and our whole being. We've got to let the koan repattern us and it's got to be done mutually. This isn't something any of us can do alone.

That inner work is necessary because somebody who's just so full of their clarity about the outer issue and are hardened into a certain kind of mode of being can accomplish a certain amount but they're not going to become that sanga that will be the next Buddha or the next Ghandi or the next Martin Luther King.

That, I think, is what's needed. That's why I'm more inspired by the inner work and its potential. You see, our only home is our ability to show up in the next new now in a way that is genuinely fresh.

Michael: It's fascinating that you're saying this exactly in the way you are because it's so resonating with my own mythic framing, some of the core insights, some of the core mythic concepts of a Christian tradition.

I believe that the second coming of Christ is not the supernatural return of a unnatural superhero on the clouds. It's a collective phenomenon that all of those who are committed to being saviors of the future participate in the second coming of Christ, that is the second coming of this divine energy that is not just willing but sacrificing for the sake of the future, sacrificing to be a blessing to the future.

When we treat the soil as divine, when we treat the forest as divine, when we treat the oceans as divine Christ will have returned in all his glory. It's a matter of relating to what's inescapably real with a sense of devotion, a sense of divine commitment.

Terry: Yes, and to do that we have to recognize that we don't know where that commitment and that capacity for self-transcendence comes from. We don't know where our clarity comes from. We don't know where our open heart comes from. We don't know where those qualities that we need to

embody come from.

That is prayer. That opening to that mystery and saying yes, please come in. Give me you, mysterious source of my insight, mysterious source of my courage, my integrity, mysterious source of my ability to serve. Put me in, coach. Please give me what it takes to take the ball and run down the field, to find the opening, to go where I'm called.

Please help me to hear your voice. Please be here with me in the way I'm being with Michael. Please be here with all of us that we can break through and become that which is needed. Let us be committed to this in an unconditional way such that no matter what happens, even if on our watch we pass some horrible point of no return that takes us to some ugly mad max destiny, let us be that which would have turned it around if it could have been turned around.

Let us go down doing the good work. Let us be that which was the blooming of the flower. Even if the flower is destined to wilt, let it blossom open just an increment, an iota more. Let us be that which is life celebrating itself. Let us take joy in that, let us be able to be inspired by that, let us be committed.

Come into us in that form and turn us together into that which is doing that unconditionally. It doesn't matter. We can't handicap the horse race and know how it's going to come out. We can be the thing that would have been the health, no matter what.

Michael: Amen. Amen, brother. You speak in my heart. Well, I'm glad you used the word mysterious several times because as I speak about what it means to live in right relationship to reality, and as you know I use the words God and reality interchangeably, I see reality having at least three faces, maybe more, maybe infinitely more. At least three things, three aspects of reality are undeniably, fundamentally, inescapably real whether we believe in them or not. They're beyond our beliefs.

That is time is real whether we believe it or not. Clearly the present moment is real. 13.8 billion years of creativity is real and if we act as if the future is not real we're going to condemn the future. Time is real whether we believe it or not.

Nature is real whether we believe it or not. Our inner nature, our outer nature, our social nature and our interpretive nature, so nature is real regardless of our beliefs.

Mystery is also real. Not just the realm that we don't know but the entire realm that we don't know that we don't know. What is it to be in a personal I-thou love relationship with time, nature and mystery, whether you think of mystery in transcendent terms or not it doesn't matter. It's still beyond anything we can know, think or imagine and always will be.

You just modeled beautifully that sort of I-thou relationship to the mysterious source of our hope, our inspiration, our very consciousness and everything else. To the degree that we attend to any of those I think we are also attending to the other two.

Terry: Thank you, I love that. I love that. Time, nature and the mystery. Beautiful, Michael.

Michael: Terry, this has just been an awesome conversation. Just two other questions that I just want to ask. One is how do you personally, now some of this obviously you've already covered. Just coming at it from another angle which is in the face of some really, really scary stuff, peak oil, climate change, overpopulation, species extinction, the growing gap between the rich and the poor and on and on, the acidification of the oceans, how do you stay inspired to be in action? What wakes you up on a daily or weekly basis to do the work you do in the face of some really scary stuff?

Terry: For me it is trusting the next new now. It is recognition that we're running downhill fast. Running downhill fast, you're falling, we're always falling. All you can do is pull the next leg out in front of you to catch the fall long enough to stick the next foot in front of you and catch the next fall. That is the new moment is always coming and it is always fresh.

It's asking something unique of you in every moment. Some moments it's asking for creativity or energy or expressiveness, sometimes it's asking you to shut up and listen. Sometimes it's asking for humility, sometimes it's asking for commitment. Who knows? Clarity, discernment, there's so many virtues.

If you come at it with a hammer thinking everything is a nail with one strategy you're deadened. For me the recognition of the total aliveness, the dau, and the fact that yes we're in crisis and somehow the mystery of being has brought me into this moment as a committed and growing heart, and the aliveness of how I am unfolding, I'm in an ecstatic relationship to the mystery. I'm amazed at the bounty of one moment of this incredible

conscious embodied existence is a grace beyond imagining.

I'm letting that wonder always be there for me. Then seeing, oh my God, everything I love is threatened. Of course I want to be here. I want to be with that in the best way I can. I can see that I need. Even though I am living my commitment in all the ways I know how to, bringing my unique capacities to bear as creatively as I can, I have to do much better.

The crisis makes the enormity of what's asked of me so apparent. That gap, you might say the half emptiness of the glass, only makes the opportunity of growth, the endlessness of that opportunity of my own growth into goodness, more alive and delicious. It just makes me kind of say, "Okay, everything is asked of me. Yes, okay mystery, thank you, I'll go for it." That is powering. That is what gets me going.

Michael: That's awesome. That's absolutely awesome. Last question, totally off the wall. I've been asking it to everybody. I haven't let anybody know ahead of time that I was going to ask it because I wanted it to be a surprise. Actually, there's two questions.

I'm going to ask one that I've never asked anybody else but Nancy Ellen Abrams who co-authored with her husband Joe Primack the book *View From the Center of the Universe*, she posed this. I've never asked this. If an alien ship came and landed on your front lawn or your front yard and out came the alien and the alien said to you, "Take me to your leader," who would you take him to?

Terry: Well, you stumped my mind with that one.

Michael: I don't know how I'd answer that myself, to be quite honest.

Terry: I have no idea how to answer it.

Michael: Okay, in that case I'm going to go on to the other question.

Terry: I think I might take him to CNN.

Michael: Oh gosh. All right, here's the question I've been asking everybody, which is if you had the opportunity to have any three people in human history, however far in the past or they could still be alive today, but any three people in human history for a dinner party where it was those three people and you, or a one-on-one where you go for a hike or have a beer or a glass of wine or a meal with any three people in human history, who would you

choose and why would you choose those three people?

Terry: Whoa. Well, it's interesting, Michael. I have a feeling that I'm going to have that dinner with the right people and they're going to be alive right now. The unique challenges of now aren't going to be solved with the heroism that transformed the world at a time when it was less complex than it is now.

I would want the heart and the vision of Jesus Christ, the sacrificial, transcendent goodness. I would want to discourse with the incredible wisdom and peace of Buddha. I would want to feel the kind of social commitment and transformative force that transformed the world with Martin Luther King. I'd like the balls and power and fucking gonads of Genghis fucking Khan. I'd want to talk with a lot of energies from the past in a way.

I think the conversation is now. I think the conversation is in a moment. I am actually going to take on board from your asking me this question a commitment to become the person who belongs in that conversation with the other people who are belonging in that conversation because we need to have that conversation.

Michael: Amen. Wow. Great response. Anything else you'd like to say on this topic, *The Future Is Calling Us To Greatness*? Then where can we go? Where can somebody who just is fired up by this conversation, who wants to go more deeply into your work, where would you send them?

Terry: Into my work, well I'd send them to my website, TerryPatten.com. I'd ask them to get on my mailing list and find out about what I'm doing locally. There is one other thing I want to say. I really hope people will. I'm balls on here and I hope you'll check in. I think my work can be catalytic for people who respond to how I've spoken.

You're white hot, dude. This has been a blast having this conversation with you. I just want to thank you. My day is fuller for having had this conversation. You've been right here with me in a beautiful way and you were great before but something's coming alive through this process that's beautiful, brother. I'm really happy to see you in this shape.

Michael: Thank you, thank you. Yes, it has been the most incredible honor to have these amazing conversations with so many people who I consider heroes and sheroes of future generations and amazing colleagues who I have so much to learn from. It's somewhat different than the other conversations

series that I've had before where like with the *Evolution of Christianity* one I was engaged as much as they were. We were sort of spiraling each other. A little bit of that has been happening in this series.

Terry: We've had some of that.

Michael: Yes, absolutely. Just the listening, just the listening, the wisdom and the ideas and the passion and the heart of these amazing 50 people, or 52 it'll look like when it's finally done, is just I've never been engaged in any project that has more filled me with realistic hope and a sense of solidarity that we are participating in something hugely fucking important.

What a privilege it is to work with this caliber of people. There's I'm sure hundreds of others, if not thousands of others, that are just as amazing as these 50. Thank you for seeing that and also for just being who you are in this conversation and what you're doing in the world, man. I love what you're doing in the world. When I think of people in the integral community who have the greenest of hearts you're at the top of the list and I deeply honor you around that.

Terry: Thank you so much, Michael.

Michael: All right, well until we get a chance to take a walk in the redwoods or go skinny-dipping again, I love you, brother.

Terry: Absolutely. Love you, too. This has been a total blast.

Michael: Yes.