

(This is a draft English translation of the original Japanese document.)

Chapter 4 The characteristics of a society based on “Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence“

(1) A longing for coexistence

In a nutshell, I would say the answer is “Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence”. That is to say, I think success for 21st-century Japanese depends on the extent to which we can accomplish “Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence”.

Here, coexistence is the Japanese translation for the English word collaboration and is often used along with the word teamwork. Generally speaking, teamwork refers to cooperating within an organization, whereas collaboration refers to cooperating across organizational boundaries. So, when one says coexistence in general, it means cooperating with all other individuals and organizations, such as one’s neighbors, neighboring towns, neighboring companies, and neighboring countries; one’s next and previous generations; the nature spreading outside oneself; and one’s seniors and juniors.

Relating to the feelings of the people, who are building on the hard times of the Heisei era and trying to pioneer the future through LOHAS, I imagine that their desires would be to live together with all things. That is, up to the 20th century, one’s self was unduly distinguished from the outer world. At the same time, more and more communities of all sorts, e.g., homes, businesses, regions, and countries, were broken up and the people grew more and more lonely. And the lonely individuals are even encouraged to fight with each other in the modern age. The stress imposed on the Earth by that fight threatens to undermine the very foundations of life. That’s the situation we are currently in.

(2) Coexistence with all kinds of life

A pendulum that has swung to one extreme will always swing back. Now, the Japanese are presumably feeling anew that they wish to lay aside their grudges up to the 20th century and live in coordination with all kinds of life, transcending species, space, and time. That is, with all individuals, all ethnic groups, all nations, all of nature, all of Earth; with all the people that lived in the past and all the people that will live after they die; and with all animals and plants. They are probably beginning to hold an earnest conviction that that’s what they find most pleasant, healthiest, and also best for preserving a sustainable Earth.

In other words, the coexistence that the people are seeking now is not confined to keeping peace with neighbors. It means to live together with all kinds of life, including other nations and ethnic groups as well as the plants and animals on Earth. Recycling, renovation, and emphasis on tradition mean to live together with those that lived in the past. Handing down a

sustainable global environment means to live with those that are yet to be born. Aren't the people indeed starting to seek to live together with all kinds of life, transcending species, space, and time? That's the kind of coexistence I am talking about when I refer to "Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence".

(3) Shift in outlook on life and death

And the most characteristic change in the people's values that is observed in connection with LOHAS seems to be the shift in the outlook on life and death.

Since olden days, it is said that many people in Japan believe in afterlife and/or reincarnation. But in the 20th-century era of modernization, such a traditional and religious way of thinking ebbed and a secular, ephemeral view of life and death, with a life-on-the-earth-is-all-that-matters attitude, became common in Japan as well. Accordingly, as only life between birth and death mattered, tradition and history were apparently disregarded and irresponsible attitudes toward the future became more conspicuous. It is very difficult to stop people from acting self-righteously, selfishly and irresponsibly without limit, if they think that everything starts from the moment of birth and ends at the moment of death. If the situation becomes such that only fear could restrain peoples' actions, the world will plunge into turmoil and the society itself will head for collapse.

However, people leading their lives based on LOHAS seem to detach themselves from the self-righteous, secular, ephemeral outlook on life and death quite naturally, without believing in any one particular religion. They appear to sense other lives transcending species, space, and time as well as feel, with their bodies, the pleasure and joy of living together with those lives. The people seem to be gradually departing from the modern view of life and death, and regressing to the traditional view of life and death, namely that which does not regard afterlife or reincarnation with discomfort, as evidenced by the following examples: many episodes of near-death experiences become topics of seminars on spirituality; people closely observe plant growth or animal life with their own eyes; cases are introduced, one after another, in which intractable diseases are cured without modern medical treatment; many instances are witnessed in which mentally-depressed persons are healed by getting in touch with the world of LOHAS.

(4) Relativization of reason

Simultaneously, it is very characteristic that the word "why" is gradually being disused by people. In science, generally, emphasis is placed on reproducibility and logicalness; conclusions are drawn by accumulating visible evidence. While Japan is dubbed the world's number-one manufacturing superpower, today its people's interest in science is gradually

waning. What is more, even a distrust of science is spreading among the people.

Interestingly, that does not mean that people are escaping from science or fearing it out of ignorance. Rather, people are feeling that way, after relating their own experiences and intuition to what those at the leading edge of science are telling them. The people are listening to professionals in science, who are confronted by the limits of science, talking very sincerely and earnestly about the need to transcend the framework of science. Those professionals include competent doctors, physicists, economists, agriculturists, and others. That is, those at the leading edge of science are beginning to tell genuinely that things could no longer be fully understood by reason alone; that there are just too many “whys” in the world that could not be answered; and that science by itself could never fully explain the whole world. I think this has been a major driving force in relativizing the reason of people in Japan. Also, the regression from a modern outlook on life and death to a traditional one is basically a phenomenon caused by the relativization of reason.

(5) Feeling, rather than believing

Accordingly, when a person leading a Lifestyle Of Health And Sustainability communicates his/her thought to others, that person generally would not persuade them by thoroughly giving a scientific and rational explanation. Rather, the person generally would introduce them to the first step, but leave it up to them to feel and judge by themselves whether that thought is a good or bad idea. Selection and choice based on one’s own sensibility, which naturally discerns good and bad, seems to be becoming the mode of behavior of the public in general, rather than persuasion of oneself or others through a particular belief based on logic, interests, or calculation.

Of course, people are coping very rationally and cautiously with matters that are susceptible to falsity or exaggeration, such as quality labels of organic products or efficacy of dietary supplements. But that only means that they are judging whether a product fits LOHAS or not. When people make a choice among high-quality ‘LOHAS’ products, they seem to do so, without hesitation, based on their own sensibility and the deflection of their feeling of like or dislike.

Placing more value on feeling than believing; that implies a principle of people’s behavior that was not ‘recommended’ so much in the 20th century. At the same time, with respect to coexistence, it would basically be of utmost importance that a person can feel with one’s own senses that he/she is indeed living in coexistence.

(6) The importance of enjoying

Above all, a characteristic of a person leading a Lifestyle Of Health And Sustainability is

the strong emphasis on enjoying anything, whatever that happens to be. In recent years, both in the world of sports and business, it is becoming empirically clear that selecting the survivor of the fittest through competition is not an effective way to [produce a person who can] win an extremely fierce race. That is, at the extreme of fierce competition, one can never win the race unless one performs at a level so high that no ordinary person, no matter how highly-trained, could ever exceed. That is the reality that is emerging.

Then, how do we [produce a person who could] win such a race? From the very start, you choose, from among many people, an individual that is very talented in the area concerned. And you provide that individual with training that is tailored to him/her, exercising wisdom so that the training, however grueling it may be, becomes enjoyable. Just as really delicious vegetable or fruit bear ineffably sweet flavor, the highest performance is accomplished by developing an individual's full potential through applying appropriate stimuli in a vigorous and fun environment.

Conversely, training becomes unenjoyable when it is forced from above or when it merely tries to cast an individual into a mold. Such training tends to daunt the person being trained and seldom leads to the blossoming of his/her potentials.

When does one feel fun, delighted or satisfied from the heart? When one actually senses that one's own horizon has been broadened or that a new dimension of one's own potential has blossomed. Such an experience of success becomes a strong driving force that leads a person on to the next success.

(7) Blossoming of one's potentials

It is highly interesting that the approach to [produce an individual who could] win the rat race observed at the end of the 20th century is not to provide infinitely rigorous training [to the individual] but to arrange an environment wherein the individual feels fun, apply appropriate stimuli, and develop the individual's potential to its maximum. That must mean that each and every person has a potentiality that is to be put to use in mutually different areas.

Accordingly, I think a common approach to education in the 21st century would be to allow an individual to go through trial and error in various areas at an early age; carefully judge and decide the areas in which the individual's potentials are likely to blossom; provide appropriate stimuli once the direction becomes apparent; let the individual gain experience of success without damaging the sense of fun; and consequently realize the individual's full potential. This approach to education is clearly different from the mass-production-style of education in the 20th century. I expect education to be one of the areas whose state would differ the most in the 21st century compared to the 20th.

(8) Why is LOHAS fun?

When we look at people leading Lifestyles Of Health And Sustainability, we find that each one of them has his/her own area of specialty, his/her favorite area, and/or area which he/she finds fun. Therein they are increasingly cultivating their expertise, acquiring experience, and evolving their lifestyles. The areas that fall into the scope of LOHAS have a boundless expanse. As such, in LOHAS, you need not compete with others for success in any way. Each and every one can experience success in one's own Lifestyle Of Health And Sustainability. In other words, a Lifestyle Of Health And Sustainability differs in its specific form for each and every person. Accordingly, in LOHAS, success consists not in comparing yourself with others but in your own perception of what success is.

On the other hand, while Lifestyles Of Health And Sustainability may vary widely between individuals, they can generate very large synergies through exchange of information, mutual assistance, interactive dialogue on one another's success, and collaboration. That is, LOHAS has the characteristics as described above in terms of values. One can readily become friends with another who has a shared set of values. And when people who share the same values cooperate to reach a common goal, a synergetic effect is created, as if one plus one made three. This synergetic effect is truly the result of the full realization of one another's potential through living in coexistence. Not only can one enjoy a Lifestyle Of Health And Sustainability alone, but one can also have greater success and fun through the synergetic effect created by living in coexistence with others. You can sense rather easily how fun co-existence — a principle underlying LOHAS — is. That is another characteristic of LOHAS.

(9) LOHAS enables people to take pride in themselves

Furthermore, why are people leading a Lifestyle Of Health And Sustainability serene? And why do they have a bright disposition toward symbiosis (coexistence)? The reason of course may be the positive effect brought about by the innate quality of yoga, organic vegetables, etc. But, I think another greatly contributing factor may be the praise one receives from others for one's unique lifestyle, one's own version of LOHAS of one's own choosing and establishing, a lifestyle in which one's personality and talent are amply expressed. In LOHAS, a small flower is not inferior to a big one. Nor is an item with a low price looked down upon by one with a high price. The very fact that each and every person is enjoying life, realizing his/her unique talent while meeting the conditions of health and sustainability, becomes the object of people's appreciation and praise.

In other words, the choices available for the way of life in LOHAS are infinite. As such,

as long as one enjoys walking on the path one has chosen, that person is certain to be full of vigor and be naturally praised by others, whatever that choice may be. That is why people leading a Lifestyle Of Health And Sustainability can take pride in themselves. In other words, one receives praise even if one does something different from others, no, BECAUSE one does something different from others. One can take pride in oneself even if one does something different from others, no, BECAUSE one does something different from others.

(10) Difference is what matters

Thus, here emerges a key characteristic of LOHAS and the “Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence“ society extending therefrom: difference is strength.

Under conventional 20th century values, being different from others was not highly appreciated. As can be seen without even citing the example of quality control in factories, as a general rule, things that were different from others were rejected as heterogeneous. We were told that homogeneity as a group was the origin of strength. Indeed, in the 20th century, people’s goals both at work and in life were concentrated in a very narrow area. I think many people’s interests were focused on who gets the limited number of seats (posts) or who gets to climb the ladder to the top of the hierarchical pyramid. In other words, I believe difference meant weakness under 20th-century values.

However, as described above, in the “Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence “ society, difference is the key to distinguish oneself from others in the first place. It is the very expression of one’s feelings, one’s intention, and one’s characteristics. Precisely because we differ with one another, we can live in coexistence, feeling reassured, without having to participate in a scramble. At the same time, living in coexistence while making the most of our diversity leads to the fulfillment of each individual’s potentiality and a greater sense of joy.

(11) Difference is the source of strength

According to the theory of evolution, species that survive the evolutionary process are those which are adaptable to change, not those which are strong. In my opinion, when diverse individuals flourish in their respective spots, adapting flexibly to their respective environments, therein living in co-existence with one another and realizing their potentials, it brings about stability to the entire society as one ecosystem.

Admittedly, when the entire society is organized toward one goal in a streamlined way, it may be convenient and efficient in going about one’s daily business and life today. However, that becomes a major cause of decline and crisis in the future, when the environment and the way of the world changes for some reason.

If people are to seek infinite stability in a society, then each day must be complete. In my view, that can be achieved only when diverse individuals act according to their respective environments and therein live in coexistence. In other words, intrinsically, being different from one other should be a strength not a weakness.

At the same time, when diverse individuals share common values and live in coexistence, it generates a synergistic effect, which educes those individuals' potentials, thereby upgrading the level of society and augmenting the society as a whole. Studying history and tradition, as well as learning masterful skills from the old and knowledgeable, generates a synergy by coexisting with the past. Recycling waste, as well as protecting the natural ecosystem, generates a synergy by coexisting with the future.

In a society based on "Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence", the very fact that one is different becomes a strength and enables one to take pride in oneself.

(12) Restoration of the sense of right and wrong

Furthermore, in *Lifestyles Of Health And Sustainability*, the sense of right and wrong is definitely respected. The definition of the term LOHAS stipulates in the first place that health and sustainability are right. This apparently enables people to have a sense of right and wrong without much hesitation.

In general, in 20th-century common sense, all kinds of values, as well as the criteria for discerning right and wrong, became relative (*as opposed to absolute*). The sense of right and wrong became less esteemed at work and in life. You only had to win a lawsuit, to have your deeds justified and deemed right. Such was the widespread trend that, in my opinion, people have consequently lost the criteria to judge confidently what should and should not be done.

A look at the world slightly from a distance would show the inexorable existence of a distinction between deeds/thoughts that are right and wrong, albeit with some gray area in the middle. A party, whose acts may not be illegal but make an extremely unfavorable impression on the other party, will naturally be excluded from *Lifestyles Of Health And Sustainability*, by losing the trust of the other party permanently. Such acts may include preparing a contract written in illegibly small letters and subsequently accusing the other party of breach of contract; or mixing an undesirable ingredient into a product under the cover of terminology that is incomprehensible to the consumer.

LOHAS is grounded on the view that humans are inherently good, a view that basically places trust on the other party. As such, a wrongdoer is punished through expulsion from the LOHAS network, to which a betrayer can never return. Therefore people will naturally look for a counterpart whom they can trust; eventually, coexistence will be founded on trust, not negotiations or law. In the foundation of that trust lies the rigorous sense of right and wrong,

as well as the people's desire to continuously seek what is good.

(13) Boundless expanse of the industry base

Moreover, in terms of the industry base that supplies the products underlying LOHAS, it is marked by its boundless expanse. To repeat, LOHAS stands for Lifestyles of Health And Sustainability. As such, it has an infinite range of applications. Every industry has the potentiality to play an active role in the field of LOHAS.

The thing is, if one admits and maintains that health and sustainability is right, and has the intent and ability to coexist with other people seeking LOHAS, then anyone can have a network with people leading Lifestyles Of Health And Sustainability. The articles that the people leading Lifestyles Of Health And Sustainability demand are those that are genuine, that are good, and that have distinctive personalities, not those that feature only cheapness, expensiveness, famousness, or large sales volumes. Ultimately, one's sense of like and dislike, as well as one's feelings are the key. It is a world where one's personality is respected; and one's personality decides the customers with which one's business will deal with.

Accordingly, organizations that fit in well with a LOHAS-based society tend to be medium-sized or small or tiny companies as well as sole proprietorships. In addition, a LOHAS-based society is a place wherein nonprofit and voluntary organizations can operate admirably as well. This means that the industrial structure, which supports LOHAS and the society based on "Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence" extending therefrom, would consist of very unique companies providing high quality, operating in a finely-meshed network, encompassing every field whether domestic or international. In my view, that is what the industry structure would eventually look like when it falls into place.

In such a world, it is inconceivable that a single brand will overwhelm others. You would not be able to dominate the market by simply injecting a large sum of capital. Always in shortage would be unique ideas, skilled artisans, and experienced personnel with distinctive personality. I envisage that the industry structure would be like that.

(14) Economics rewritten

I think another area that is going to change significantly is modern economics. If we open the history books on economics, we might be able to find versions of economics that differ from present-day economics, which is tunnel-visioned and obsessed with efficiency. Unfortunately, however, the economics most people come in touch with today is probably either economics based on free competition and efficiency, or economics that advocates already-collapsed socialism and/or policies of massively debt-ridden governments.

Why did the 20th-century world reach an impasse? I think it may safely be said that the

biggest reason is because economics of the 20th-century reached an impasse. When we get closer to the core of it, the reason is because 20th-century economics was defective or failed to evolve into the 21st century.

What was wrong with 20th-century economics? I think its greatest flaw was that its perspective of the economy was too narrow. In my opinion, economics of the 21st century will have the notion of “blessings of nature (gift from nature)”, as well as the sense of right and wrong, added to 20th-century economics.

(15) How is value created?

20th-century economics states that value is created through labor. But is that true? When you live a Lifestyle of Health And Sustainability, you will readily understand that an overwhelming portion of value is created, in the first place, through a unilateral gift from nature. We may consider that the value is then elevated to its highest level when man takes thorough care of that blessing of nature.

You can see this when you observe how agricultural crops grow. To begin with, it is nature that generates and nurtures the plants. Man, however smart it may become, cannot create a single leaf of greens. A plant that sprouts from a plowed field is a unilateral gift for us from nature. But at the same time, if you leave a plant growing naturally as it is, you will not by any means be able to harvest a savory crop. Only when man takes care of the plant with devotion can we reap it as good crop.

The same could be said about the production of industrial goods in a factory. It seems you have only to possess the manufacturing machinery and tools, and operate them according to a manual, in order to produce industrial goods. However, the true added value of an industrial product is determined by how devotedly you improve and how elaborately you maintain the manufacturing equipment, and how well you operate the tools and machinery. It is absolutely not possible to produce excellent products by simply placing machinery and tools side by side. The quality and value of an industrial product is ultimately determined by how devotedly man cares for the factory.

The same applies to education. Man has the capacity to grow by himself owing to the forces of nature. But why then has man always been keen on education from ancient times? That's because a naturally-growing man develops into a more brilliant person through others' devoted teaching and guidance.

Thus, in daily life and work, we can acknowledge that the value of all things is earned by our devotedly taking care of the unilateral gift from nature.

(16) From calculation of self-interest to the sense of right and wrong

In addition, the sense of right and wrong explicitly presents itself in LOHAS.

The sense of right or wrong is not explicitly taken up in contemporary economics, which assumes that people always act on self-interests and the calculation of gains and losses. Contemporary economics preaches that it is a wonderful thing for an individual to always maximize, within budgetary limitations, his/her so-called utility, or his/her desire that is presumed to be clearly quantifiable. As such, it is a far cry from “knowing contentment”. Also, contemporary economics implies that businesses are warehouse-like places, wherein various resources are simply brought together and laid out; therein squat infinitely greedy business managers, who care only about their own profits and losses. It states that the capacity to boldly slash or reinforce plant equipment or manpower, with the minimum amount of cost and time spent, constitutes competitiveness.

But can that be true? Conversely, didn't the epidemic of such economics, which ignores the sense of morality and cares only about calculation of self-interests, force 20th-century society into collapse? Why does only destruction run rampant in society, in the name of reform? The answer might be that we tried to judge everything in this world solely by calculations of self-interest, rejecting what slight sense of morality that remained.

In LOHAS and the “Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence” society that extends therefrom, the sense of right and wrong, not calculation of self-interests, becomes the foremost constraint on people's economic activities. Moreover, in the “Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence” society, a network [of individuals] with long-term relationships becomes the world's basic structure. This means that gains and losses cannot be judged by a single transaction alone at this point in time, but rather should be calculated on the basis of past, present, and future inclusively. Accordingly, gains and losses in the “Great Collaboration = Magnificent Coexistence” society will end up to be the exchange of costs that enables mutual survival and co-existence.