

It's Past Time to Return to the Principled Life of the Past



By Sidney Secular

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In consideration of the title of this article, I strongly suggest that now would also be a good time to once again indulge in some satisfying activities of the past, such as collecting historical memorabilia as a means of getting one's mind off the foibles and problems of the present. For we seek too much succor in so-called success and progress while our foundations are crumbling beneath us. Earlier generations thrived on a foundation of morality, ethics, community and responsibility and there was a time when most people's lives were not centered around the mere accumulation of "things" as well as achieving a higher social status, keeping up appearances and/or virtue signaling. Instead, striving for decency, dignity, and integrity were considered both sufficient and fulfilling as life's callings. One lived by the examples set by our forebears. We didn't have to compete with our neighbors in order to feel worthy. We didn't believe that love depended on externals such as our performance in the society; that is, putting on a certain persona, or props.

We started out on life's journey doing simple things that built character and became almost rites of passage – such as delivering newspapers at dawn, mowing lawns, milking cows,

helping mother at home, joining the Boy Scouts and other activities known and understood as “good” and worthwhile. Thus, the individual acquired a reputation as a good boy or girl, a reputation that followed that person for the rest of his or her life barring unforeseen calamities. People survived the privations of The Great Depression and World War II and, in doing so, learned to be grateful for the “little things.” Family and faith held one up during vicissitudes and together with the family and the culture, these were the pillars of a meaningful existence.

Then over what must be seen as a very sudden period of time – the latter half of the 20th century – we, as a People, lost our way. All that had meaning in life for centuries before was replaced by the mundane and the materialistic. Ordinary human contentment required more of what people began to consider “important” and were striving for – more education (but not more knowledge), more “achievement” even when that which was achieved was nonsense, or worse, wicked! More toys and useless baubles, recognition for useless “achievements,” and, of course, more money from higher salaries even when what was paid for was itself meaningless. People were uprooted and families shattered. Individuals became lonely, suffering a lost sense of purpose, and drifting without any vision or goal. We became anxious and easily overwhelmed, spiritually unanchored and personally unhinged. Ordinary people lost all motivation as the world became unsettled and chaotic. All the comforts were demanded but even when those demands were met, that comfort appeared without purpose, leading not to satisfaction but, rather, to spiritual and sometimes social paralysis.

The comforts of human accomplishment having failed, addiction became the primary new affliction – addiction to substances, distraction, validation, stimulation and attention. Rogues became role models. “Influencers” and actors living soap opera lives were the new acts to follow. Vulgarly and outrage

became the new rage. The reds and blues coalesced into separate communities and faced each other along a “continental divide” of mindless slogans and misunderstood ideologies. Pit-bull politicians, no longer held to the standards of decent society, spouted polemics and promoted polarization. People began walking around in a zombie state of near-perpetual anger and anxiety. The Internet and social media erased reputations with a click. Wikipedia became a crutch and an authoritative source despite lacking any of the formerly demanded scholastic ability and knowledge; that is, it suffered input from amateurs that was then presented as accurate. Social platforms engaged in deplatforming and cruel fictions without even the call for accuracy or decency.

The West began an intentional mass immigration from the Third World to reshape the West, country by country, not gently or thoughtfully, but chaotically. Millions of people unable to assimilate into our culture arrived knowing only that they were free to ignore the culture they infected, but rather, were given the right by the governments of those cultures to destroy the existing social “glue” and gum up the works. Entire nations are being forced to endure tensions and tragedies just to mollify the culture mulchers and lefty loons while no one is permitted to object lest they be accused of xenophobia or Islamophobia. Merely questioning, never mind analyzing the prescribed narrative is treated as a moral crime while pointing out the perpetual plunder, pillage and profiteering by our supposed “allies” – the Israelis – is deemed demonic.

We must address these realities because they are not just political, but psychological, cultural, and spiritual. A society in perpetual turmoil and conflict cannot nurture happiness. Indeed, it cannot survive! Identity politics, wacky wokeism, and Critical Race Theory didn’t appear in a vacuum. They came – or rather, were *brought* into the society successfully because that society was already weakened by

diversity and secularism, confused and drifting and because the older generations did not speak up! Rather they listened to the “experts” (!) and became their children’s “friends” rather than their parents; they failed to teach (discipline) and thus failed the children who needed that discipline. And for this failure, these children paid the terrible price of having to grow up without the necessary skills demanded of adult life. We see it today in thirty-year-olds still living in their parents’ basements! But what happens when those parents are no longer there to support what should be adult human beings?

The “greatest generation” failed to get a grip and grasp the situation. In the present failed culture, people forfeit their jobs for failing to follow the crowd. Whites are perpetually punished and placed beyond the pale because of their pale skins and a false history that makes this race responsible for all the wrongs of humanity. In the past, people were smart enough not to buy into that fable; today, even the whites believe it. Women are told they are oppressed even when they rule the roost and have more freedom than ever. However, because that freedom has destroyed what made women truly happy, this “victory” has produced nothing but cultural chaos. The society has become frenzied! Emotion replaces reason, narrow but desired narratives replace facts and fragility replaces resilience. Growth – emotional, intellectual and even spiritual – cannot occur when questioning is forbidden, discomfort avoided, and the science is “settled” until it is replaced in the next pogrom. How can a citizen who is told that his culture is both toxic and evil accept with a good conscience that he is part of that culture and show appreciation for its historical accomplishments?

There was a time when our worth wasn’t measured by how many “likes” one collected on a meaningless social platform or how many letters followed one’s name. Before all of that, first and foremost, being a good person was essential to one’s

social status. Once upon a time, people were judged by how much that person contributed to his family, his faith and his community. And in a working culture such as was found in the West, usually one breadwinner could easily provide enough food for his table. As well, there was enough “free time” to share with one’s children and there was no overwhelming desire to withdraw into a false world of screens and images, a world that now takes hours out of our lives each day as we interact with them. We didn’t crave constant distractions or one thousand TV channels and numbing Netflix flicks to make life worth living. When people don’t know who they are, they look to peers, influencers, ideologies, and identities to create a persona.

When we are adrift, we go with the flow! Without a spiritual or personal “anchor,” we go with whatever voice is the loudest, whatever message is trending and whatever belief offers us a rudimentary sense of belonging – usually the one with the least amount of introspection because we still have our humanity, however damaged it has become. Some drift into entitlement because they have been taught it is their due; no one has taught them gratitude. Others drift into despair because no one taught them resilience or shown them that they have it within themselves to achieve anything. Many drift into outrage because no one has taught them humility and to be aware of the rights of other people. “Me, myself and I” has become the 21st Century’s Unholy Trinity! People are easily placed into categories – oppressor and oppressed, privileged and disadvantaged, good and evil. Nuance is neglected or negated. Dialog disappears. All discourse becomes a matter of accusation and denial. In all this chaos and calamitous confusion, America has lost something precious – a shared narrative that formed the bricks and mortar that built and held together our foundation as a nation.

At the end of this long road of distrust, mistrust and factionalist, there now is AI! This “new technology” is the

natural, or rather *unnatural* end result of all this cultural illness, the ultimate representation of artificiality as we seek to discard our humanity for what many perceive as “something better” – that is, the “trans-human.” For a few moments more in time we will still be able to know what’s real. After that short grace period passes, we won’t be able to trust our senses or brains to figure out what’s real and what isn’t. True happiness will then become even more elusive because human joy is a product of human engagement, not mindless automation. True meaning and happiness grow out of the process of living on your own terms, not having life streamlined or pre-digested for you.

Some simple action steps you can take to turn the tide, or at stop from drowning in the swirling currents around you include:

1. At least once a day, for several minutes, sit somewhere quietly, no phone, no music, or conversation.
2. Perform one act of quiet service each week – it need not be dramatic but can include such things as calling someone who is lonely, helping a neighbor, buying a meal for a person in need, or offering your time to help someone who is overwhelmed with tasks that have to be performed.
3. Reach out to someone who you know will lift your spirits.
4. Throughout the day, pause and ask yourself: “Is this feeling really mine, or is it something i absorbed?”
5. Each evening, think of something that lifted your life or supported you that day such as your mobility, your senses, your friendships, your body’s ability to heal, the kindness of a stranger, or even getting some sun upon your face. Happiness will grow whenever gratitude is watered.

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