

GOING UPSTREAM

The problems generated by a paradigm cannot be solved within that paradigm. It does not matter how much money you spend or how hard you try. Witness current American society. Spending more on medical care does not create a healthier population, building more prisons does not reduce crime, funding larger welfare programs does not make families more independent, spending more money on colleges and universities does not result in more literate graduates, and finally building more churches has not resulted in a more spiritual America. What's wrong? The paradigm is wrong! It is based on faulty reasoning. Most societal problems cannot be fixed. We intervene too far downstream to make a real difference. Often by the time it reaches the emergency room or the court, it is too late and we can do too little. We must go upstream to the source of our problems if we are to succeed.

The question is not about trying to fix what is broken. Rather we must go upstream and attempt to design out the pathology. How much disease, crime, ignorance, poverty, and sin cannot be designed out of a human population? We don't know. We have never tried. I, for one, am not interested in adapting to the amount of crime in American society, are you?

How much disease can be designed out of a population? About 90% of the incidents in many large city emergency rooms are the result of poor lifestyle choices. At least in theory, a great deal of pathology is preventable. The question is simple, do we continue to build larger emergency rooms or do we reduce some of the need for them?

It is not possible to be healthy if you are raised in an unhealthy environment. Two major health services of the future are human potentiation and habitat redesign. If a quality is not present in a person's early environment, it is not likely to appear in the person. I now use the same descriptors for human habitats that I used to use as references to people. If I want a loving person, I must provide a loving habitat early in the person's life. If I want a compassionate person, they must come from a compassionate environment. If I want an innovative person, I must surround them with an innovative environment. If I want a spiritual person, I must design a spiritual environment etc. By going upstream, we can design desirable qualities into the person. This is much better than trying to fix them later, downstream.