




PARADIGM SHIFT

*I am looking for a lot of men who have
infinite capacity to not know what can't be done.*


HENRY FORD



A paradigm is like a theory, but a little different. A theory is an idea that sets out to explain how something works, like Darwin’s theory of evolution. It is meant to be tested, proved or disproved, supported or challenged by experiment and reflection. A paradigm, on the other hand, is a set of implicit assumptions that are not meant to be tested; in fact, they are essentially unconscious. They are part of our modus operandi as individuals, as scientists, or as a society.

Ever make Christmas cookies using a cookie cutter? No matter what the ingredients, they all come out of the oven looking pretty much the same.

—WILL



A paradigm is never called into question because nobody thinks about it. It’s like having the proverbial rose-colored glasses on *all the time*; we see everything through those glasses. That’s the reality we inhabit. All our perceptions come through that framework, and within that system are all the things we take for granted. We never question them—or even become aware of them—until we run into a wall and the rose-colored glasses are shattered, and suddenly the world looks different.

Paradigms and Belief Systems

Another way to understand a paradigm is as a belief system. If you have ever tried to define what your belief system is, what you value and believe, you know how hard it is. Maybe some of

the issues you've thought about consciously aren't so difficult—you may believe in the importance of family, friendship, exercise, a healthy diet; you may have reason to believe your political affiliation is the sensible one, and so on. But there are dozens, maybe hundreds of unconscious, unexamined beliefs that run your life from the subterranean levels of shadowy awareness—beliefs about your worthiness and competence, for example, or whether people can be trusted or not—that were deposited in childhood and continue to determine how you relate to the world.

A paradigm is like the unconscious belief system of a culture. We live and breathe these beliefs, and we think and interact according to them.

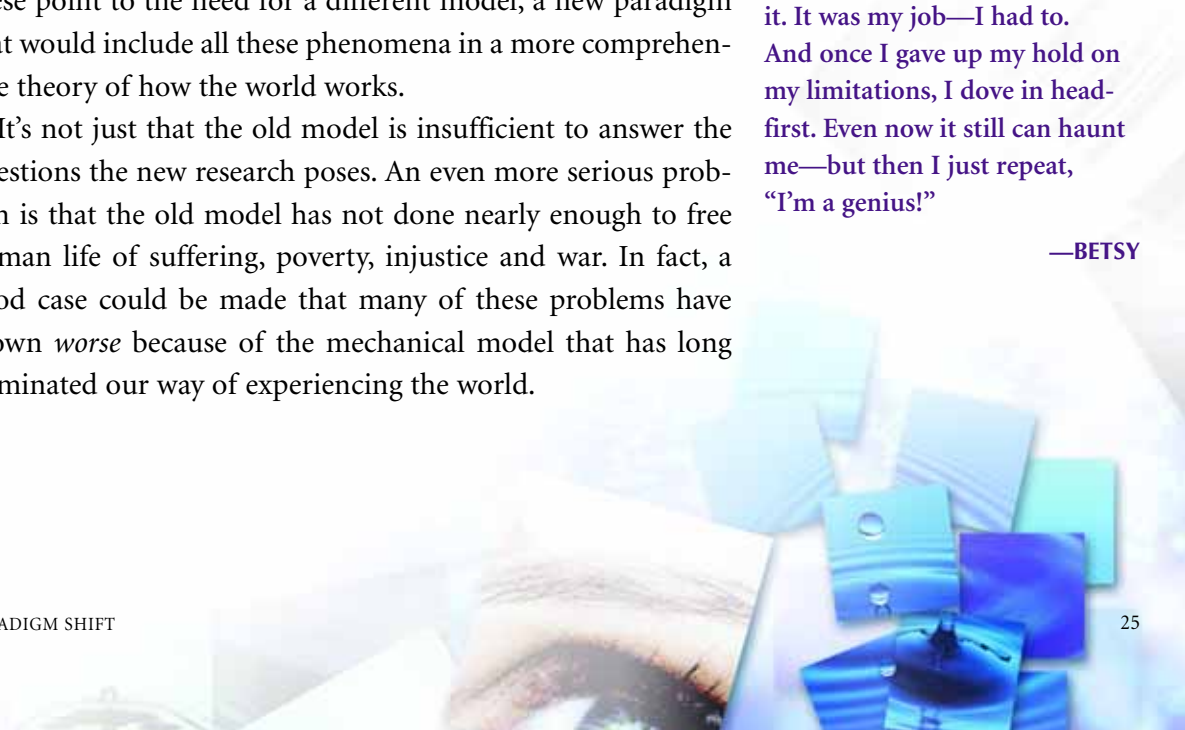
The Old Scientific Paradigm Isn't Working

Practically every day, new scientific information is appearing that cannot be explained using the classical Newtonian model. Relativity theory, quantum mechanics, the influence of thoughts and emotions on our bodies, so-called “anomalies” like ESP, mental healing, remote viewing, people serving as mediums and channels, near-death and out-of-body experiences—all these point to the need for a different model, a new paradigm that would include all these phenomena in a more comprehensive theory of how the world works.

It's not just that the old model is insufficient to answer the questions the new research poses. An even more serious problem is that the old model has not done nearly enough to free human life of suffering, poverty, injustice and war. In fact, a good case could be made that many of these problems have grown *worse* because of the mechanical model that has long dominated our way of experiencing the world.

In beginning to understand which paradigms govern my life, I can start to see how I have created the situations in my life. Doing this movie and writing this book have broken up a huge unconscious paradigm of mine, the one that made me think, “I'm not that smart!” I never thought of myself as a person who could understand any of these concepts. Sure, I was savvy and crafty and could hustle my way around in the world and become successful. But I was not “book smart.” My first week on this film, Will and Mark handed me about twenty books and said, “Start reading, because you're going to call these scientists and convince them to be in our film.” It took a while for me to stop telling myself I couldn't do it. It was my job—I had to. And once I gave up my hold on my limitations, I dove in head-first. Even now it still can haunt me—but then I just repeat, “I'm a genius!”

—BETSY



Repercussions of the Newtonian Paradigm

Paradigm shifts also occur on a human scale. It can be as simple as suddenly waking up and realizing something about ourselves that's always been there; we just never realized it before. For example, I discovered recently one of the reasons for my voracious appetite for knowledge. Not only was it born out of curiosity, but also a great deal of fear. I remember as a child being afraid of many things. Maybe as a way to combat my feelings of insecurity and uncertainty, I decided to learn as much about things as I could to try to build a “predictable” model of reality. This way I thought I could foresee any eventuality that might occur that might produce pain. So it was a sad state of affairs. I lived in a constant state of fear because of my interpretation of events that occurred as a child. It occurred to me recently, though, that if I hadn't had that fear, I would never have had my obsession with knowledge. In that moment of realization, I felt completely grateful for all those “difficult” experiences. My view and version of the past were forever changed in that moment. That's what I call a paradigm shift. New eyes viewing an old situation.

—MARK

The materialist model of reality moved long ago from the ranks of “theory” to become set in stone as the implicit basis of all thought and research. It has governed scientific inquiry, and the scientific world's openness to what is possible or impossible, for 400 years. It tells us that the universe is a mechanical system composed of solid, material, elementary “building blocks.” It asserts that what is real is what is *measurable*. And what is *measurable* is only that which we can perceive with our five senses, and any mechanical extension thereof. It also assumes that the only valid approach to gaining knowledge is to banish all feelings and subjectivity and become entirely rational and objective.

This way of relating to the world divides the wholeness of human life into mind and body. It declares feelings, passions, intuition and imagination as unworthy. It objectifies nature and sets us apart from it. In this view, nature becomes “resources” to control and exploit rather than an organic living system to care for and sustain.

According to the current scientific paradigm, we live in a mechanical universe that is a dead universe. It's the world of the machine. A living intelligence may have established it and set it in motion (as Newton and the early scientists firmly believed), but now, it is completely mechanical and predictable. Given any set of initial conditions, the outcome is completely determined. The effects are inevitable.

Now, even if the motion of planets is predictable like the falling of rocks and apples, and the behavior and relationship of objects in the material world are quantifiable (and we will see later that quantum physics has challenged these terms), to say this is true of human life is demeaning and stultifying. Where does this kind of life lead? If there's no freedom, if the path from wherever we are is completely determined—what's life about, then? There is no place for consciousness or spirit, for freedom and choice, in this model.

A New Paradigm

In the words of Dr. Jeffrey Satinover, “A lot of people want quantum mechanics to be the rescuer from that kind of cold and pitiless indifference. And the reason people feel they need rescuing is because the cold, pitiless, mechanical idea is enormously powerful. Even if you don’t profess to believe it, it has affected your life and the worldview of civilization to an immense degree.”

Imagine yourself as a mechanical being (we’ve all seen enough science fiction movies to do this pretty easily) living in a totally dead world, in which all “things” are unconscious, unresponsive objects totally controlled by abstract laws of behavior. How does it feel? How do you feel about your loved ones, now that you are just a machine and that love is just a happenstance of brain chemistry, with nothing more than an evolutionary advantage to the DNA?

Do you believe that? And yet most of the scientists in the world are telling you that. They are the same people who tell you why the sky is blue, and why your car starts in the morning, and why trees convert carbon dioxide into oxygen. And if they had a big enough computer, they could tell you why you are sitting there right now reading this particular book. It’s all initial conditions with which “you” (which is an illusion anyway) had nothing to do.

Do you believe *that*?

Of course, we have trouble thinking of *ourselves* as purely mechanical beings. That’s because we’re not. And neither is anyone else. We all experience that we have (or perhaps that we *are*) consciousness and spirit, and that we *do* make choices.

Or do we?

And here we are at the bottom of the paradigm rabbit hole. On the left is the life where we are conscious beings determining our path, and on the right is just ones and zeroes that somehow create the illusion of you.



From a classical point of view, we are machines, and in machines there is no room for conscious experience. It doesn't matter if the machine dies; you can kill the machine, throw it in the Dumpster . . . it doesn't matter. If that is the way the world is, then people will behave in that way. But there's another way of thinking about the world, which is . . . pointed to by quantum mechanics, which suggested that the world is not this clockwork thing but more like an organism. It's a highly interconnected organismic thing . . . which extends through space and time. So, from a very basic point of view having to do with morals and ethics, what I think affects the world. In a sense that's really the key for why the worldview change is important.

—Dean Radin, Ph.D.

Opposition from the Establishment

For me the big paradigm change has to do with me (in here) and the rest of the universe (out there). If we are just little clocklike, windup soldiers in a ticktock universe, then why should it concern me what happens outside of me? And it's this attitude that makes it easy to bomb people, deplete resources and send future generations into a destitute world. Whereas when I extend my boundaries in time and space, it's all different. Practically, it means that instead of leaving the light on all night because I'm too lazy to turn it off, I think about the amount of coal or oil that gets burned lighting that bulb, then the manufacturing to make it, and the ozone hole and how in three generations there will be none left.

It's amazing how people will worry all day about their next meal, and yet not care about what someone will eat 100 years from now. The elk that graze in my meadow go from one patch to another, never eating ALL the seeds. They don't wear watches either.

—WILL

Just as in the time of Copernicus, Newton and the other 16th- and 17th-century pioneers of the scientific model, conservative elements in society are not only closed to this new knowledge, they are fiercely opposing it. The established orthodoxy is rigidly entrenched and unwilling to consider any change. These days, instead of the tried-and-true burning at the stake, the ecclesiastical authorities have been replaced by some (not all) people who use the power of universities, governmental grant-making institutions, and a closed-minded media to threaten the *livelihood* (through firing, denial of promotion or tenure, withholding of grant money, ridicule and sarcasm) rather than the actual *lives* of “heretical” scientists whose ideas and research projects don't fit within accepted bounds.

Amit Goswami sees hope. He believes that opposition is not necessarily a bad thing. “An opposition has something significant to say. You never exclude things so long as you think that this is all rubbish, and just a cursory examination will eliminate the rubbish. But when things become significant and cursory examination doesn't do it anymore, that's when you become rigid and you want to exclude the other. Because the other is too dangerous. So the perception that the alternative scientists are making a good case of their data in their field is (impacting) already the world of establishment science. And that is why the polarization is a very good sign that we are getting somewhere.”

The Evolution of Scientific Paradigms

One of the great truths about paradigms is that *they change*. Especially in science, which is an ongoing enterprise in which one generation builds on the work of those who came before, the paradigm of knowledge evolves as older views are proved to be incomplete or incorrect. Sometimes slow, sometimes kicking

and screaming, but the grandeur of science is that it *does* move on! Science inexorably moves on, building a new view, a new structure on the foundation of the old.

Sometimes the current model bumps up against the ongoing march of knowledge and comes away bruised by the encounter. Then, whether with the support or against the opposition of the powers that be, the model gives way to a new one.

Dr. Hagelin has described the process this way:

Within the progress of science, there are stages of understanding, stages of evolution of knowledge. Each of these stages brings its own worldview, its own paradigm, within which people act, within which governments are born, nations are born, constitutions are written, institutions are structured, education is created. So, worlds evolve from paradigm to paradigm as knowledge progresses. Each age has its own characteristic worldview, its characteristic paradigm, and one ultimately leads to another.

THE PARADIGM OF PARADIGMS

Along with many leading-edge scientists, William Tiller has run into in-the-box bias head-on. He says, “Okay, here we’ve done experiments with intention and they’re very robust. . . . Why doesn’t science rush in? That is the true sadness. The majority of scientists have become so locked into the conventional paradigm and the conventional way of viewing nature that they built a jail around themselves. If you provide experimental data that violates their precepts, they want it to go away, and so they’ll sweep it under the rug. They will not let you publish. They will try to block all venues for communicating it because it’s very uncomfortable. It is unfortunate—and it’s always pretty much been that way. It’s a human characteristic to be comfortable with a certain way of viewing the world. New stuff is uncomfortable;

I believe that the most far-reaching trend of our times is an emerging shift in our shared view of the universe—from thinking of it as dead to experiencing it as alive. In regarding the universe as alive and ourselves as continuously sustained within that aliveness, we see that we are intimately related to everything that exists. This insight . . . represents a new way of looking at and relating to the world and overcomes the profound separation that has marked our lives.

—Duane Elgin

you have to change your way of thinking.”

Tiller explains one important reason the current paradigm of scientific reality needs to change:

“There is no place in . . . our present paradigm for any form of consciousness, intention, emotion, mind or spirit to enter. And because our work shows that consciousness can have a very robust effect on physical reality, that means that ultimately there must be a paradigm shift; a shift that would allow consciousness to be incorporated; the structure of the universe has to be expanded beyond what it presently is in order to allow it to enter.”



Personal Paradigm Shift

The paradigm shift under way today is not just happening in science. It also extends into society and is powerfully impacting our culture. Perhaps the most important shift that is taking place is personal. Over the last couple of decades, many thousands, maybe many millions of people have undergone dramatic transformations in their values, perceptions and ways of relating to each other and to the world.

Why is this happening? One reason is that people have realized that at the end of their quest for flashier cars and bigger houses and shoes for every day of the year, what remains is an emptiness—the same emptiness they tried to fill with possessions and financial success. The materialistic worldview says: more money = better life. But having gotten more and finding that the emptiness remains, the conclusion is: The materialistic assumption is wrong.

Another reason? If the new paradigm is correct, and the universe is a living being, of which we, and our thoughts, and the planets, and all the subatomic particles are part, then the necessity for a new worldview will itself cause that to happen. It may be human arrogance (not that again!), which seems like we are bringing in the new view. A hungry organism always

seeks out food. We are part of that organism, as are the planets, our thoughts and subatomic particles, and we are searching for a new way because we know we are camped out on death's doorstep.

And it's not a comfortable place to be. Polluted water and foul air. Overpopulation vying with starvation and suitcase-size weapons that can take down a city. The list goes on and on. Dr. Candace Pert says "the body always wants to heal itself." So if our reality, both physical and non-physical, is a huge organism, as is suggested by the "new physics," then that reality is this moment trying to heal itself. And out of that impulse new conceptions of the world are arising, even as old conceptions of the world fight to stay entrenched.

What is in the balance? Our notion of reality. Who is the balance? We are.



Ponder These for a While . . .

- What paradigm governs your reality?
- What color are your glasses (both conscious and unconscious)?
- How do you find the unconscious glasses?
- What is the predominant world paradigm?
- How is it different from your paradigm?
- How do they interact?
- Is *social consciousness* a paradigm?
- Is *People Magazine* a paradigm?
- Is the Bible?
- What would it take for you to shift to a new paradigm?
- Are you willing to give up everything attached to the old paradigm?
- What is your new paradigm?
- Is it *your* new paradigm or a new global paradigm?
- If we really are mutant machines . . . can you fall in love with your toaster?

ASKING QUESTIONS

