

PHΘSPICIAΠ BΛIΣPPIΠ†

A Bridge to Peace and Prosperity

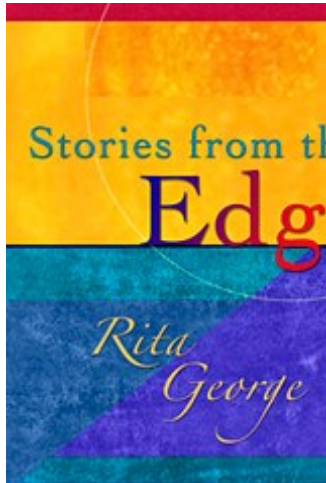


Rita George

PHOENICIAN BLUEPRINT

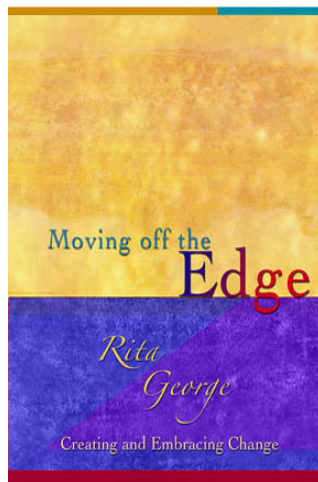
Rita George

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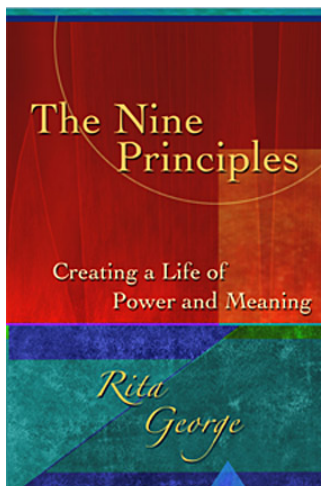
Stories from the Edge:

Nine Principles to Create Lasting Transformation



Moving off the Edge:

Preparing for and Creating Change



The Nine Principles:

Creating a Life of Power and Meaning

To be published

PHOENICIAN BLUEPRINT

A Bridge to Peace and Prosperity

Rita George

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In Memory of my Mother Mary (Couri) George

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To Sanford Holst for his 30 year dedication to researching, discovering, and writing about the unique history of the Phoenicians, Lebanon's epic heritage, and the legacy they left the world. For bringing the Phoenician history out of the shadows into the light so that people around the world can understand how the Phoenicians created a cohesive, peaceful, prosperous society using Seven (life-affirming) Principles.

To the authors of neuroscience books who have written about how science has validated the enormous plasticity of the brain and our individual capacity to re-wire our brains and create lasting transformative results, including Dr. Daniel Amen, Dr. Jill Taylor Bolte and Dr. Richard Doidge.

This is for all my Phoenician ancestors and my Lebanese family for inspiring me to speak about our unique heritage; for my great grandfathers Tanous LaHood and Faddoul Kouri for being the first of three men to immigrate to Peoria, Illinois and finally for my grandparents Sadie (La Hood) and Joseph (Germanous Khoury) George and Edward and Thiorah (Kouri) Couri for also immigrating to Peoria and for passing on their Phoenician DNA to my parents Mary and Virgil George.

To my cousin Randy Couri who opened the door for me to speak at the Celebrate Lebanon conference and who believed that whatever I spoke about would be important.

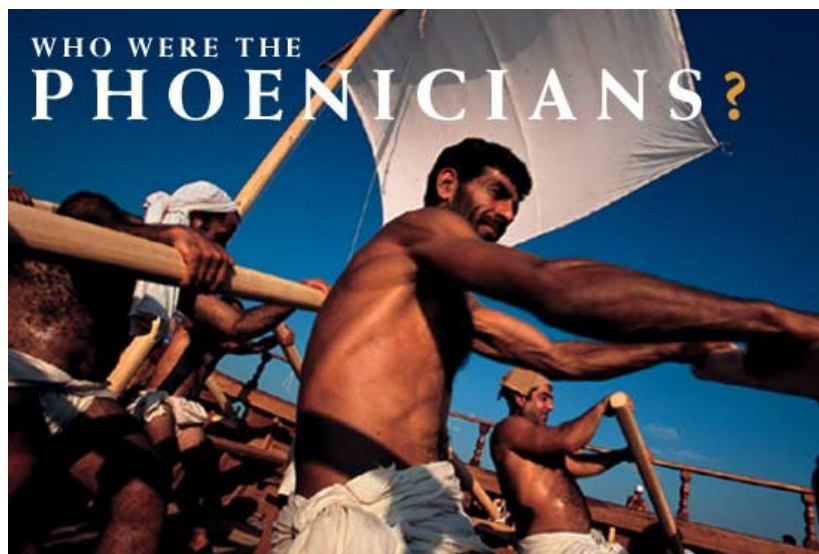
INTRODUCTION

Millions of people around the world have dreams of creating a better life for themselves and their family. But the opportunity is not within their reach because of war, violence, greed, poverty, disease, famine, injustice, economic collapse and/or corruption. These are just a few of the many challenges that block their freedom and ability to realize their potential.

The Phoenicians, an ancient society who lived throughout the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, were a beacon of light who showed us the way out of this darkness and who paved the way for humanity to rise out of the ashes of destruction—that we are witnessing on every

continent. They provided us with a blueprint—with a roadmap—for creating a healthy, loving, vibrant, peaceful, prosperous world with Seven (life-affirming) Principles. The choice is ours. We can cling to the past and witness the death of the world a little more

each day or we can partner with others to create a revolution with a deeper calling to birthing a new world. The Phoenix is calling us to rise out of the ashes and create a new world.



Here is the story of the Phoenicians who created a peaceful and prosperous society for over 3,000 years. I presented their story at the three day Celebrate Lebanon conference and cultural festival sponsored by the World Affairs Council in Peoria, IL in November 2010.

THE LEGACY OF THE PHOENICIANS: A BRIDGE TO PEACE AND PROSPERITY

In July, I was asked to present a program at this conference on the success of the Lebanese. I was asked to address two questions: Why did the Lebanese who immigrated to America succeed so fast? Why did they assimilate smoother and faster than some other ethnic groups into the culture? Honestly, I didn't think we had succeeded or assimilated faster than other ethnic groups. I was intrigued! I am a curious person who loves adventure, exploring and learning. I'm also an avid reader with eclectic taste. I enjoy mysteries. So, like a detective, I set out to unravel the mystery with the following question in mind. Why do others who study foreign affairs perceive the Lebanese different than other ethnic groups?

After extensive research, I had an answer. I was stunned by what I had learned about the Lebanese! Personally, I now understand why my approach to politics and business in the past and continues to be different from others. As you learn about what I discovered, you too may reflect upon your own approach to life and how it relates to the Phoenicians. Let me share with you a short story that illustrates what I mean.



This occurred in San Francisco, California in 1975. I'm young and relatively new to politics. A coalition was formed to establish the Commission on the Status of Women, and I was appointed the strategist and spokesperson for the coalition.

My vision was to bring together all the diverse organizations for and *against* the initiative and work with them to create common purpose and then present the initiative as a unified force to the Board of Supervisors.

When I presented this strategy to the group, some people looked at me like I was from another planet, and a few said I was politically naïve. The very *idea* of bringing people together who were *against* the initiative made no political sense to them. They said the strategy would never work because there was always adversity and conflict in politics and it would be impossible to create unity.



I was fascinated by this extreme point of view because that is exactly what it was. A perception of reality doesn't mean it is real; it just means it is our perception. My perception of reality was different. I proceeded with my strategy, and it worked. I met with all the people who were against the Commission, developed rapport, and listened to them to gain understanding. Then I explained why it would be advantageous to support the initiative. Together, as a unified

force, we appeared before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. After I presented the initiative in a chamber packed with over 200 people, including the media, the Board established the Commission on the Status of Women.

Now over 30 years later, I am surprised to learn that I was following in the footsteps of my ancestors. I come from a 3,000 years ago tradition, a society that survived, thrived and flourished because they could avoid conflict, resolve conflict and live in peace. Has anyone heard of a society that avoided conflict, resolved conflict and lived in peace? This society, the Phoenicians, was located in modern day Lebanon,

where my ancestors had lived for centuries. In fact, our family tree goes back eight generations, and we have enormous information about our ancestors that was gathered by my cousin Joe Couri for over 25 years.

The Phoenicians were guided by Seven Principles and these principles shaped the minds, character and personality of the Lebanese around the world including this community. These practices and qualities have been passed down from one generation to another. The Lebanese brain has been hardwired with the DNA of the Phoenicians.

I am going to discuss the latest neuroscience research that is related to the Seven Principles. Neuroscience is a field that is growing and



exploding yearly with new insight. This is why there are numerous bestselling books and award-winning television programs on the brain. Understanding the brain and understanding how our mind works is considered by some scientists to be the last scientific frontier. As you learn about this research, you may be thinking “Well, I knew that; or that is not new information.” Some of you may understand how our minds work intuitively. What is important is that what may seem obvious has now been proven scientifically by neuroscientists.

The research has shown that genetics determines certain behaviors, and it has also proven that the brain is modified by cultural activities. Both cultural and social behaviors are deeply wired in all of our brains no matter where we live. For example, if we keep on doing the same activity or make the same decision over and over again, we reinforce this habit—this pattern of thinking or this behavior pattern—and this experience is stored in memory files. We create the same results and can expect similar consequences over and over again. Literally, we can connect the dots between our

thinking, decisions, actions and results. Now, this has major ramifications. Because what science is saying is there is no one to blame; each of us is creating the results in our lives based upon our thinking, decision, and actions. So, we need to understand how our mind works. These cultural and social behaviors are passed down from one generation to another and they are locked into the neuro-circuitry of our brains. We respond to the world from these memory files. If you are not Lebanese, think about your ancestors. Everyone inherits cellular memory from their ancestors which is stored in DNA. But we have a choice whether we express these memories or not. To understand the Lebanese, we need to understand ancestral history.

AGENDA



Today, I am going to share with you my personal ancestral history and then go back 7,000 years to see how it all began. We'll discover the roots of the Seven (life-affirming) Principles the Phoenicians lived by, see the heritage they passed down to the Lebanese, and what legacy they left the world.

PROMISE

By the time I'm done, each of you will know the tremendous impact you can have in your personal and professional lives if you embrace the legacy of the Phoenicians and you will have a blueprint for creating a new world not only for your children and grandchildren but for all children around the world. I believe, and you will discover, that the Seven Principles are the key to how we all want to live in all aspects of our lives.

PERSONAL ANCESTRY

My ancestral history began in 1886 when my great grandfather, Anthony (Tanous) La Hood, left Aytou, Lebanon to immigrate to North America. He spent five days walking down a narrow, twisting dirt road from the mountainous village of Aytou to Beirut and then sailed on a small, slow moving freighter that stopped at ports along the way until it reached France. Then he traveled by train to the northwest coast of France where he boarded another ship for



the Atlantic crossing. Upon arriving in America, he made his way alone across the country until he found work in Peoria, IL. Yes, he was the first man from the village of Aytou to settle in Peoria. Now, there are over 6,000 descendants from the village of Aytou living in Peoria and about another 6,000 descendants living around the U.S. and the rest of the world.

To put this in perspective, he immigrated from a small village of about 500 people buried in the mountains of northern Lebanon in the Middle East while over 10 million other people had emigrated from mostly Northern Europe. In 1887, he returned to Lebanon in order to bring four of his children to Peoria. In 1900, his wife immigrated with three other children, and they were all reunited in Peoria. By 1907, a flood of Aytou residents were immigrating to Peoria. They would eventually



thrive in building successful lives for themselves and their families while laying a solid foundation of prosperity from one generation to another.



Today, the Arab population in America is about 4 million. Lebanese Americans comprise about 35% or 1.4 million out of the 4 million, although many do not identify with being Arab, but with being Phoenician. Out of the 1.4 million Lebanese Americans, 1

million are Christians and of those around 900,000 are Maronite Christians. The Maronite Christians in my family identify with being Phoenician rather than Arab because Mt. Lebanon, where Maronite Christians lived for centuries, was not invaded by the Arabs when they conquered Lebanon.

Let's get back to our story. The success of the Lebanese did not begin with my great grandfather or other Aytou immigrants or with the thousands of Lebanese who immigrated to North and South America, Australia or South Africa at the beginning of the 20th century. It began almost 7,000 years ago in 4600 BC with the Phoenicians.

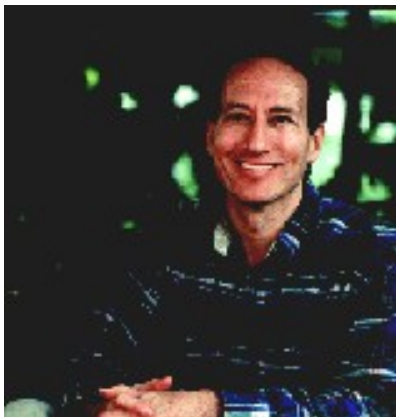
By now, you may be asking yourself, why haven't I heard about the Phoenicians or these Seven Principles? Why haven't I heard about a society which was prosperous for over 3,000 years without engaging in war? Up until

𐤆 Z Zayin Weapon	𐤅 W Waw Hook	𐤇 H He Window	𐤃 D Daleth Door	𐤂 G Gimel Camel	𐤁 B Beth House	𐤀 ' Aleph Ox
𐤎 N Nun Fish	𐤍 M Mem Water	𐤌 L Lamedh Ox-Goad	𐤋 K Kaph Palm of Hand	𐤊 Y Yodh Hand	𐤈 T Teth Unknown	𐤄 H Heth Fence
𐤐 T Taw Mark	𐤑 SH Shin Tooth	𐤓 R Resh Head	𐤒 Q Qoph Monkey	𐤔 S Sadhe Fishhook	𐤕 P Peh Mouth	𐤅 ' Ayin Eye
						𐤆 S Samekh Support

recently, the Phoenician heritage has been in the shadows—mainly because the Phoenicians were not writers of history like the Egyptians, Romans or Greeks. This is ironic since the Phoenicians created the first alphabet.

Over the last 30 years, new historical information and archaeological finds have been discovered in the Mediterranean that shed new light on the Phoenicians. New archaeological digs have been discovered in Lebanon, Egypt and the Greek Islands which provided new insight. Historians, scholars and archaeologists have combined new facts with past information to reconstruct an astounding image of this unique society. Now, there is a well documented trail of the new historical, archaeological and even DNA data that is being presented by scholars and historians around the world. I am going to discuss the work of one historian, who brought together an abundance of information from many sources along the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, to present an overview of the Phoenicians.

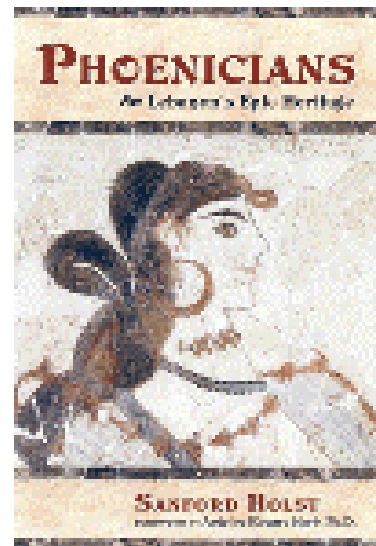
SANFORD HOLST



In 2005, Sanford Holst, a world class MIT researcher and a member of the Royal Historical Society, wrote a book called *Phoenicians: Lebanon's Epic Heritage*. As a child Sanford loved world history and he studied and read about different cultures in English, French, German, Greek and Latin. When his family informed him that the Phoenicians had traded with the Scots, he was intrigued. He wondered how the Phoenicians could have travelled from Lebanon to Scotland in the ancient world. By the way, Sanford is Scottish. This began his 30 year quest to learn about the mysterious Phoenicians. Leading historical experts would inform him that there was little to discover. The Phoenicians appeared, traded and disappeared.

Sanford was tenacious. He had a master's degree from UCLA in business research, so he was used to digging deeper. He was an international businessman who had lived in or explored 23 different countries. He would meet with leading scholars of the Mediterranean and travel to Phoenician cities and colonies. After 30 years of researching the Phoenicians and covering a period of over 3,000 years of Phoenician history, he began writing articles and presenting ground breaking Lebanese research at scholarly events.

In his book, Sanford reveals that the Phoenician's prospered for over 3,000 years and that they were ruled by seven principles. These principles would distinguish them from all other people and cultures during this time. The Principles are: One: International Trade, Two: Creating Strong Partnerships, Three: Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts, Four: Religious Tolerance, Five: Respect for Women and Mother Earth, Six: Equality, and Seven: Privacy. We still see these practices in Lebanese life, culture and actions today. Intriguing, isn't it?

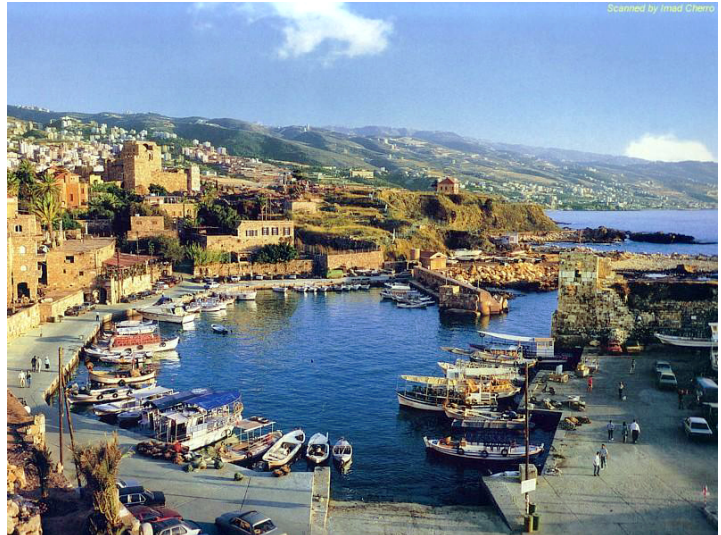


SEVEN PRINCIPLES

Let's look at the Seven Principles. Keep in mind, like in any good mystery clues unfold one right after another. We don't want to know the ending of the mystery in the beginning, otherwise curiosity wanes. As I discuss each principle, you will notice that they build one upon another and each of the Seven Principles is a clue as to how the Phoenicians created a cohesive society while living peaceful and prosperous lives.

The First Principle: International Trade

Our story begins in 4600 BC, when the Phoenicians began building cedar boats to fish and earn a living at Byblos—which is north of Beirut. Soon they were trading half a day from home. By 3600 BC they discovered and began trading with the Egyptians. By 2000 BC, they were expert sailors and navigators and had expanded their trading

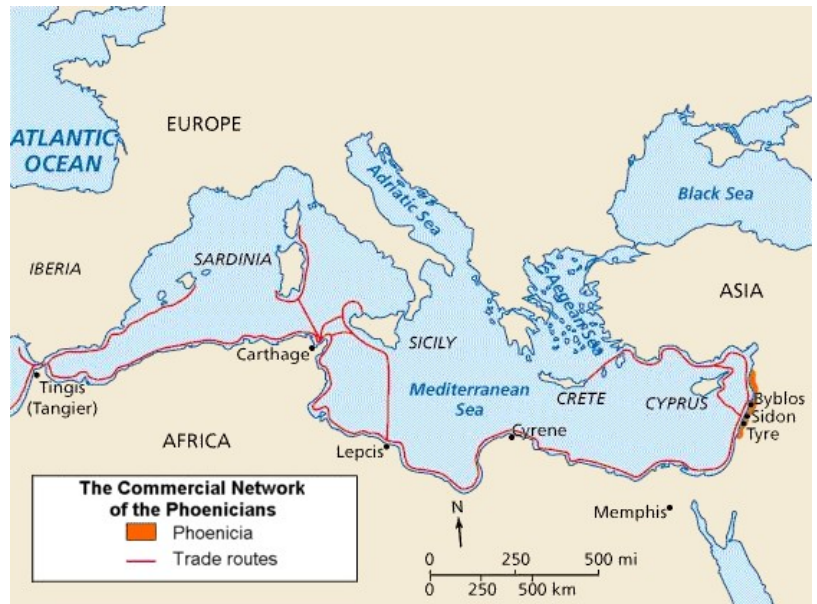


venture to the Eastern Mediterranean. They formed a partnership with Crete to create the Minoan civilization. They discovered Santorini and it became a Phoenician city. They would eventually expand to the Western Mediterranean and establish trading posts and more Phoenician cities and colonies including Corsica, Sicily, Sardinia,



Cyprus, and Carthage in North Africa and in the Atlantic coast of Morocco and Spain. Some historians even believe they traded with England and travelled to North America. As their trading empire expanded, so did their wealth. So you have to ask yourself, why were the Phoenicians so successful in trading and living peacefully in ancient Eastern and Western Mediterranean for over 3,000 years? It all goes back to the brain and understanding how the mind works.

Whatever we learn from our culture is wired into our brains—wired into neuro pathways. Based upon our neuro pathways—which are patterns of thinking and behavior—we act a certain way. Whatever we learn becomes ‘second nature’ and usually we don’t even think about our behavior, it just seems natural. Our own culture seems natural. When the Phoenicians explored new cultures, they soon learned, like all of us would, that other cultures and customs were not the same as theirs. This became a pivotal moment or what I call a ‘transformative moment’ that would decide their future.

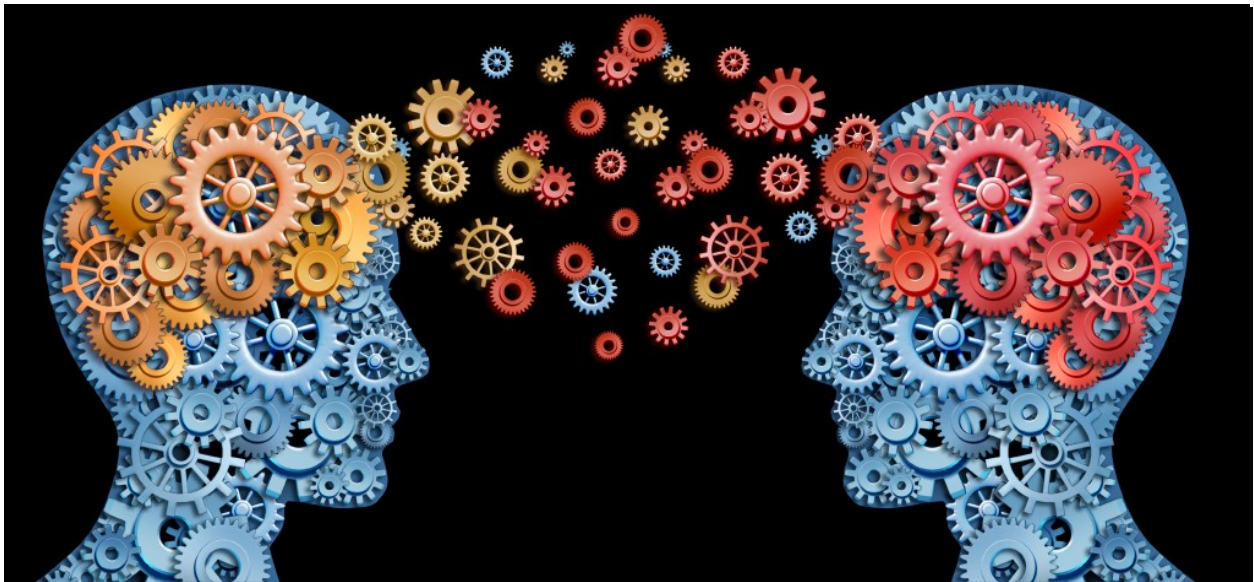


The Phoenicians had two choices. They could focus on what was different between the two cultures and judge others. Or, they could attempt to understand others, educate themselves about the new culture, accept the differences, and wire their brains to change and blend in quickly and assimilate smoothly. The Phoenicians made a conscious choice to become accepting, and they adapted. They became highly skilled

*Emotional
Intelligence*

readers of people and honed what is today called EQ—emotional intelligence skills—among those skills are the ability to listen to and understand others and develop lasting relationships. Now, getting along with other cultures was ‘second nature’.

Can you imagine the world today if all of our brains were hardwired to accept others and their cultures, to change quickly, and to develop mutually beneficial relationships?



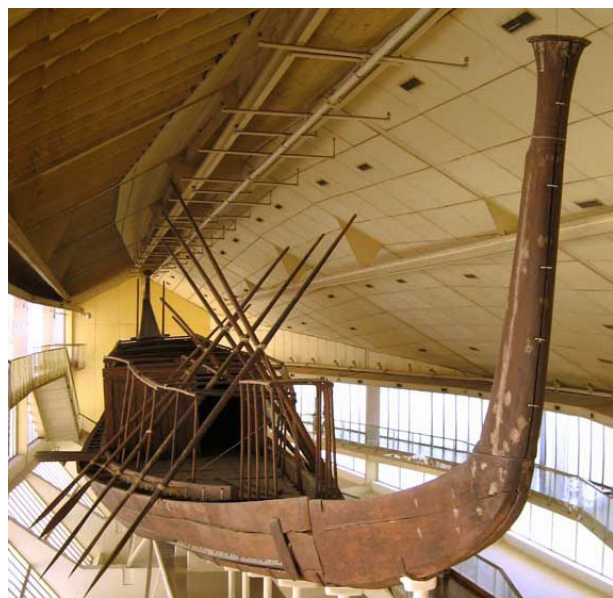
The Second Principle: Partnerships among Themselves and Others



The story continues. In 3200 BC, an Egyptian leader wanted to build a large temple, and he needed five huge massive cedars. Except this time, he offered the Phoenicians gold instead of linen or grain. When the traders returned to Byblos, they laid out their predicament at a town meeting. They did not

have the ships to deliver the massive cedars, and they could not deliver the cedar alone. Byblos was at another choice point, another 'transformative moment' and their decision would transform their lives and the world for centuries.

The entire village decided to pool their resources, take a risk and fulfill the contract. Everyone would participate to create a successful trade. The entire village acted like a board of directors. Instead of being dominated by one leader, everyone joined together to accomplish what a few could not. When they succeeded in transporting the cedar hundreds of miles to Egypt, unity would be the driving force behind future achievements. They understood that creating a common purpose and working together was the key to surviving and flourishing.



What would the world be like if people in local communities and in state and national politics worked together to achieve a common purpose, develop successful ventures, and prosper?



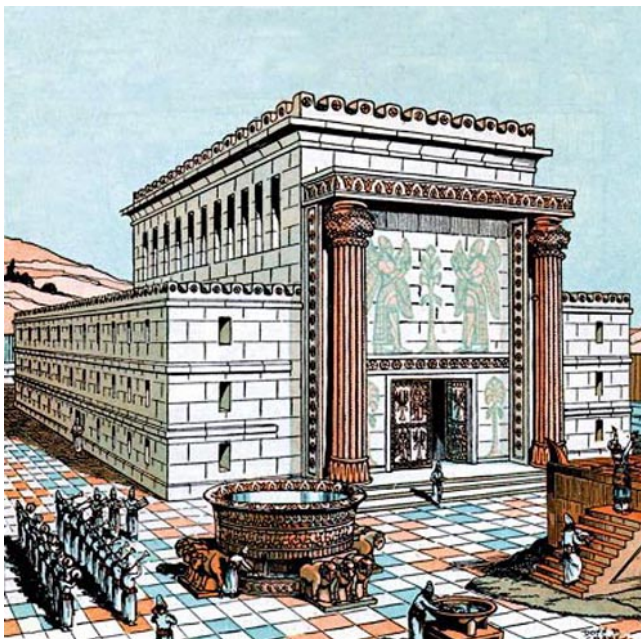
The second half of this principle—creating powerful relationships with outside groups—would also be essential to their existence. They looked at people they traded with as friends. Once they created a powerful partnership with Egypt, this allowed them to grow and expand rapidly. Trade began to expand North, South and West of Lebanon. From then on, the Phoenicians approached each new culture with the goal to develop partnerships, and this became the ‘cultural norm’ and was stored in memory files. They would continue to respond to the world from these files.

Now the first two principles were in place: international trade and creating partnerships with themselves and others.

Can you imagine what would unfold if people formed partnerships that were advantageous for all people within their own country and with other cultures?

The Third Principle: Creating Peaceful Resolution of Differences

What did the Phoenicians think and how did they act when the Egyptians eventually set out to expand their empire in 1500 BC? Or what did they do when other cultures like the Assyrians, Babylonians, or Persians set out to conquer them on their own soil between 900 and 500 BC? For centuries they had lived peaceful lives; so war was not an option.



With the Egyptians, they negotiated a contract not to be attacked so that they could retain their status as trading partners and friends. The Egyptians received a more lucrative trading agreement. With other outside forces, they developed an innovative strategy for each culture that wanted to invade.

Taking a pro-active approach, they would first offer them lavish gifts and then begin to negotiate a deal equally advantageous for both sides. For example, with the

Hebrews they first offered them glittering gifts and then offered to build Solomon's Temple, a place of cedars. This strategy allowed them to retain their independence and freedom and to continue leading peaceful and prosperous lives.

Over a period of 3,000 years, they excelled in using negotiation and diplomacy to defuse confrontation instead of going to war. They did not resist conquerors. They did not struggle. They did not conquer others. Diplomacy and the peaceful negotiation of conflicts would be wired into their brains rather than war.

What is fascinating is the Phoenicians lived completely differently from other societies in their day. They did not live by force of arms. They did not subject the people in the countries around them to slavery. They did not attempt to control or hold down their own people by force. There were no servants and there were no masters—all were partners. They weren't ruled by fear or by deference to a man of power. Instead, people were encouraged to take control of their own lives and destiny. As a society, they stood together to survive larger, powerful, and frequently warlike neighbors.

What type of world would we experience if differences were settled peacefully and people would respond to each other from peaceful memories rather than violence, hatred and anger?



The Fourth Principle: Religious Tolerance

The Phoenicians believed that Mother Nature was the source of all things. Since Mother Nature was created by God, they respected it. They built majestic temples to honor Mother Nature and referred to them as Our Lady of Byblos or Our Lady of Santorini depending upon what town they lived in. The temple, located in the center of town, was a place of quiet contemplation where they could appreciate all the abundance in their lives.



When they traveled to foreign cultures, the Phoenicians tried to blend in with the different people instead of standing apart and above others. They arrived in each new land admiring the local Gods, the local culture, the individual and the society as a whole. Since they chose to live peaceful lives, they were not interested in fighting over differences in religion. They came to understand that others were worshiping God by



Phoenicians bringing gifts for the Persian King - Persepolis relief, 5 century B.C.

different names, so they respected others' beliefs. They accepted rather than criticized others' religion preferences. Remember this was before organized religion. Religious tolerance would play a tremendous role in their relations with people and their long survival.

At this point, they were socialized to be respectful of foreigners, their customs, their traditions, and their religions and this became the 'cultural norm'.

What would the world be like if all religions were respected, religions were not demonized, and religions were not used to war?



The Fifth Principle: Respect for Women



Honoring Mother Nature was carried over to respect for women. Women were partners in the trading ventures and participated fully in community and civic affairs. They sat on the city council in each town and made decisions along with the men. They participated in sporting events. The Phoenicians believed if you lacked respect for women then you lacked respect for

Mother Nature. Mother Nature was created by God. They were serious about their faith and God.

While the Phoenicians were honoring the principles of trade, partnership, peaceful resolution of conflict, and respect for all religions, women, and Mother Nature, other societies disappeared and were destroyed on the battlefield. By 1200 BC all other civilizations in the Mediterranean were destroyed or weakened except for the Phoenicians.



How would the world be if mother earth and women were respected and it was socially unacceptable to treat women without honor?



The Sixth Principle: Equality

Since everyone was a partner in the trading ventures and everyone was involved in the decision making process, everyone profited from the trading ventures. The risk and the wealth were shared by everyone in each city. If one family was more active in trade ventures; of course, they would achieve more wealth. No one family acquired too much of the community's wealth. No one lived in poverty or was poor. Instead of fighting and competing with each other to get ahead, they used their energy to focus on a common purpose, expand international trade and create prosperity for everyone.



After they began trading with Egypt and all the families acquired their new found wealth, they stopped living in huts and built multi-room homes out of stone in Byblos and eventually other cities. Now the experience of treating all people in their society with equality became the norm and was stored in their memory files. No matter what town the Phoenicians lived in, people were treated with equality.

What would the world look like if all people prospered and were treated with respect and dignity regardless of their material wealth, nationality, race, religion, or position of power?



The Seventh Principle: Privacy in both their Personal & Professional Affairs

The Phoenicians understood human nature—you might even say that they were very good psychologists. They understood that people had a tendency to attack people who were different from themselves and who were wealthy. They understood that humans could be greedy and jealous so they set out to protect themselves.



Remember, as the Phoenicians traveled to new lands, met new people, and were introduced to different cultures, they blended in—they wore similar clothes and respected their customs. Instead of boasting about their achievements or wealth and setting themselves apart from others, they set out to develop rapport and lasting relationships which were beneficial for both parties.



On the home front, they avoided all ostentatious displays of wealth in public, keeping any treasures in their temples and in their homes. Even today the Lebanese are private. In fact, most people don't know that many famous people today are Lebanese or many wealthy people are Lebanese. How many of you know that the wealthiest individual in the world is Mexican Lebanese?

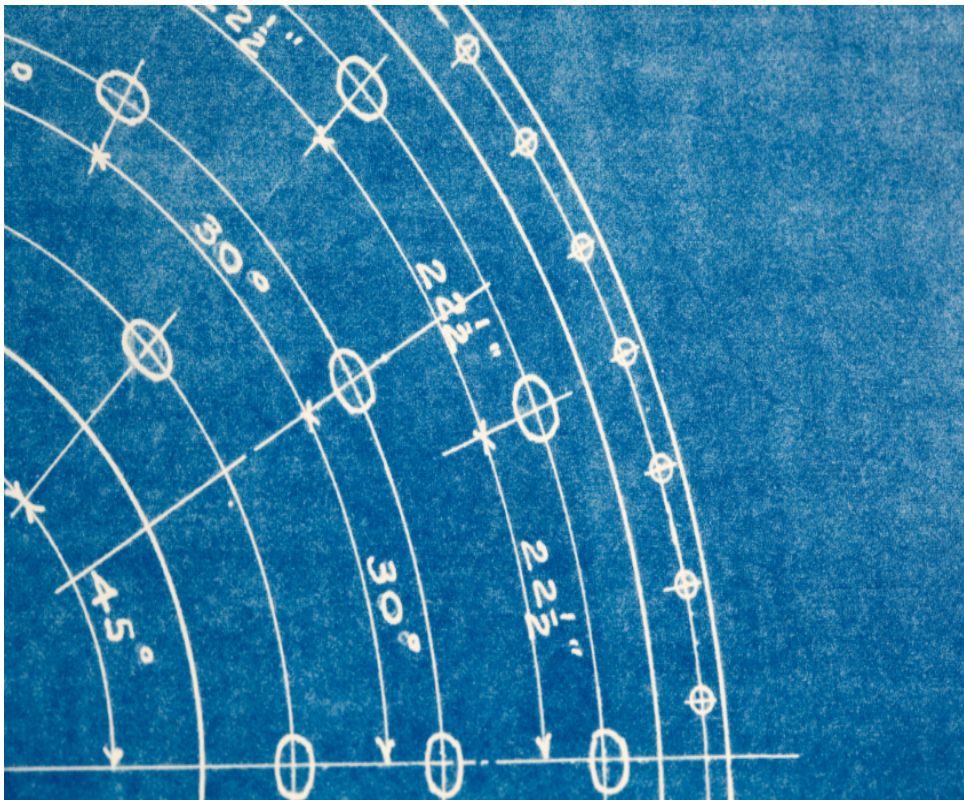
How would the world look today if people did not boast about their achievements or flaunt their wealth but instead were appreciative of their good fortune and contributed to others' welfare?



BLUEPRINT AND VISION FOR SUCCESS

Clearly, we can see that the Phoenicians had a moral code by which they led their lives. They valued life, freedom, fairness, and caring about others. They were highly committed to their faith, family and relationships. They became highly independent, resilient, determined, generous and gracious. We still see these qualities instilled in the Lebanese today regardless of where they live.

Clearly, the Phoenicians had a blueprint for success. They were men and women with Vision—men and women who did not allow fear to run their lives. It doesn't mean that they didn't have fear; it just wasn't an obstacle to expanding international trade or traveling on the high seas without maps and navigation tools.



Vision allowed them to take extraordinary risks and to succeed. Vision trumps fear. When we focus on achieving a vision, we do not operate out of fearful memory files. Instead, we leave fear behind and it allows innate wisdom to guide our daily life.



Vision allowed the Phoenicians to move forward with a sense of adventure into the unknown with the deep inner knowing that they could achieve something that had not been done before.

Vision connected the Phoenicians on an emotional and spiritual level. It provided them with purpose and meaning, to work together to achieve a common goal, and to feel good about themselves and others.

Vision instilled in the Phoenicians the ability to be pro-active and respond to life from a place of love and wisdom rather than react from fear and anger.

AN EPIC HERITAGE

The Phoenicians left the Lebanese an Epic Heritage, and the Seven Principles are still alive in the Lebanese culture. Even though the Lebanese carry the cellular memory of these Seven Principles in their DNA, it does not mean every Lebanese person lives them. It is up to each person to make a conscious decision to express these principles moment to moment until they become the 'norm'. These principles have shaped the mind, character and personality from one generation to another.

Seven Principles - of - Phoenician Society

- **International Trade**
- **Partnerships among Themselves and Others**
- **Creating Peaceful Resolution of Differences**
- **Religious Tolerance**
- **Respect for Women and Mother Earth**
- **Equality**
- **Privacy in both their Personal & Professional Affairs**

The Phoenicians, along with the Greeks, Romans and Persians, were builders of the world and they left the world a life-affirming legacy. If they could survive, thrive and prosper for thousands of years using the Seven Principles, so can humanity today. They left humanity with a blueprint for transforming the world, a roadmap for moving the world forward in a new direction. We desperately need to live in a world without war, violence and hatred.

MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP

PEACE AND PROSPERITY —*Arbil*

The Seven Principles are a model for leadership. All people can use them in their personal lives to create a solid family foundation for success. Political, business, religious, educational, and community leaders can use them to

create healthy communities and a life-affirming world rather than a world with poverty, greed and violence. Leaders can use the Principles as a bridge to peace and prosperity. Yes, the Seven Principles are a bridge to Peace and Prosperity. We could teach them to our children and grandchildren. The choice is ours. There isn't anything that we Americans or humanity can't achieve once we commit to a vision and work together to achieve what seems impossible today.

When we combine the Seven Principles with an understanding of brain research and an understanding of how our mind works, we can see why the Phoenicians, as well as the modern day Lebanese, were so successful and why they became



flexible and adaptable in new environments. We can see how they could assimilate fast and smoothly into any new culture.

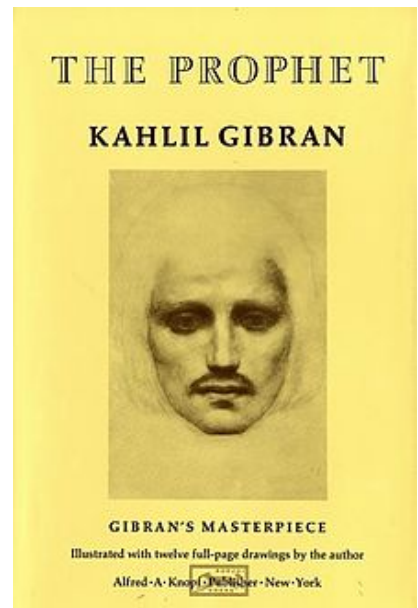
If the Phoenicians were constantly transforming their brains and building upon what worked for them in ancient times, we too can act upon their legacy in modern times. All of us have the ability to hardwire the Seven Principles into our brains by understanding how our mind works. All of us can transform our neuro-circuitry—our memories of war, violence and aggression to ones of peace, partnership, and equality. All of us can program our minds to transform quickly.



Some of you may be thinking, well, not me. I'm too old or I'm too set in my ways to change. I have worked with thousands of men and women from every profession, from every religion, from every generation—yes, as young as 12 and 76—and they succeeded in transforming their memory files and re-wiring their brains. Our brains have enormous plasticity, and this plasticity allows us to grow, learn and evolve minute by minute. It is our choice. Who we are in the world depends upon our choices.

CONCLUSION

Kahlil Gibran, the Lebanese poet, artist, writer, and philosopher, said in his book *The Prophet*, “The self is a sea boundless and measureless.” What I want to remind you is that our individual and collective potential is boundless, measureless and limitless. We can develop our potential by embracing the Seven (life-affirming) Phoenician Principles, and when we do, we will have a rippling impact around the world. Our potential will ripple out into the sea from continent to continent and one by one we will transform our world, just like the Phoenicians and modern Lebanese have for thousands of years.



I challenge each of you to make a commitment in this moment to move out into the world embracing the legacy of the Phoenicians and the Seven Principles to create a new world for ourselves, our families, our community and the world. Will each of you make that commitment with me? Thank you.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Are only the Lebanese imprinted with the DNA of the Phoenicians?

Many people around the world can carry an imprint of the Phoenician gene. For thousands of years the Phoenicians lived in many trading cities along the Eastern and Western Mediterranean besides the Atlantic Coast. They resided in Carthage in Tunisia, Tangiers in Morocco, Marseilles in France, Sardinia in Italy, Gibraltar in Spain, Malta, the Aegean Islands and many other towns. National Geographic has been conducting DNA testing across the Mediterranean to see if men carry the Phoenician gene. Only men can be tested for the gene since they have only developed the test for the Y chromosome.



In 2008, scientists from the Genographic Project announced that “as many as 1 out of 17 men living in former Phoenician trading cities may have a Phoenician direct male-line ancestor.” Results have also shown that 27% of the population in Lebanon carry the Phoenician gene but I’m not clear if they tested men equally who resided in the South, North in the mountains, and near the coast or inland. Also, you have to keep in mind that millions of Lebanese living around the world today are descendants from the first wave of men and women who immigrated to North and South American, Australia and South Africa between the 1800’s and 1917 and they can easily carry this gene imprint along with their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who married outside the Lebanese community.

Everyone has the capacity to hardwire their brains to express the Seven Principles even if they don't carry an imprint of the Phoenician DNA. As you will recall, I discussed how neuroscience has proven that the brain has amazing plasticity. This means that everyone has the capacity to learn, grow, and evolve moment by moment regardless of their age, race, nationality or religion. It all depends upon our conscious choice—whether we choose to express these principles in all aspects of our lives. If we are not living the principles, we can transform our minds by letting go of memory files (thoughts, beliefs, decisions and actions) that are in conflict with the principles and adding new files that are aligned with them. Once we release old memory files and add new ones and use these new files over and over again, we actually re-wire the neuro circuitry and pathways in our brain. Then, expressing the principles becomes our 'cultural norm'. This is why millions of people around the world are expressing these universal principles even though they don't have the DNA imprint.



Do you think the Phoenicians ability to survive, thrive and flourish for over 3,000 years was only because they were committed to the Seven Principles?

Personally, I believe their commitment to the Seven Principles was the major key to their success. Without commitment, they would have lacked the creativity, integrity, wisdom and courage to take risks, sail the high seas without navigation maps, and successfully resolve one challenge and conflict after another.

Revolutionary research in physics, biology and psychology has proven that it is our natural inclination to connect, cooperate, collaborate, create, and cultivate harmony with self and others, form partnerships, play fair and care about and help others—all of these were integral to the Phoenicians rather than the inclination to dominate and compete like other societies of the times. At the same time, I believe that there are other factors that facilitated the Phoenicians living peaceful, prosperous lives for 3,000 years.



from which the Phoenicians built and expanded their society. The principles were the glue that held their society together and it was what was important to them. If you look at the Phoenician society from a historical perspective, I don't think there is another society that lived both prosperous and peaceful

lives on three continents for thousands of years. The Aborigines in Australia lived peacefully without engaging in war and many societies have acquired enormous economic wealth throughout the centuries.

But there are many different aspects to being wealthy; for example, having material or financial wealth, being spiritually wealthy or living in a healthy community where you have access to quality education, health care, housing, food, employment and other opportunities.

So you have to ask yourself, how did the Phoenicians create a society that expressed the Seven Principles for centuries when they lived in different countries and cities? And how did they become, most probably, the wealthiest society in ancient times?



One reason could be when young men and women were initiated into adulthood, they basically pledged an allegiance to the Seven Principles. Being a member of the Phoenician society and belonging to this unique community meant they would live by the Seven Principles regardless of what continent or town they resided in. They made a lifetime commitment to these practices which guaranteed they would continue to experience all the benefits of living in a peaceful, prosperous society.

This commitment to a vision, beyond their own personal goals and needs, allowed the Phoenicians to operate as a cohesive society. Their ability to come together as a society, regardless of where they lived, and create a collaborative and common identity with a positive vision of future possibilities for everyone created an energetic field, a

group resonance, where everyone was on the same wave length. Social connectedness is known as a predictor of higher levels of happiness and well-being and a greater sense of purpose and meaning.

With an understanding of brain research and how our mind works, we can now understand how this behavior could be passed down from one generation to another through DNA. And we can also understand how cultural conditioning was reinforced year after year and century after century just by expressing the Seven Principles. Let's face it, wouldn't most people around the world think it was beneficial to live in a society that was both peaceful and prosperous and where you were a full participant in this society, where you had quality housing, food, employment, where everyone was treated with respect and dignity, and where you could shine as an individual?



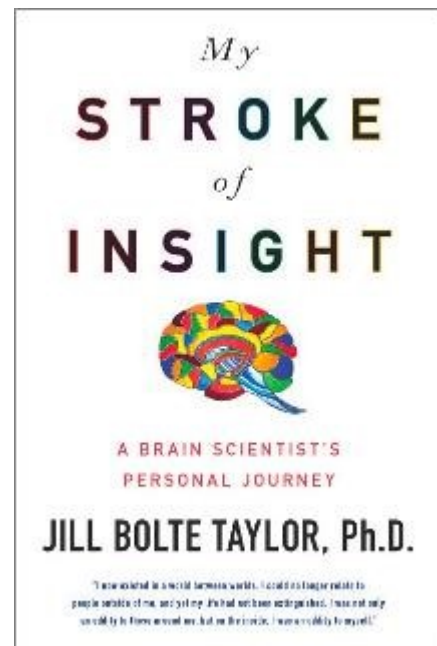
Another key element to their success was their ability to protect what is today called 'intellectual property'. Remember, they were both private and secretive about their society. On the private front, they kept their egos in check and did not boast about their achievements or wealth. On the secretive front, they protected the design of their cedar boats, their navigation maps, and the details of their trading resources—the location of their trading partners and specific location of goods.

I can't emphasize enough that the Phoenicians had a high level of awareness (spiritual intelligence), respect for others and an ability to listen to and understand others and create lasting relationships (emotional intelligence) and an acute ability to develop and implement innovative strategy (intellectual intelligence). I believe they had developed integrated, balanced, healthy brains.

What do you mean when you say the Phoenicians had integrative, balanced, healthy brains?

The left and right hemispheres of our brains have different functions. Different personality traits come from each hemisphere. Even though the brain is complex, one simple explanation is the left side can be described as logical and rational and the right side as creative and intuitive.

Dr. Jill Taylor Bolte provides a brilliant view into both sides of the brain in her book *My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey*. Dr. Taylor, who is a Harvard trained neuroanatomist, experienced a severe hemorrhage in the left hemisphere of her brain in 1996 at the age of 36. Within a few hours of this stroke, she could not walk, talk, read, write, or recall any of her life. It would take her eight years to completely recover her thinking ability and all of her functions. She provides us with a rare look into the functioning of the right hemisphere without access to the left. As you read this list of traits—which Dr. Taylor discusses in her book—think about the Phoenicians and the traits they expressed because of their commitment to the Seven Principles: International Trade; Partnership among Themselves and with Others; Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts; Religious Tolerance; Respect for Women; Equality, and Privacy.



Personality Traits in the Brain

Left	Right
Values Finance	Values Humanity
Language Center	Sensitive to Non-Verbal Communication
Memory Center	Not Bugged Down by the Past or Fear
Judges Right and Wrong	No Judgment—Acceptance of Others
Processes information	Empathic and Nurturing
Organizes Information	Lives in the Now—Not the Past/Future
Evaluates Information	One with the Universe
Rationalizes	Access to Higher Consciousness
Attention to Details	Perceives Interconnectedness
Categorizes	Intuitive
Describes	Accesses new Insight and Ideas
Schedules	Thinks outside the Box—Highly Creative
Identifies Patterns	Flexible and Open—Welcomes Change
	Adventurous—Risking Something New
	Socially Adept and Friendly
	Joyful and Enthusiastic
	Grateful and Celebrates Abundance

In living the Seven Principles, the Phoenicians developed and created a balanced left and right side of the brain. This is what I mean when I say they had integrative brains. Now, remember this does not mean that all Lebanese or those who carry the

Phoenician imprint have healthy, balanced, integrative brains. They may carry the cellular memory of these traits, but it is up to each individual to make a conscious choice to express them. And you can express a trait in one aspect of your life, but not in another. What is amazing is that the Phoenicians were consistent and research shows that the Seven Principles were constant practices century after century and this is what made them a unique society.

In the Western culture, we tend to emphasize the development of the left side of the brain to the detriment of traits in the right side; although, people are awakening to the importance of developing an integrative brain and of acknowledging the interrelationship



between the body, mind and spirit. In the West, we lean toward presenting facts, logic, and strategy and being analytical. In many Eastern cultures, they look for the links that connect things as a whole and they perceive the interconnectedness. Cultures in the East also focus on the development of other spiritual traits, such as evolving to a higher consciousness and living in the now. Not to short change the right side of the brain, it is also the creative, flexible, adventurous, and change oriented center.

The Phoenicians developed and expressed the traits of the right and left side of the brain. They allowed people to just be and expressed mutual respect for each other, instead of attempting to control, dominate and destroy others. I believe developing an integrative, balanced, healthy brain, combined with operating as a cohesive society with clear principles or a moral code and with the commitment by each person in their society to these practices, led to their enormous success for centuries.

As I discussed in my presentation, the Lebanese today are programmed to succeed fast and assimilate smooth and quickly into any culture. Their brains have been hardwired with the DNA of their ancestors. Anyone can develop the traits of both sides of their brains. Anyone can transform memory files and add new ones and thus change their DNA. It's all about conscious choice. It's all about commitment. It's all about embracing a model for transformation that achieves practical results in re-wiring the brain.

How can I transform or delete memory files and add new ones so that I can live the Seven Principles?

What I have discovered over the last 40 years in my work with thousands of individuals from every profession is if you want to transform memory files, re-wire your brain and change your DNA, you need three things: 1. proven transformation tools (a system that has a solid track record), 2. a long-term commitment to the process, and 3. probably a coach—someone who creates an individualized program and guides you through the process.

Difference between Change and Transformation

Before I discuss a technique to delete and add new memory files, let me explain the difference between change and transformation. Change deals with a shift in behavior and it is a temporary fix. Did you ever wonder why when you set out to shed a few pounds and you eat less, eat healthier food and/or exercise more frequently, you lose weight? Then have you noticed that weeks or months later, you gained the weight back? Changing your eating or exercising



habits does not create permanent transformation. You literally have to revise and delete old patterns and replace them with new healthy ones to create different results. Now this example is simplified and does not take into account any physiological or emotional imbalances that impact weight.

We also need to understand that we have three different minds. All three minds need to be operating as a team in alignment in order to revise or delete old memory files and add new ones.

So as far as shifting our weight goes, our rational conscious mind made a decision to lose weight but our emotional subconscious mind, which controls the physiological functioning of the body, was not on board. Basically, we used will power to change and then the subconscious eventually returned to former habits operating out of old memory files. Our spiritual mind, which



provides guidance, insight, and wake up calls—messages indicating that some aspect of our life is not working and is out of balance —may be informing us that it is time to do something about our lifestyle. If we acknowledge and accept the message rather than denying or dismissing it, this will go a long way to realizing results.

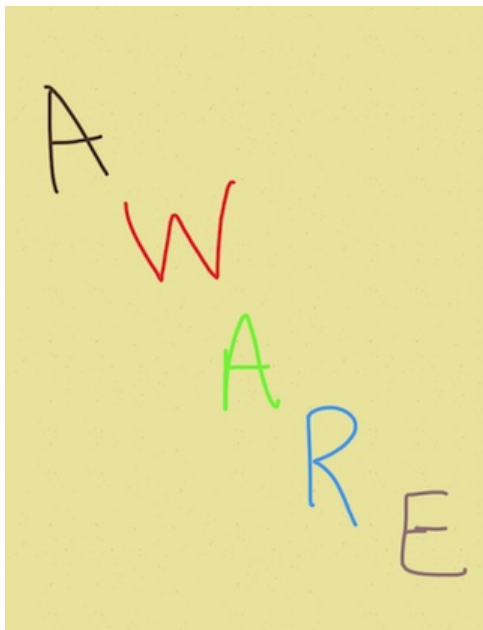
In order to create lasting transformation, we literally have to delete the habits or imbalances that are the cause of weight retention and add new healthier memory files. And we need to reinforce these new behavior habits over and over again until they are deeply ingrained in our subconscious memory files. We can use our conscious mind to keep us committed and disciplined and we can engage our spiritual self by discovering what has meaning for us when we lead a healthier lifestyle. Once we stay committed to this new lifestyle over nine months, we will probably have re-wired our brains by forming new neuro pathways and have changed our DNA.

The AWARE Skills©

Let me discuss the AWARE Skills©, one of the many strategies I developed to help people release old memory files and patterns daily. Here is a brief overview of the five step process:

AWARE: *Be present.* Focus your attention in the moment on whatever you are experiencing so that you can clearly perceive, think, sense, feel, act and respond with clarity.

WITNESS: *Watch everything.* Be an observer. Think of your life as a movie which you are watching. Respond to any new realization from a place of detachment. Do not judge what you see, think, feel or do. Observe your thoughts and emotions as well as your reactions to various situations.



ACCEPT: *Just allow what you see to exist.* Do not resist what is—when you do, you will open a new memory file or reinforce an old one that is not productive. Accept that these are your current thoughts, emotions and behaviors. Accept that you are doing the best that you can at the moment.

RELEASE: *Release this energy.* Recognize that you have conscious choice. You can make a decision to be present rather than to indulge in negative thinking or an old pattern. If you literally enter a state of being present in the moment as an objective observer, your identification with the thoughts and emotions will be released.

EXPAND: *Notice your energy expand.* The release of old patterns and memory files—stored in the memory of your mind and body—will energize you. Your mind will be calmer. Physical energy will increase, and your heart will feel more expansive.

If you want to express the Seven Principles, you need to notice what memory files are in conflict with each principle, do not resist the thought or feeling, and accept what is—and if you can remain neutral or present in the moment—you will release the thought, feeling or behavior. Then, focus on the principle and add a new thought, feeling, decision or action to your memory files—one that is in alignment with the principle. You will notice that there is a direct link between your inner and outer worlds. Once you shift your inner world, you will soon create and attract new experiences and relationships that reflect the new memory files. For example, if you treat people with increased respect and dignity, you will notice that others respond to you the same way. If you notice that far more strangers you meet suddenly begin speaking with you out of the blue, you will probably notice that you are more open and flexible to meeting different people and you adapt well in new situations.

How did the Phoenicians survive when one of their warlike neighbors were not open and flexible or willing to negotiate?



As far back as 2000 BC, the Phoenicians in Byblos had to deal with warlike neighbors like the Amorites. Since the Amorites were not interested in negotiations, the Phoenicians decided to relocate their people to another area. At the time, they were trading with the people on Crete and felt it would be advantageous for both people to live together. The Phoenicians approached the people on Crete and offered them an opportunity to share in the wealth of their trading empire if the Phoenicians from Byblos

could migrate to Crete and if the people in Crete would be willing to integrate into the Phoenician society and live by the Seven Principles. The people in Crete agreed and this is how the Minoan civilization was formed.

Hundreds of years later, when the Myceaneans set out to invade Crete and were not open to negotiation, the Phoenicians focused on what was important and they collected their personal belongings, wealth, and people, and they sailed to Lebanon. Most settled in Tyre which was, by this time, the major trading capital in Lebanon. This pattern was repeated over and over again, and this gave rise to the Legend of Phoenix Rising.

What is the Legend of Phoenix Rising?

The legend is connected to the mysterious bird known as the Phoenix which was popular in ancient times in Egypt and later in Greece. The legend told of a magnificent bird with beautiful plumage that lived for five hundred years. At the end of that time, it suddenly burst into flames and was consumed. Out of the ashes, a young Phoenix would be born and live another five hundred years. The legend grew out of the long history of the Phoenician people to create miraculous comebacks and it still thrives in modern day Lebanon and in our culture today.





Remember, the Phoenicians sought to avoid conflict. If they could not negotiate a successful agreement prior to being invaded, they would save their families, the city's treasurers, and carry everything away on boats before the attack. They left the rest of the city for the invaders. After the city had been burned and the invaders had taken

whatever was left, they went away. We have to keep in mind that this type of annihilation was common at this time. This was the nature of life and war during those days. But the Phoenicians were remarkable because they would return by boat with their people and wealth and rebuild their devastated city within five or ten years. The city would flourish and become even richer than before. It would literally rise out of its own ashes and this miracle, the resurrection of Phoenician cities, was repeated over and over again throughout the centuries.

In modern times, during World War I, the Ottoman Turks had been in control of Lebanon and the surrounding region for four hundred years. They created a famine in the region by creating a naval blockade and not allowing food into the region. In 1915 a plague of locusts invaded Lebanon and destroyed all of the crops and most of the trees. By the time the war ended in 1917, it is estimated that over one-third of the



population had died. Again, the Phoenix would rise and the Lebanese would rebuild their country.

Even today, the Phoenix is a central figure in Lebanese modern culture. Beirut is often depicted symbolically as a Phoenix having been destroyed and rebuilt seven times throughout its long history. Most recently, Beirut was reborn from its own ashes after the Lebanese Civil War ended in 1990.



The Phoenix is prevalent in cultures around the globe. Recently, 33 Chilean miners were originally assumed dead after a tunnel collapsed. Then, two months later, they were brought to the surface alive in a capsule named Phoenix. As the Phoenix capsule rose out of the depths of the earth, the Chilean miners were reborn as they were greeted by their loved ones.

What happened to the Phoenician trading empire after 3,000 years?



The Seven Principles formed a solid foundation for the Phoenicians to operate as a cohesive society. Once the Phoenicians in Africa ignored the principle of peaceful resolution of conflicts, their decision would eventually lead to war. In 555 BC, the Phoenicians who lived in Carthage changed the rules. Instead of focusing all their energy on expanding their economic power, they began focusing on holding the land in Sicily and using military action to protect it. Now their decisions and behavior mirrored other land societies, and they were doomed.

Even though Carthage had an army and behaved like the other land forces, they and other Phoenician cities in the Western Mediterranean were still in their glory days. Then in 295 and 212 BC, Carthage was attacked by the Romans and the First and Second Punic Wars were fought. Even though they lost Sardinia, Corsica, Spain and Sicily to the Romans, Carthage continued to expand their trade and rule the seas. The Phoenix continued to rise out of destruction until Rome's jealousy begins the Third Punic War and the Phoenicians are destroyed.

Roman soldiers went door to door throughout the city slaughtering every person in what was the largest execution of civilians in history prior to the WWII. The Phoenicians continued to live in many of the cities in the Western Mediterranean, but their vast trading empire died out with the Romans in control of Carthage and their vast trading empire.



Let's return to our story in Lebanon. In 335 BC Alexander the Great set out at age 21 to conquer the world. When Alexander entered Lebanon, all of the Phoenician cities surrendered but Tyre. By resisting Alexander, his quest was delayed for nine months until the siege ended. Alexander retaliated by killing 8,000 people, selling 30,000 into slavery and impaling 2,000 youth on the coast of Lebanon. Alexander used Tyre as an example to the rest of the world what was in store for their fate if they did not surrender. Even though all the other Phoenician cities surrendered and were part of the Greek empire, they continued to trade and prosper. Once Alexander died a decade later, trade returned in Tyre and the business flourished.

By 65 BC the Romans conquered Lebanon and over the next 2,000 years conquerors one after another would layer other cultures on top of the Lebanese people, but the Seven Principles would continue to live on within the minds and hearts of the Lebanese people and with the Lebanese culture until the Civil War of 1975.

Is it true that women were respected and treated equality?



Yes, women were respected. Remember, the Phoenicians respected Mother Earth. They worshiped the Goddess, the feminine, as the creator of life. When other warlike societies conquered the Phoenicians, they brought

the worship of male Gods to Lebanon. Once the Greeks, Romans and other cultures conquered Lebanon, they dictated how society would operate, and male Gods were worshiped publicly. But that doesn't mean that the Phoenicians abandoned the

Goddess or they immediately transformed their brains to disrespect women and not treat them as equal or that they embraced other cultures religions. In many indigenous cultures today, people continue to practice their former spiritual beliefs even though they were converted to other religious practices.

How did the Phoenicians convert to both the Christian and Muslim religions?

In regard to Christianity, around 400 AD a hermit by the name of Maroun began preaching the teachings of Jesus in the mountains of Lebanon. If you think about it, the teachings of Jesus were similar to the Phoenician principles—respect for all people regardless of their sex, race, religion, or customs; treat everyone with equality; peaceful resolution of conflicts; fairness in business transactions, and so on. Then he began attracting disciples who desired to live under his spiritual guidance, and they became known as Maronites. Eventually, the monks established a church in the mountains around their founder and the Maronite spiritual identity was built on their faith in God. Within two centuries, the Phoenicians living in Lebanon were converted to Christianity.



In regard to the Islamic religion, when the Arabs invaded Lebanon in 636 AD, the cities fell to the Arab invaders, but the Maronite Christians living in the mountains were left alone. Many people in the cities would convert to Islam but Mt. Lebanon would remain Maronite Christian along with pockets in other cities.

You said that 35% of the Arab population in American is Lebanese and 90% of them are Maronite Christian. Why are so many Lebanese Maronite Christians?

From 1840 to 1860, the Maronites, living in the mountains of Lebanon, were being persecuted and massacred by the Ottoman Turks and Druze. When the Europeans



finally intervened to stop the massacres, the Maronite Christians negotiated Mount Lebanon as a semi-autonomous state in the Ottoman Empire. This allowed the Maronites to immigrate. Now, it is estimated by Dr. Alixa Naff, who researches and writes about immigration patterns from Lebanon and Syria, that 95% of the Lebanese people who immigrated to North and South America, Australia and South Africa from the 1880's to 1920, were Christians and 90% of these Christians were Maronites. So, I think the Maronites decision to immigrate was twofold: freedom from being ruled by conquerors and the opportunity to create a better life.

CONCLUSION: THE PHOENIX RISING IN THE 21st CENTURY

As I mentioned in the Introduction, the Phoenicians were a beacon of light who have shown us the way out of darkness and who paved the way for humanity to literally rise out of the ashes of destruction—out of the crises we are currently witnessing around the world. They provided us with a model of transformation for creating a healthy, vibrant, peaceful, prosperous world. The choice is ours. We can cling to the past and witness

the death of the world a little more each day or we can partner with others to birth a new world and build sustainable momentum using a model which was astoundingly effective for centuries. The Phoenix is calling us to rise out of the ashes and be reborn.

In ancient times, the Phoenicians understood the cycle of death and rebirth and they understood the role the individual and collective society played in creating miraculous comebacks—and they created miraculous comebacks over and over again for centuries.

In modern times, Albert Einstein understood that ‘You can’t solve a problem out of the same consciousness that caused it.’ We continue to watch our leaders attempt to solve world challenges with old solutions. The question is will each of us make a conscious choice to birth a new consciousness and stand in our power and require our leaders to remodel all structures in order to embrace a conscious way of being and operating.



Kahlil Gibran’s vast wisdom and loving spirit bridged both the ancient and modern world. His deep faith in God, love, understanding, compassion for all mankind, generosity, and gift of friendship reflects the wisdom of the Phoenicians. His power, beauty and spirit in his work are alive with the grace of inspiration and have moved millions of people in the depths of their consciousness over the last century. The Divine force, Source or Presence within was his guiding light.

May the loving spirit of all of our ancestors guide humanity to embrace the bright light that is within each of us!

PERSONAL STORY

As a little girl, I was fascinated with my Lebanese heritage especially since we had a family tree that was anchored in eight generations of stories and lore. Listening to my mother, grandparents and other relatives speak Arabic, I wondered what it would have been like to grow up in the mountains of Lebanon. When I wasn't dreaming about exploring foreign lands and learning about other cultures or attending school and playing with friends, I thoroughly enjoyed the warmth of the family gatherings. Being surrounded by over 44 family members—just my mother's siblings and their spouses and children—provided me with a deep sense of community at Easter and other holidays. Being surrounded by hundreds of first, second, and third cousins, aunts and uncles, great aunts and uncles, and grandparents during the summer gatherings or weddings, were happy times. It was a love fest with music, singing, dancing and incredibly scrumptious food.



By age 15, I was more intrigued and reflective about my heritage. I began to wonder who I resembled in the family. I was dreaming of graduating from college, living on my own, being a United States Senator, owning a business, traveling the world, and making a difference. The only role models I had for any of my goals were my relatives who were small business owners. At the same time, I wondered what family traits I had inherited from generations of ancestors. (Brain research had not yet proven that social behavior, family patterns and cultural experiences were passed down from one generation to another.) I was aware that I was demonstrating some of the same traits of immediate family members, but many aspects of my personality, interests, goals, and thinking were markedly different from others in the family. Where did I come from, I wondered? Little did I know that my fascination with wanting to see a reflection of

myself in the family and my fascination with family traits and patterns would lead me to developing an expertise in transformation and to researching and speaking about my ancestors, the Phoenicians.

Eventually, I learned that my paternal grandmother, Sadie (La Hood) George, who had died before I was born, was a leader. She made a huge difference in her family, church, home, and the larger Lebanese community, in addition to being kind, warm and compassionate. She raised money with the well-known writer and TV personality Bishop Fulton J. Sheen for St. Patrick's Church in my hometown of Peoria, Illinois; counseled others in the Lebanese community when they were distressed; worked in the family grocery store along with my grandfather; raised four children; and conceived of an idea to raise funds for the Itoo



(revised spelling of Aytou) Society—an organization formed in 1914 in Peoria to help the Lebanese. Her vision, along with a few other women, was to hold an annual Itoo Supper for the general public. Currently, these dinners are the oldest ethnic festival in the state of Illinois. Even though I resonated with stories about my grandmother, I felt I was missing crucial insight about our family's ancestral past.

Over the years, I achieved one goal after another except for being a U.S. Senator. I decided after a long career in California politics and after running for the Board of Supervisors in San Francisco that my destiny was as a political advocate, strategist and spokesperson behind the scenes. Then five years into forming and heading a marketing strategy, consulting, and speaking business, being a newspaper columnist, teaching on the adjunct faculty of three universities, and serving in way too many leadership positions, my personal and professional life came to a screeching halt!

I was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and was informed that my body could not endure any more stress. My doctor was adamant: let go of all leadership positions on any boards and in politics, including closing down my business. Then he informed me that the medical community did not understand the cause of CFS, let alone have a cure.

Healing an unknown health issue seemed daunting. I reminded myself that I had faced challenges before and had developed courage and resiliency of will and spirit. My quest to heal my body began an intense inner spiritual journey. Learning about the Eastern healing arts and how to nurture my body was time consuming, but I had all the time in the world. Delving into understanding how the mind works in order to heal my body, mind and spirit—I had discovered they were interconnected—was stimulating and exciting. Learning to slow down and deal with an identity crisis—I was no longer performing, achieving, generating an income or being validated by colleagues—was a torture chamber. Increasing my awareness and consciousness and eventually perceiving a world that was unavailable to me before was enlightening and awesome.

A few years into the healing process, I discovered that I had lost my way in my attempt to achieve and make a difference. I realized that I had spent far too much time in my mind; I was not being guided by my heart and spirit. I was not bringing forth the best of myself or expressing my true authentic self. The long arduous journey to awaken to my real self and heal would lead me to transform every aspect of my life. This journey would lead me to develop a model for individual, business, political and global transformation.



Eventually, I would teach, speak and write about The Edge Transformation Program©. Because I had successfully used this profound healing program to heal, grow, and learn, I began teaching others how to become unstuck, create breakthroughs, and evolve spiritually. As clients embraced the process, step by step they reinvented their personal and professional lives, their businesses, and their organizations.

Over the last 30 years, I have helped turn around hundreds of businesses and organizations in times of crisis and transition. Facilitating the transformation of leaders in every profession has been humbling as they developed hidden talents and potential, re-wired their brains, and made more significant contributions in their personal and professional lives. Experiencing quality relationships, increasing financial wealth, creating personal and professional balance, expanding their businesses, and healing and aligning their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual selves was deeply meaningful for them.

Even though I had made a positive difference in the world, deep within my heart, I knew my potential had not been realized. I began to wonder



what was next. Then my cousin Randy Couri, who I am related to on both my mother and fathers' side of the family, visited San Francisco. During our tour of the city with him and his wife, Randy suggested that I attend and speak at the Celebrate Lebanon conference being sponsored by the World Affairs Council in our hometown. I thought this was a wild idea and reminded him that I speak on transformation, not about the Lebanese. He informed me that whatever I spoke about would be interesting. But he had never heard me speak!

Over the years, I have attended many foreign affairs forums, traveled to over 23 foreign countries, and kept abreast of world events. Speaking at a WAC conference would be intriguing. But this was my mind speaking not my heart or my spirit and all three



needed to be engaged if I was to speak. When I lack clarity about a decision or an answer, I sleep on the question or issue and usually wake up the next day with clarity.

Early the next morning, I thought about my visit to Lebanon in 2000 and

especially to Aytou where my ancestors for generations had lived. While walking in this small village, which is isolated on a mountain about 70 miles from Beirut, I imagined what it would have been like to grow up in Aytou without a formal education and without the freedom and opportunities that North America offered. While being appreciative of my ancestors in the past, I experienced a deeper feeling of gratitude and reverence. I reflected on all the sacrifices they made immigrating to America, working extraordinary hard to create a solid foundation for their children and grandchildren to thrive and flourish, and for offering me opportunities that I would not have experienced in Aytou. Deep within my heart, I felt my ancestors calling me to speak; although, I had no idea what the topic would be. So, I jumped 'off the edge' into the unknown and called Randy.

The idea for my presentation did not emerge until Angela Weck, the Executive Director of the World Affairs Council, challenged me to speak about the success of the Lebanese. She was adamant that the Lebanese succeeded faster than other ethnic groups when they immigrated. She insisted that the Lebanese assimilated faster and smoother than other ethnic groups into the culture. Angela wasn't the only one who perceived



the Lebanese this way; so did other members of the World Affairs Council in Peoria. I expressed that I honestly could not say that this was true. Then, Angela challenged me to conduct some research. Delving into challenges excites me. Reading mystery books and discovering the clues is stimulating. Business wise, I'm always looking for the clues in order to understand others complex minds—their perceptions, decisions, emotions, behavior, motivations, patterns, and goals that caused personal and business crises—so that I can facilitate their transformation with insight and ease. Step by step the clues unfold until the mystery is solved and the organization or individual crises are resolved.

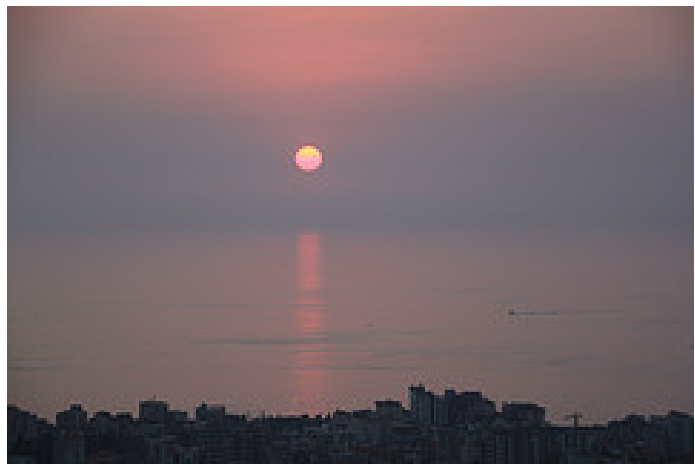


What was intriguing during my conversation with Angela was why my perception of the Lebanese and why the World Affairs Council members were different. Angela was also a professor who taught international affairs at a university so I took her point of view seriously. What clues was I missing as to the success of the Lebanese? In July 2010, I set out to find an answer. While reading academic papers, articles, various web sites, history books, and especially the book *Phoenicians: Lebanon's Epic Heritage*, I gradually woke up to my heritage.

Startled I learned that my ancestors, the Phoenicians, were a cohesive society that lived prosperous, peaceful lives for over 3,000 years. After extensive research, I did not discover any other society in ancient or modern times that was both wealthy and peaceful for centuries. I discovered that the success of the Lebanese was linked to Seven Principles that the Phoenicians were committed to for centuries no matter what town they resided in. When I combined the historical information with my understanding about how the mind works and neuroscience research, it was clear how the Phoenicians built their society upon a solid foundation and passed down qualities from one generation to another.

As I learned about these principles, I reflected upon my own life. Finally, all the pieces fell into place. I believed in and had been living these Seven Principles. Now I understood why my approach to politics and business was considered unique. Why my perception of reality, thinking, decisions, and behavior was different than others, in many situations, was clear. Understanding the Seven Principles was the reflection I had been looking for as a teenager growing up in my family. Amazed, I also realized that the Edge Transformational Program®, which I had developed over 20 years ago, led people to embrace and live these Seven Principles. My life had come full circle. Questions were answered. Reflections were clear. New insight emerged: My life work in the past was interrelated to the present and maybe even a future direction.

Personally, I only speak and write about what I have passion for, what inspires me, and what I have personally experienced. Now that the mystery was solved, I set out to discuss the Lebanese with Sanford Holst, a historian who spent 30 years researching and eventually writing three books about the ancient world and the Phoenicians. After two lengthy conversations about his research, travels and meetings with scholars around the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, I sat down to write the speech.



While writing, I could feel my ancestors looking over my shoulders to ensure that I would express their truth besides my authentic self. The story was not just about the Lebanese and their epic heritage, but also about the legacy they left the world—the possibility for all of humanity to lead prosperous, peaceful lives. The ancients had

birthed a blueprint for success and were committed to it for centuries while other cultures were destroyed or weakened.

Could people be ready to embrace their story and use the Seven Principles to turn around a world in crises? I wondered what would unfold if a generation of youth around the world embraced these principles to solve world problems and used social media to promote them. I also wondered why this information had come to light in the last decade instead of centuries ago. Could it be that many people are ready to believe war is no longer an option and to take a stand for creating peace and prosperity and living in harmony with nature? Brain research has proven that our inner world—perceptions, thoughts, emotions and actions—are creating the results in our outer world. We are the creators of our world individually and collectively. The leaders in this ancient society truly understood this and they made a conscious choice to embrace and live universal wisdom.



I believe that who we are is deeply linked to our ancestral lineage besides all of our earthly experiences. Each experience—if we learn from the last one—prepares us for the next one and builds one upon another to awaken us to our full potential. Maybe the time is right for humanity to awaken to its full potential—one that embraces both

peace and prosperity. This speech is dedicated to all the Phoenicians and Lebanese who walked tenderly on earth for centuries.

In appreciation and gratitude,

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NOTES

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