

A future of our own making

Third, we are becoming more diverse. As Shakespeare has Hamlet observe, “there is nothing that is either good or bad but thinking makes it so”. I suspect that adjusting to this new reality of social diversity will be the greatest test for most Singaporeans.

A BLIP, NOT A BOMB

Fourth, our existing public infrastructure is ageing. The MRT and the main highways are now some 25 or more years old. We have the means to re-capitalise and extend them.

The occasional failure is, on the grand scale of things, a blip not a bomb.

So, let us take a deep breath and cut ourselves some slack even while insisting, justifiably, on high standards. Cutting slack simply means not over-interpreting the meaning of occasional failures and consequently growing despondent that we are systematically decaying.

Fifth, and most importantly, let us mature to accept that the Government is not our parent and the people are not its children.

To expect the national conversation to be a binary one, where complaints flow in one direction and solutions flow from the other, is naive and self-defeating.

For the experiment of co-creation to work, solutions have to come from the community and individuals as well as the Government.

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SHAPING THE NEW NARRATIVE

Complex systems are capable of the phenomena of emergence. This is where macro reality is created by, but is distinct from, the action of the micro activity. The wonder that is consciousness, generated from the chemistry of neural activity, is an example.

Similarly, the new narrative for Singapore will emerge from the activity of a multitude of conversations, iterations of discussions, resolutions of tensions and, yes, even clash of ideas. We should be willing but patient enough to see this process through.

The future is not certain. We are not in full control of events and some driving forces of change are fixed. What is flexible is our attitude towards these driving forces. We may not be able to fully recognise our future before it is here, but we can do much to make it the way we want it to appear.

We can give deliberate attention to the things we can control and take ownership of the process by which we do so. We already have a good start. We have a leader who has the wisdom to know that it is better to change while we can, and not when we must, and the courage to acknowledge that the need for change applies to himself and his team as much as it does to the people and the nation.

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The moral compass of the nation lies within each of us, magnetised by the warmth of shared values and not steered from the outside by the grim iron of economic numbers. Knowing this, we need not fear losing ourselves even as the frequency and amplitude of change increase.

This conviction must be of a shared attitude of mind and a spirit of heart. It should not require a government department to cultivate; it must be an autonomously activated, self-sustaining chain reaction of positive energy. It must be real, not manufactured.

To facilitate this, we have to have more trust that people have the intelligence and maturity to be self-regulating in their social and political conduct. Not all will live up to this standard, but the deficiencies of a few should not be determinant of the standard for all.

This trust needs to be both between government and people, and among the different constituencies of people within the community.

TEMPERING EXPECTATIONS

Successful adaptation does not mean that every challenge can be defeated. It means also learning to come to terms with changes which cannot be avoided.

During the process of the national conversation, we should be prepared to make some reality checks on our expectations of just what can change and what cannot.

First, it is our lot in life to be a geographically limited country. The implication is that density of urban environment can only continue to intensify. No amount of conversation will change that.

But coming to terms can be a positive process of self-awareness of the things that matter more, over the things that matter less. In other words, we work on the things we can change, such as building our social harmony amidst the density, and fret less about the things we cannot, which is the density itself.

Second, we are an ageing society and that is a persistent driving force of social change. While some may be resistant to the placing of aged centres near them now, they will likely change their minds when they themselves are turning aged.

Realistically, with ageing being so pervasive, we face a future where infrastructure for the aged will permeate every part of the community. Introducing this infrastructure progressively allows us to stay slightly ahead of demand.



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You Need to Know Where You Want to Go before You Leave Where You Are Now.

2. MODEL THE STRATEGIES OF EXCELLENCE

You Must Learn to Model the Strategies that Will Allow You to Attain Your Goals.

3. DEVELOP PERSONAL POWER

You Must Fight Procrastination and Know How to Consistently Take Action to Succeed.

4. BE A POWERFUL COMMUNICATOR

You Must Learn to Empower & Influence the People Around You to Achieve Your Goals.

5. ELIMINATE SELF SABOTAGING HABITS

You Must Eliminate Bad Habits like Procrastination Apathy and Resistance to Change.

6. DEVELOP POWERFUL SELF BELIEFS

You Must Break Down Your Mental Barriers and Create New Empowering Beliefs to Succeed.

DATE : 30th August 2012 (TONIGHT)

TIME : 7.00PM – 10.00PM

(Registration starts at 6.30pm)

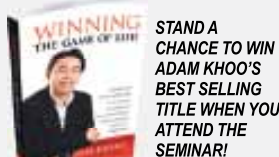
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