The good life: Good money, good work, good friends, good questions

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ESSAY

The Good Life

Good Money, Good Work, Good Friends, Good Questions

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This essay explores whether there is a general definition of the good life applicable cross-culturally to everyone, yet sufficiently open to permit infinitely idiosyncratic personal experience and lifetimes of inquiry. The essay proposes that four goods—good money, good work, good friends, and good questions—make up the good life, if they are pursued in the proper rank order of relative priority and with the proper blending. Readers are invited to test their own intuitive or explicit sense of the good life and the path toward it against the perspective offered here.

This essay offers one set of responses to the question, "What is the good life and what is the path toward it?"

Readers attracted to this question can compare this set of responses to their own definition of the good life—whether their definition has been explicit or implicit heretofore, whether it is well developed or still forming.[1] By way of preview, this essay proposes that a good way to approach the good life is to see it as composed of four primary goods—namely, good money, good work, good friends, and good questions.

But other potential readers will wonder first, "Why should I—a reader of this journal that is concerned with *management inquiry*—worry about this more personal question about the good life here?" "Is not the question of the good life more like a religious question?" such readers may ask—"a question that is one's own private business rather than one to be addressed in the context of management, organizations, and economics?"

Still other readers may chime in, "Doesn't the market system and market theory presume that each consumer has his or her own utility function, which is not the business of economic theory per se?"

These questions or doubts could keep some from reading this essay. The essay as a whole represents only an incomplete response to these questions, so any abbreviated comment at the outset will be even less adequate, less persuasive. Nevertheless, here is one way of beginning to think about how the values we choose as most important to the good life directly influence our performance as leaders, senior managers, or board members of the organizations we belong to (including our parenting roles in family life).

In an earlier essay in this journal, titled "The True Challenge of Continual Quality Improvement" (Torbert, 1992), I argued that companies can make significant long-term progress toward improving the quality of their products and services and of their market and financial positions, *only if* senior executives engage in a continual quality improvement process in regard to their own leadership. Stated this way, the point may seem too obvious to bear mentioning in and of itself. At the same time, this question may seem to have

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nothing to do with the question of the good life. Let me expand on this notion of what it takes for executives to successfully lead a continual quality improvement process.

That earlier essay pointed to empirical evidence that 90% of all executives require at least *two* developmental transformations before they become capable of reliably and effectively supporting continual quality improvement throughout the organization and in their own moment-to-moment actions. To put this point in its most paradoxical form, executives must somehow be open to a level of questioning that more than once leads them through upending developmental transformations that recast their assumptions about the aims of life and work *before* they become fully open to moment-to-moment questioning that can improve performance. During such developmental transformations, the very meaning of questioning itself, the very sense of how time works, and the feel for what kind of exercises of power generate continual quality improvement all change in ways that the person rarely if ever imagined before the change.

Put a little differently, unless the senior managers and boards of organizations fundamentally reconsider the value of questioning in action in attaining the good life for themselves, America's and the globe's economic and political problems and polarizations will not abate.

Yet virtually all persons tend to resist the disorientation and suffering of periods of upending questioning. Few leap at the opportunity to repeat the upending sense of their teenage years, especially when they hold major corporate responsibilities. Perhaps the only way to become enamored of questioning in action, as executives who wish to successfully lead a continual quality improvement process must become, is to make questioning in action the primary commitment and practice in one's personal search toward the good life—as this essay outlines.

The reader will have the opportunity to wrestle with the question of how much to value what kind of questioning as the essay continues. But before turning to the discussion of good money, good work, good friends, and good questions and of why they may be good candidates as criteria to focus on in the search for the good life, let us examine some other areas of life that need to be addressed anew today by a constructive definition of the good life.

Communism's claim to have a workable answer to the "good life" question is no longer at all credible. At the same time, in America, fewer feel wealthy or even comfortably middle class, and the gap between the richest fifth of the population and the poorest fifth has been widening for the past decade.[2] We are no longer certain that the individualistic capitalism of the economics texts works so well, especially when we compare it to the productivity of Japan's clan capitalism.[3] Nevertheless, few of us wish to imitate the Japanese approach of this past generation, which too often virtually indentures persons to their work, leaving wives estranged from husbands and husbands in their 40s dying of heart attacks in lonely hotel rooms. Nonetheless, cynicism, discontent, and disillusion with regard to virtually all professions permeate broad layers of our population.[4]

From another angle, we are increasingly realizing that the entire modern way of life, with its predominant emphasis on the values of production and consumption, is endangering the planet—from the Himalayan forests, to Madagascar's waters, to Brazil's plant and animal life, to Mexico City's air, to the thinning ozone layer over the poles—and intrudes into the foreground more and more frequently. From the point of view of the market model of economics, these are mere "external diseconomies" in our quest for the good life. But because these effects of our actions may threaten our very survival, surely an appropriate definition of the good life and of the path toward the good life will properly subordinate both production and consumption to higher values.

On the cusp of the third millennium, the global nature of the political economy and of its environmental effects dictates that our answers to this perennial question will this time have global—not just local or national—consequences. Therefore, this additional question arises: Is there a way of defining the good life that can have global validity without obliterating justifiable differences in values?

Another question, yet more ambitious: Is there a way of answering all these questions that leaves the market system intact as a method of determining prices *and* that leaves broad leeway for different individuals and societies to evolve distinctly while simultaneously posing a challenge to all individuals and societies to evolve *constructively*? This would be the most conservative possible path toward the good life from our present condition.

I believe that there is an answer to these questions that is at once immediately practical within the melange of marketlike systems that now exist, broad enough to allow for infinite variety among personal and societal value systems, deep enough to embrace

many transformations of understanding, and mysterious enough to allow each a lifetime of continuing questioning. The most succinct way of stating this answer is that the good life consists of an appropriate blending of *good money, good work, good friends,* and *good questions.* Now, let us examine more closely what I mean and what each of you may mean by each of these four criteria that I claim constitute the good life when appropriately blended together.

GOOD MONEY

I would be surprised if very many of you who have ever tried to make ends meet don't agree that making good money represents positive net personal and social value.

But some of you are probably aware of the ambiguity in the cliche "good money." When we say that someone makes good money, we typically mean simply that he or she makes quite a lot of money. There is an implication that the person makes more than an average amount of money, an ample amount of money, comfortably enough money, maybe more money than we can imagine we would really "need."

In the context of talking about the good life, however, the phrase "good money" also carries an ethical overtone of some initially unclear sort. Can we imagine making "bad money?" Perhaps such a phrase applies to illegal profits, such as those of Michael Milken based on insider information in the Wall Street junk bond market of the 1980s. But not all of us would agree that all illegal profits are bad money. In the Soviet Union of the 1970s, the only free markets were illegal black markets, yet some would argue that such illegal profits contributed more to personal and social net value than the money made by legal means under that system.

According to the four criteria of the good life that I am here proposing, what is ethically good about making good money is that one makes money in a way that blends best with the other three criteria of the good life. One can see plenty of examples of persons who accept jobs they don't regard as good work in order to make more money. One can also see examples of persons whose dedication to making more money leads them to sacrifice more and more of the leisure time during which one can cultivate good friends and good questions. Although there may be extenuating considerations in particular cases and for short periods of time, in general, making more money in these ways reduces rather than increases the overall goodness of one's life. Hence no matter how great the amount of money made in such cases, they are not examples of making good money, according to this definition of the good life.

Another way of putting this is that, of the four criteria of the good life, three of them—good work, good friends, and good questions—are intrinsically valuable (we value the time actually spent engaged with them). By contrast, good money is only extrinsically valuable (valuable as a means to obtain other values, not as an end in itself). Therefore, any time we spend making, managing, or spending money—when we are not simultaneously doing good work, meeting good friends, or raising good questions—is not intrinsically valuable time. Indeed, every moment we spend in this way reduces the amount of intrinsically valuable time in our life.

At one extreme, according to this definition of the good life, if the richest person in the world spent all his or her time making money in the way just described—thereby leaving no time for good work, good friends, and good questions—he or she would have the "poorest" life of anyone, would be making absolutely bad money, and would be living an ideal case of "the bad life." The reclusive, addicted, suicidal millionaire Howard Hughes seems to have exemplified this case.

At the other extreme, making no money at all could be an ideal case of making good money, if one's entire life were spent doing good work and engaging with good friends and good questions. (This extreme may initially strike readers as even more unlikely than the other. In fact, however, it is much *more* likely, because whole cultures have functioned altogether without the symbolic token of exchange value that we call money.)

Turning away from these extremes to the vast middle range of situations that virtually any adult reading this essay inhabits, one can be said to be making good money insofar as one spends the *least* amount of attention to making, managing, and spending money consistent with spending the greatest amount of attention to doing good work and engaging with good friends and good questions. Note that this way of defining making good money says absolutely nothing about how much money one makes. Note also that this way of defining making good money is perfectly consistent with spending as much time as one wishes making money, so long as one constructs such money-making activity in such a way that it simultaneously involves doing good work, engaging good friends, and asking good questions.

In any event, this gives you a sense of what I mean by making good money.[5] Does it sound more—or less—like what you mean by making good money?

GOOD WORK

Of course, we would all rather make good money by doing good work than by doing bad work. But what do "good work" and "bad work" mean, and how important is good work?

To me, good work means work that invites the development of craftlike skills and judgment (whether in the realm of materials or language). Such work calls for a kind of mastery that is never fully achieved, in the sense that it can thereafter be exercised in a rote, repetitive, or mechanical fashion. Instead, good masterwork requires and reflects an active attention by the masterworker at each moment to the interplay between one's own body in action and the material (which, in the case of executive-level work, is most frequently the way one is using language as one speaks to others). This active attention integrates knowledge and application, prior experience and future ideal, disciplined sobriety and spontaneous responsiveness. In short, good work raises the consciousness of the worker. It generates mind-body integration and good health.

But this description of good work is still radically incomplete. Left as it is, this definition can give the impression that good work is good just for the worker, is nothing more than a form of narcissistic self-stimulation. Such an implication does violence to our most primitive intuitions about what work is—namely, that it produces something of value to someone(s) other than the worker. And, indeed, this is another essential element of the definition of good work advanced here: Good work produces something of value to someone(s) other than the worker. Everything in the prior paragraph about good work actually implies this without making it explicit. For example, all craft mastery is defined in relation to a tradition (even when it redefines the tradition in creative ways). And all craft traditions represent at once sacred and social trusts: They are dedicated to the creation of *genuine*, rather than false, *social* value. (Of course, how to differentiate genuine from false value in particular cases—whether in food, in works of art, in legal arguments, in accounting audits, in political candidates, or in spiritual teachers, to mention only a few—is among the best and most difficult of good questions—a matter to which we will return later.)

Furthermore, the masterworker can properly appreciate all of his or her own prior experience and future intention only in their embeddedness within social relations—to mentors, peers, and apprentices within the craft tradition, to specific clients and the general public who receive the work (be it product or service), and to past and future generations.

"Delighting the customer," the current cliche about how to succeed in business, is certainly one of the measures of good work, according to this definition, and one of the ends toward which the masterworker aims. But it is just as certainly not the only end. Delighting the customer is a great phrase in that it evokes the spontaneous enthusiasm of response—the raising of consciousness and the arousing of appreciation—that the very best products and services generate in their recipients. On the other hand, delighting the customer can become a murderously narrow and inadequate criterion of good work when it becomes the only or the overriding criterion. Witness NASA's killing off the seven *Challenger* astronauts in an effort to be responsive to its major client—the Office of the President.

All of human history in any field of endeavor instructs us that there is no simple public measure of good work. In the short term and even in the middle term, good work may or may not be rewarded by good money, by promotions, by awards, or by positions of communal esteem and trust (e.g., board memberships). Nevertheless, doing good work is a more significant criterion of the good life than making good money for two reasons. First, as already stated, it is intrinsically valuable, not just extrinsically valuable. Second, good work *can* generate good money, whereas good money can only support, not generate, good work.

The public judgment of good work is so problematic because the very best work does not generate a passive result but, rather, acts on the public, raises consciousness and questions about the very boundaries of the product, service, or medium. This is most evident in the realm of the creative fine arts. But it also occurs in the most down-to-earth products such as shoes, which recently have been filled with air and advertised as vehicles for flight by Air Jordan and other colleagues of his craft tradition.

We know best the cases when such boundary-questioning-and-crossing experiments succeed in commercial terms. But such success hardly proves that those experiments provide much genuine value (as the rapid succession of fads suggest), and many more such

experiments fail than succeed. Many of the failures deserve their fate. Others have simply asked questions for which the public is not yet ready.

Recognized geniuses like Land of Polaroid or Freud or Picasso integrate an enormous span from indigestible questions to delighting the customer (and they often exhibit extraordinary endurance in their experimenting toward such a span of consciousness).

As the foregoing paragraphs suggests, good work unveils questions that evoke wonder in the worker. But *wonder* is a gentle word, and questions sometimes act more roughly. The commitment to do good work can badger and bedevil the worker with such questions. A final criterion of good work is that, through such questions, the work remains lively for the worker and keeps the worker lively "til death doeth them part" (at least insofar as those of us still living can see).

And a brief postscript: If an increasing proportion of a society seeks to live a life that includes good questions, good friends, and good work, then good work that raises good questions is increasingly likely to generate good money and esteem for the masterworker.

Such, then, is the definition of good work offered here. This definition emphasizes the challenge of continual quality improvement inherent in good work and shows that this is not just measured by an increase in the external quality of the product but also by the vivification of the awareness of the worker.

How do these ideas accord or not accord with your own sense of good work? To what degree do you experience yourself as currently doing good work, either by this definition or by your own?

GOOD FRIENDS

A common way of describing good friends is to speak of buddies who have a lot in common (like to shop together or play basketball together or get along at work). They can trust one another's reliability. They support one another, perhaps casually, but nevertheless reassuringly. And they don't get into fights (too often).

What do you mean by good friends?

This common way of describing good friends is emphatically *not* what I mean by good friends. No, I mean more nearly the reverse.

Good friends, as I understand the relationship, are persons who wish to meet and celebrate their differences, in part because these differences clarify who each is and what each values. Good friends often act unpredictably because they are growing and seeking to promote one another's growth. Good friends actively develop trust by disclosing their own efforts to grow, by supporting the other's efforts, and by getting into fights of a certain kind—by struggling together over what each means by the good life and by confronting one another when possible contradictions appear between a person's espoused principles and actual practices.

"Buddies" share norms and values that remain implicit. They thus tend to become more alike, or at least *appear* to become more alike, until some rift separates them. By contrast, good friends, as here understood, *explicitly* test their differences and become *more different* from one another, even as they also develop shared aims, respect, and love at the deepest level. e. e. cummings' (1959) lines about friends and lovers bespeak this kind of love:

> love's function is to fabricate unknownness . . .
> how lucky lovers are(whose selves abide
> under whatever shall discovered be) (p. 57)[6]

This kind of friendship is highly challenging and dynamic. It is essential for discovering and defining for oneself what the good life is and what one's own particular good work is. Persons who begin to taste and value this kind of friendship tend to be attracted to, rather than repelled by, strangers who come from different cultures, generations, sexes, religions, or races. And because such friendships are rooted in concern for one another's development, they tend to become *lifetime* friendships that can span great distances and long periods of absence rather than temporary friendships founded around some specific age-related activity. Developmental transformations tend to occur within the friendship rather than ending the relationship.

No matter what the beginning circumstances or formal roles of the participants in such a friendship—even when they are hierarchically related as mother-daughter, boss-subordinate, or teacher-student—the friendship evolves toward a peer relationship in its maturity.

By this definition, family relationships are a subcategory within friendship. Marriages and parent-child relationships at their very best cultivate mutual development and, over 25-year time periods, the evolution of peer relationships. According to this definition of

the good life, the proper aim of marriage and family life is to generate the kind of friendship described here.

Many persons in today's world have no friendships of this kind. Others have one or two friends with whom they border on the kind of experience described here on rare occasions. Because such friendship does not treat either person's current equilibrium as sacred, it can feel threatening. Persons frequently shy away from this type of friendship without fully realizing it—for example, laughing away the beginnings of what for the other would have been a significant disclosure. The degree of male violence against wives and of parental abuse of children is one raw indication of how far many families are from creating the conditions for true friendship.

Who do you count as good friends? Do the names differ if you use your own prior definition and if you use the definition presented here?

The definitions of good work and good money offered earlier are probably fairly easy to understand and probably contain some attractive elements, whether or not you fully agree with them. By contrast, the definition of good friends offered now is more likely to seem strange and problematic. Although this definition contains echoes that go back at least as far as Plato's dialog *Lysis*, on friendship, this kind of friendship has never flourished widely in any society. It has often been regarded as dangerous to family, church, and state because it generates a deeper loyalty to "whatever shall discovered be" than to any taken-for-granted, prestructured institutional authority (see McWilliams, 1973).

Whereas it is at least conceivable that global consensus could be achieved about the positive value of good work and good money, it seems much more likely that global consensus would form *against* this definition of good friends than for it. Neither American individualism nor Japanese clannishness predisposes persons toward such friendship.

But this is just the (paradoxical) point. *No* taken-for-granted culture can generate such friendship. The aspiring intercultural friends must generate such friendship for themselves by offering their allegiance to good questions. This kind of friendship is neither personality bound nor culture bound but personality transforming and culture transforming.

Because this kind of friendship welcomes strangeness (weirdness, queerness) and transformation, rather than protecting against them, it is consistent with a global society that allows for local and personal differences.

This kind of friendship is also just what you'd want in a board or a senior management team (or a team at any other organizational level). For a work team's ultimate constructive purpose is surely to question whether its members, both collectively and individually, lead/act in ways consistent with the organization's mission.

GOOD QUESTIONS

Most people treat questions as leading toward answers, the point being to discover the correct answer. In such cases, questions serve at best as a means to an end. From this point of view, it will no doubt seem peculiar at first to hear the claim of this essay: that good questions are intrinsically valuable—indeed, more valuable than good work or good friends (though truly good questions often insinuate themselves *through* good work and good friends).

Of course, what I mean by good questions are not mere questions of fact (e.g., "Where's the bathroom in this place?"). To such a question, we wish an answer—pronto. Good questions are intrinsically valuable because they heighten our awareness, make us more alive and more related to the rest of our own lives and everything else.

Good questions, insofar as we can attend to them, connect us to a wider, living universe. Every time that the scene before my eyes comes to life and I really see the color, the movement, and the relationships—every time looking becomes seeing—I am looking with a question. Every time I truly listen to the sounds reaching my ear, I am hearing with a question. Every time I actually taste the food I am eating, I am . . . actually tasting.

To taste is to test. To test is to question. To question is to taste. The subtlest taste of all, and the trickiest to develop, is the taste for continual questioning. Initially, we can't help hoping that we'll find an answer that ends our agonizing questions. We'd rather not be *that* alive! We're anything but sure that we want to learn how to see answers as leading to better questions.

Questioning may or may not be translated into words. In poetry, at its best, every word is tasted as it is written (and as it is read). In prose, too.

An organization's mission or purpose is, properly, an undying question, sometimes prodding, sometimes alerting, sometimes guiding its members. But how many members of an organization treat it this way? How to focus, how to formulate, how to wake

up to an organization's mission is itself a good question. Is *anyone* in the organization awake to either of these questions?

What are the questions guiding your life? What is the single question that integrates those different questions? Are you asking every day? Every moment? Are you fully alive—let alone living the good life—when you are not tasting your experience? Am I? Now?

Perhaps you are a committed believer, with a deep, embracing, and comforting faith. Whether your faith is in the Koran or in the miracle of Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection or in a-theistic scientific method or in constitutional democracy, you may feel that you have passed beyond this "adolescent theology of questions" to a wonderful, well-founded answer.

Yes. But if your answer is truly wonder-ful and you are truly alive to it now, then you are wonder-ing and wonder-ful—alive to its mystery, questioning. To advocate scientific method without question or Christ's resurrection without appreciation for the mystery, are grand self-contradictions indeed!

Good questions never die. It is only our attention that dies to them. Good questions enliven parties (even political parties!), organizations, and each of us individually (even those of us who avowedly and emotionally hate to be put into question). Good questions grow relationships ("What thoughts, feelings, and actions are truly loving now?"). Good questions grow vocations ("How can I 'excel' my current attention in the service of excellent work?"). And good questions grow wealth ("Who are my customers and what will tickle them pink?"). Whereas "right answers" have a way of growing armies and generating destruction, good questions generate conversation and good spirits.

Good questions rise outward toward the very nature of nature, toward the very nature of the universe. Good questions deepen inward toward the very mystery of one's own and others' human being, attending finally to one's own and others' attending, bestowing the gift of developmentally meaningful glances, silences, words. Good questions expand flirtatiously along the boundaries and surfaces of the present. We can only work, love, and question in the present. Can we remain present to the present, even as our hearts remember the past, our minds roam the future, and our bodies fall toward sleep?

As we grow older and begin to stiffen physically, are our questions becoming increasingly lively?

Not all questions become increasingly lively. Not all questions awaken us to the present. Not all questions meet any of the criteria for good questions advanced in the foregoing paragraphs. Indeed, the experience of good questions is likely to be rare in a society such as ours, conditioned for the past 500 years by the quest for scientific certainty.

If you immediately and fully agree with my sense of what good questions are and with my sense of their centrality to the good life, I will be astonished. For I have never seen the matter presented so.[7] Moreover, I have heard many initial reservations and objections to these ideas when I share them verbally—objections that are by no means fully dealt with in this brief introduction to the notion of good questions. So . . . what are your initial responses to this notion?

PRIORITIZING AND BLENDING THE FOUR GOODS

In beginning to draw together the thoughts you have had as you have read the foregoing pages, you may wish to consider the following questions:

1. What additional criteria for the good life—besides good money, good work, good friends, and good questions—have occurred to you?
2. How do you prefer to reformulate the four goods I have tried to describe?
3. How do you prioritize the four goods presented here and/or the goods that seem primary to you?
4. Which of these primary goods have you concentrated on in your life more than others?
5. How successful do you feel you have so far been at generating each good that seems primary to you?

I have been quite explicit about *my* rank ordering of the four goods. Good questions, I have asserted, grow relationships, vocations, and value/wealth. Good questions are, therefore, in my understanding and experience, the primary aim of anyone seeking the good life. As strange as it may sound from the modern point of view, a practitioner of this path toward the good life might say, even cheerily, "Good questions bedevil me; therefore, my life is good."

Good friends are the second highest priority, and friendships are good to the degree that they are based on good questions. The more you take the risk to bring the questions that be-devil, be-wilder, and be-muse you to your friends; and the more you take the risk to listen to their questions; the better your friendships will become, even when the questions are addressed to the friendship itself. (Along the way, you are likely

to lose some buddies who don't want to face such questions, at least not just now or not in just such a way).

Good work is the third priority among the four primary goods. Work is good to the degree that it revivifies good questions (raising the worker's awareness), to the degree that it spins off good friends and the leisure to enjoy them (indeed, the best work is itself leisurely in this respect), and to the degree that it embodies itself in ways that others, including Mother Earth herself, value.

Money, I have asserted, ranks lowest of the four goods, having no intrinsic value. Money, therefore, functions as a good only insofar as it supports the other three goods.

The very best way for money to support the other three goals is to make it (enough of it so that one is not distracted by its absence) *by doing good work with good friends addressing good questions.* To create such conditions is a high challenge indeed! If one succeeds, the issue of how to divide one's time among the different priorities obviously fades, because one is attending to all four goods at once. This represents the ultimate blending of the four goods—the good life.

CONCLUSION

These pages have attempted to raise questions for the reader about what you regard as the good life and as the path toward the good life. I have attempted to provoke you in two different ways:

1. by asking you what approach to the good life is compatible at one and the same time with a market economy, with cultural and personal diversity, and with the developmental transformations that growth entails
2. by offering you a set of four, rank-ordered criteria for the good life and the path toward the good life for you to compare to your own evolving criteria.

I have not attempted to make a strong, closely knit argument in favor of my particular criteria. Instead, I have attempted to say just enough to display the outlines of each criterion, of their overall coherence with one another, and of their consistency with a globally universilizable definition of the good life that does justice to local differences.

Of course, you may not agree that I have succeeded in displaying either the beneficence or the coherence or the universalizibility of my four criteria for the good life. I will welcome your comments to that effect, because it is altogether in my own self-interest to improve my approach. Please tell me also how your favored criteria fare in response to the demand for beneficence, coherence, and universalizability?

Good wishes in your ongoing search.

NOTES

1. John Rawls (1971) in *A Theory of Justice* offers another, related theory of what anyone can be presumed, minimally, to mean by the good life. Although his theory is not synonymous with the one offered here, it is not fundamentally inconsistent with it either (see Torbert, 1974). Rawls' candidates for the four primary goods are (a) self-esteem, (b) a rational plan of life, (c) the opportunity for good work, and (d) wealth. The last two obviously bear some relation to the ideas of good work and of good money.

2. The well-known conservative Kevin Phillips (1990, 1993) has written two books on this topic: *The Politics of Rich and Poor: Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath* and *Boiling Point: Republicans, Democrats and the Decline of Middle Class Prosperity.*

3. The distinction between individualistic capitalism and clan capitalism is based on William Ouchi's (1980) *Theory Y*, William Lazonick's (1991) *Business Organization and the Myth of the Market Economy*, and Lester Thurow's (1992) *Head to Head: The Coming Economic Battle Among Japan, Europe, and America.*

4. Best known among the recent cultural critiques is Robert Bellah *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life.* More recently, there is Donald Kanter and Philip Mirvis (1989) *The Cynical Americans: Living and Working in an Age of Discontent and Disillusion.*

5. The most provocative extended treatise on the relation of money to the good life that I have encountered is Jacob Needleman's (1991) recent book *Money and the Meaning of Life.* Although the flavor and style of that book are very different from my brief comments here, I do not sense any fundamental inconsistency in the underlying argument.

6. Reprinted from *Complete Poems, 1904-1962*, by E. E. Cummings, Edited by George J. Firmage, by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation. Copyright © 1935, 1963, 1991 by the Trustees for E. E. Cummings Trust.

7. A fuller and different discussion of questioning occurs in chapter 15, "Living Inquiry," of my book *The Power of Balance: Transforming Self, Society, and Scientific Inquiry* (Torbert, 1991).

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