



# THE POWER OF ONE MANIFESTO

**Reclaiming the Heart & Soul of Our Nation**

**One Person, One Policy, One Value at a Time**

By

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## Introduction

*I care deeply about the well-being of this courageous experiment in individual empowerment, self-governance and civic engagement called American Democracy. And I am disturbed and saddened by the lack of integrity, honesty, courage and, above all, the lack of genuine wisdom being demonstrated by many who today call themselves leaders in both our public and private sectors.*

*I am particularly disheartened by what I believe is a corruption of values and a lack of effective and intelligent action being taken by these leaders specifically, but not exclusively, by those who consider themselves conservatives and appear to be driven far more by economic motives and reactionary beliefs than by larger causes and more noble concerns. By the willful division and dissention some of these individuals spread, and by their unethical obstructionism and unwillingness to address the root causes of the systemic challenges we face.*

*Indeed, in my opinion, their desire to subvert the will of the people in order to impose their own narrow political agendas and religious beliefs upon the majority is unconscionable. For in a Democracy founded on the principle of religious freedom and dedicated to the empowerment and well-being of all, these beliefs should play no role in the public discourse and certainly not in the creation of policies and laws. Indeed, from my perspective, these individuals are functioning more like mercenaries than responsible guides and more like plunderers than citizen legislators.*

*As a result, I believe that you and I and millions of our fellow citizens who are, at last, waking up to this reality – those on the left, in the middle and on the right – would be wise to also acknowledge our own accountability for these conditions, an accountability that results from our failure to remain engaged, vigilant and committed to participate in and support the true scope and promise of this nation as articulated by our Founding Fathers.*

*So I believe it is time to make a deeper effort to participate more fully in protecting and defending our own Democracy. Time we insist that our current leaders move beyond their petty, unconscious, political games and the limited goals they are pursuing. Time we begin identifying a new generation of leaders who have more skill, greater integrity and a much deeper commitment to the greater good of the greatest number. And it is certainly time that each of us become more individually attentive, imaginative and innovative regarding the next steps our nation must take to heal the wounds of the past, deal with the inequities and pain of the present, elevate the process by which we engage in governance and fulfil the true promise articulated in the documents that created this Democracy a little more than 240 years ago. In this way, and only in this way, can we and future generations hope to live more vital, sustainable and positive lives.*

*For this reason, I believe that you and I and millions of our fellow citizens must now raise our voices in unison and exercise our full rights and duties granted us and do so quickly and with*

*clear and courageous intent, so that we the people, this remarkable form of government called Democracy and the rest of humanity will not suffer serious consequences.*

*This document has been written in the hope that the suggestions and recommendations it contains can contribute to this goal of saving our Democracy.*

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For more information on the recommendations offered in this excerpt, please look for the new book of the same name that will be available in March 2017 **Contact - [george@agenation.com](mailto:george@agenation.com)**

## Part One – Our Democracy Under Seige



**“The price of greatness is responsibility.”**

**Winston Churchill**

Our Democracy has survived a number of significant challenges in its 240+ year history. Many experts believe the most severe of these occurred in the time leading up to, during and immediately following the Civil War. And indeed, some of the deep divisions that exist in America today and which were on display for all of us to experience in all of their dark demeanor during the 2016 election, can be traced, in large part, to our failure to adequately address the wounds created by that war as well as by the wounds of slavery and those created during the formative years of this nation when we displaced and slaughtered so many of the indigenous people whose land we stole. And yet not even these egregious threats, not even the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln shortly after General Lee signed the surrender by the Confederacy, fractured our Nation.

Indeed, the strength and durability of our Democracy is quite remarkable, especially when one considers the amount of turmoil and unrest that marks the history of so many other nations and other forms of government.

So at this time when our Democracy is facing another very significant threat to its well-being, it is the purpose of this document to identify some of the specific elements that have contributed to its durability in the past with the hope of allowing us to better understand what we can and must do going forward to protect our system of government and help our nation make this particularly dangerous passage in the time ahead. It is also the purpose of this document to provide some very clear and specific things each of us can do to accomplish these objectives

## **What Makes Our Democracy Strong**

The first of the elements that contribute to the strength and durability of our Democracy is, of course, the artful intent, craft and spiritual inspiration invested by those who drafted and signed the Declaration of Independence, The Constitution of the United States and The Bill of Rights.

The second is the inclusion of provisions by our Founders in our Constitution of a unique System of Checks and Balances that has, until recently, prevented any one political party or individual from contravening the intent of our Constitution and Bill of Rights.

A third reason for the strength of our Democracy is the clear separation of powers between our civilian government and a career military. A separation that has thus far prevented the misuse of our military by anyone who would turn its might against our own people.

A fourth is the resilience and commitment shown by the people of this nation in support of our rights and of our way of life.

And, from my perspective, the most important element of all, one without which these other essential elements could not have been effective for more than 240 years, has been the commitment by those who have occupied the Presidency, even those who struggled significantly with their own all too human flaws, to uphold their Oath of Office to Protect and Defend the Constitution of the United States.

Thankfully, this was true even in the case of individuals such as Warren G. Harding who was largely responsible for the Tea Pot Dome Scandal, Richard Nixon who was responsible for the Watergate Scandal and George W. Bush whose administration was responsible for fabricating information about Weapons of Mass Destruction that was used as a justification to lead our nation into an unjustified war.

Yes, even these questionable actions by men who did not always represent the highest and best of who we are, did not threaten our Democracy because, in the end, their commitment to the well-being of our people and to this construct called our Democratic Government proved to be stronger than their personal agendas and quests for personal power.

***“Nothing is politically right that is morally wrong.”***

***Daniel O’Connell***

## **The Current Threat to Our Democracy**

This brings us to the present moment and to the fact, in my opinion, that with the election of Donald Trump, we face what is possibly the most serious threat ever to our Democracy. I say

‘the most serious’ because I do not think that in drafting our Declaration of independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights our Founding Fathers ever envisioned a time when the threat to our well-being would come not from outside our borders, nor even from the kind of substantial internal divisions currently present in our nation, but instead from the person who would one day sit at the center of our Government. I do not believe they envisioned that this far more insidious threat would arise as a result of the lack of character and talent, a less than honorable intent and from the absence of respect for our system of government by a person who would one day occupy the central role of President in our Democracy and be asked to take the oath to “Protect and Defend the Constitution of the United States, So Help Me God.”

For this reason, I believe the Trump Administration poses an egregious threat to our way of life. In making this claim, I want to be clear that although I call Donald Trump to account for being the kind of man our Founding Fathers did not envision ever occupying the White House, I do not do this to disparage him as person. No matter what flaws of character or questionable core values he may exhibit – and indeed they are very substantial - he, like all of us, is on the path of learning how to be better at being human. Therefore, as a fellow traveler, I extend to my compassion, understanding and encouragement to him and hold a vision that he will one day arrive at a higher level of consciousness from which he will understand that we are all one and that none of us get to our goal until the least of us do.

My compassion and support for him as a person, however, does not extend to my offering him my support for his all-too-apparent belief that he has the right to inflict his imperfections and flaws, his limited experience, questionable values and reactionary views that are contrary to the best interests of this nation, upon the rest of us.

I will not, however, spend more time here on what I call The Case Against Donald Trump. Even a cursory review of the public record and the plethora of news reports and articles available in the mainstream media as well as online will provide more than enough information for those with eyes to see as well as look, ears to listen as well as to hear and hearts to feel. So I will not take time here repeating all of that.

Instead, in the next part of this document, I will share what I believe we – each and every one of us as citizens of these United States - can and must do to counter this threat and to return our nation to a path of sanity, sustainability and the fulfillment of our destiny.

## Part Two – Options and Solutions For Saving Our Democracy



**“He who created us without our help  
will not save us without our consent.”**

**Saint Augustine**

### **Things We Can Do Now & In The Time Ahead to Save Our Democracy**

In this section you will find some options and possible solutions that I believe we can put in place to deal with this latest and most serious threat to our way of life, put our Democracy back on track and prevent a similar occurrence from happening in the future.

First, let’s acknowledge that we cannot afford to sink into depression, let frustration and anger drive us to the sidelines, or hopelessness make us question if we will be able to live with even a semblance of honor, dignity and safety in a nation that suddenly no longer feels like home. Instead, we have to guard against allowing the current threat to take root. Instead, we need to pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, stay in balance and do some very immediate, specific and constructive things that protect the rights and privileges we celebrate and value in our Democracy and the advances we have made toward solving some of the genuine challenges of our time.

And make no mistake about this, Donald Trump and his not-so-merry band of reactionaries will damage our way of life and possibly destroy or, at the very least, greatly retard one of the most noble and unique experiments in collective consciousness, individual empowerment and civic engagement called American Democracy that has ever been articulated and practiced by a major society on Earth.

And contrary to the belief held by Trump and his supporters, those of us in this nation who voted for Hillary Clinton or who unfortunately did not vote, are not going to sit back and hold our breath or our noses for the next four years while this man, who lost the popular vote by almost 3 million votes, the largest plurality in the history of this nation, and who may well have

not even legally won the necessary number of Electoral College votes, abuses our trust and negatively impacts our nation's well-being.

No, this is certainly not our only option. There is another, a very real, powerful and practical solution. It is called "The Power of One." And it is an option that will put us directly back on the path to regaining our sovereignty and, in the process, remind Mr. Trump and his band of philosophical reactionaries that although some in this nation (some twenty-something % of eligible voters) may have elected him to represent them, not even they have anointed him or his cronies as our King and Keeper.

When it comes to implementing 'The Power of One' there is an essential caveat. In order for our efforts to be effective, we must first and foremost remember that while our founding documents identify our unalienable rights, they also make clear that we have individual responsibilities. Or to use a phrase often used by a well-known radio talk show host, Thom Hartmann – Democracy is not a spectator sport.

**Having An Effective, Aligned Strategy** - One of the things we must do to be successful is to articulate an effective strategy for moving forward and we must also now do what democrats, independents and even some moderate republicans in America have rarely, if ever, done. We must come into true alignment and act in concert with all of our strategic allies. In short, although the decision to execute "The Power of One" needs to be made by each of us as individuals, it requires a raising of our collective voices, a combining of our collective energies and the commitment of our collective talents to the accomplishment for the greater good.

If we do these things, frankly there is nothing we cannot accomplish. We have the numbers, the experience and the ability to accomplish our objectives. And if we do the necessary things we can indeed save our Democracy. For as Margaret Meade reminded us, *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*

'The Power of One' will allow us to remind the Trump Administration and this Far Right Congress that is in collusion with him that they are not our bosses or masters, but instead were elected to represent and serve us. It will allow us to remind them that they are bound by our founding documents which they have taken an oath to uphold and defend. And, of particular importance, 'The Power of One' will allow us to remind them that this is our nation and not theirs alone, a nation in which *"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote general Welfare, and secure the blessing of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."*

The Power of One can also ensure that Mr. Trump personally overcomes:

- His unwillingness to share his tax returns and disclose his financial dealings and potential conflicts of interest.



- His objections to putting his business in a true and binding blind trust.
- His appointment of White Supremacists as personal advisors and other bigots and racists and religiously motivated individuals to key posts in our Democracy.
- His unwillingness to deal constructively with the press and allow them to perform their duty which is to keep us – his bosses – informed on the business of our government and him accountable to the will of we the people.
- His desire to have his children who run the family business also sit in on official state business, and above all,
- His refusal to dealing diligently and responsibly on behalf of all of the people of this nation and to solely represent the business of the people – which is not the expansion of the Trump brand.

\*In case you haven't noticed these things Donald Trump is resistant to doing, are some of the same things the world's worst demigods and dictators do and have done to subvert the will of the people.

As a result, the bottom line is this: According to the documents that serve as the foundation of our Democracy, we have the right to expect that the person who is elected to the office of President do things in an accountable and transparent way that support all of the people of this nation. And we have an equal right and even greater responsibility to take our power back and make sure America stays on a course toward a safe, sustainable and positive future, if Donald Trump or anyone else who is ever elected President, does not perform their sworn duty to protect and defend the Constitution of These United States.

And in instances where there is “a clear and present danger” to the well-being of these United States and to we the people – a danger that I believe Donald Trump poses, - we need and should not wait for the next election to make a change. We should monitor all of his actions to be sure that he is acting responsibly and if not, we should rise up in mass and in defense of our freedom and our rights and ensure that this individual who is unfit to serve as our president is unceremoniously shown the door.

And, if Donald Trump believes he can treat the Office of the President as a preening post or as a platform to advance his personal business interests rather than the interests of this nation or that he can perform his duty as President as an absentee landlord or disinterested CEO who can delegate his duties to others who were not elected by us and who have clearly been carefully chosen by him to serve only the few and not the many, then it is our right and responsibility to remind Donald Trump that as citizens of these United States we are very familiar with what our founders declared and are prepared to act nobly and with courage, as they acted, to preserve and protect ‘a more perfect union.’

*“When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God*

*entitles them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”*

*“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness – That to secure these rights Governments are instituted among Men, derive their just powers from the consent of the governed –That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness...”*

So no matter what Donald Trump and this collection of sycophants he has nominated and appointed believe, and no matter what personal political and religious values the current majority members of Congress want to advance, this is our nation, not theirs, and we have a responsibility not to let him and them abuse us and destroy our way of life. Just as we have not let other demigods like Hitler, Mussolini or Stalin do so, just as we did not let the States of the Confederacy or any other threats we have faced, alter the course of this great nation, nor can we or will we sit silently by and hope that a Congress and a Court that will soon be working in full collusion with Mr. Trump’s Executive Branch will protect us. Instead, we must have the wit and the courage to read the writing on the wall and start demonstrating The Power of One.



*“The beginning of wisdom is a firm grip on the obvious.”*

**Anonymous**

### **Taking An Essential Step**

For our own well-being and that of our nation, I suggest we next do something that may, at first, seem contrary to what I have said. Let’s begin by holding and deepening a vision each and every day and as often during the day as possible, of a sound, well-functioning constructive nation. Let us individually and collectively keep increasing the intensity of that vision. For as many of us know, this may well be the most important, effective and powerful thing any of us can do to protect our way of life and save our Democracy.

In the process of doing this, let's also send a little love and support Donald Trump's way. Let's hold an image of healing for him because while he may not know it or, at least, his narcissism may not allow him to admit it, he most certainly can use all the help he can get.

And perhaps, just perhaps, some of our good thoughts and blessings and our vision for a positive outcome for the greater good, will help him to find better balance and a true and more constructive path forward. Perhaps our prayers for him will, at the very least, begin to help him to develop the capacity to understand and the ability to both feel and express genuine compassion for others, a most essential and necessary ability every leader at every level must have.

Now, I personally am not holding my breath and neither should you, that Donald Trump's transformation will be immediate nor even perhaps occur in this lifetime. Nor do I make this suggestion because I want us to help him stay in office. For, as it must be clear to you by now, I do not believe that his occupying the Office of the Presidency is good for our country nor even for him as an individual. But one never knows exactly how our prayers will be answered and whether his next stage of healing will occur in this or some other lifetime. But we can certainly hope that Donald Trump will eventually understand that the primary reason he and the rest of us are alive is to become better at being human.

This expression of our compassion for him and our wishes for his healing and the elevation of his consciousness and ours will certainly not harm him and it will definitely help us to maintain our balance and our humanity and help us know that we are doing everything we can to support the best and highest good for our country.

I want to be clear, however, that in recommending that we hold this kind of vision of healing and the elevation of his consciousness and ours, I am not suggesting that we perform what is called a 'spiritual or religious by-pass.' No, we should not hope that if we close our eyes, eventually things will work out.

While this may be true over the long run of human history, it certainly will not protect us in the near term. So I am suggesting that while we hold this vision of healing, each and every one of us must also, as ardently and constructively as possible, do all that we can to protect our rights and fulfill our responsibility as a citizen of this remarkable experiment in human empowerment called Democracy.

### **Turning Challenges Into Opportunities**

There is, of course, as has been reported by a number of other wise beings, some good news in what is happening. Many of the unhealed wounds that have divided us for so long – those issuing from the injustices we have committed against the Indigenous people who first occupied this land, from slavery and the Civil War, from our discrimination against various minorities and the other injustices we have and continue to visit upon our people and others - have now finally and rudely been dragged out into the light of day. Bigotry, prejudice,

misogyny, homophobia, xenophobia, malicious distortion of truth and a number of other illegitimate offspring of Fear, Hate and Ignorance as well as the pain they issue from, are now standing naked for all to see. And so this nakedness gives us opportunity to bring new levels of understanding, compassion, healing, and resolution to these wounds.

So if we want to capitalize on this opportunity to heal, we must work diligently and compassionately and remember that the most significant and important thing each of us and all of us can do every day is to contribute to this healing, within ourselves and between each and every other being in our world.

Another piece of good news is that if Donald Trump and The Reactionaries do what they claim they are going to do, people all across this nation – particularly those who voted for Trump because they thought he would improve the quality of their lives - will recognize the error of our ways and come together to take the necessary and constructive steps to insure that our way of life and our system of government will not be destroyed to serve the desire of the few to control the many.

In this way, this upheaval that is part of the Trump phenomenon can perhaps be given greater purpose and turned into a blessing for our nation. It can help us to make some long overdue changes to the way we select our candidates, to our election process, to some gaps in our founding document that have led to this current clear and present danger and to put in place new policies and strategies that will better support and serve the well-being of all of our people.

### **Acknowledging The Death of an Illusion**            r

Another piece of good news and a fundamental truth that unfortunately many of us forget every day is also now in plain sight: *“No one is going to save us.”* And a corollary to this truth that, *“No one can harm us without our acquiescence.”*

So if any of us are still harboring the hope that some ‘Deus ex Machina’ is going to descend carrying a hero who will rescue us or that one political candidate or one political party will ride into town, pull back the curtain and expose the charade that has and continues to be perpetrated against us, we’d be really wise to let go of this illusion, and instead, turn our attention to an indisputable truth which the poet June Ford articulated and the courageous Alice Walker popularized - *“We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.”*

And here’s the best news of all! Ridding ourselves of the illusion that someone else is going to save us and remembering that this is our task can put us directly on the path to regaining our sovereignty, dignity and sanity. It can stop us from waiting for others – especially Donald Trump and the other reactionaries and resisters who think they have the right to impose their minority views and their repressive religious dogma on the rest of us - to implement the necessary solutions we need. It will also help to inoculate us against the deadly Virus of the Demigod, an inoculation that is so desperately needed in our world at this time in our history.

And none of these things requires an act of Congress, an Executive Order signed by either our outgoing nor incoming President nor even a note from our mothers. All we have to do is practice “The Power of One.

**“You never change things by fighting existing reality.  
To change something, build a new model  
that makes the existing model obsolete.”  
R Buckminster Fuller**

### **Other Things We Can Do to Save Our Democracy**

Another essential and necessary thing we can do to save our Democracy is to agree to learn from our mistakes and rectify them. Obviously, we’ve been extremely fortunate up until now to have had individuals, no matter how flawed, who while occupying the highest office in the land have, for the most part, placed the needs of the nation above their own. In this instance, however, we are faced with this man who is so controlled by his narcissism that he appears incapable of viewing other people and events except by virtue of the immediate benefit they bring to him and to his company.

So if we are wise we will pay close attention to the real danger here and do all that we can to avoid a similar occurrence in the future. To do so we must look to identify and fill some gaps in our founding documents that make this kind of anomaly no longer possible. I will say more about some of these things in the next sections.

It is also true that not all of the danger we face comes from Donald Trump alone. Instead, he is simply the next stage or by-product of the very intentional, malicious and multi-decade effort that began with the notorious Powell Memorandum, the document that has guided a radical wing of the Republican party and been supported by a small cabal of high net worth funders and ill-intentioned conservative Think Tanks. The primary goal of this document has been turning America into the private playground and personal religious preserve of the few. As a result, there has been precipitous decline in the quality and character of politics in our time.

Isn’t it ludicrous, that a group talks so much about God, morality and family values and is, in fact, doing all it can to gut our Democracy and subvert our way of life.

Their actions and values have, in turn, also led them, and now Donald Trump, to undercut the fundamental safeguard in our Democracy, our system of Checks and Balances. For in order to operate effectively, this so-called fail safe system created by our Founders requires a high level of personal integrity and a true sense of responsibility and accountability on the part of those who are elected to Protect and Defend the Constitution of the United States. It also relies on a

level of mutual trust between those of us who elect and those who agree to serve which must be constantly monitored and validated.

Without these core qualities of individual character and a covenant of trust between those who are elected and those of us who are served, the greater good and the will of the people will not be advanced. Without out these essential elements the narrow political agendas and personal religious beliefs of a minority corrupt and subvert even a Democracy such as ours founded on the clear separation of church and state and religious freedom.

Below are some of the other mistakes I believe we need to identify, learn from and rectify. Please note these recommendations are presented here in only a cursory form. What they and other recommendations proposed by others who are also concerned with our well-being require is significantly more time and space as well as the contributions of some of our best minds and hearts to fully flesh them out and to articulate effective strategies for moving them forward.

### **Measuring Twice - Cutting Once**

There is an old tried and true carpenter's rule that reminds us that it is always valuable to measure twice and cut once. From personal experience I know that this rule saves a lot of time, energy, money and materials. It also significantly raises the probability of success in every undertaking.

So, I believe that as a nation we would be wise to apply this same rule to the process of selecting our candidates for public office. Putting in place a few simple and easy to implement requirements that would allow us to 'measure twice, cut once' could go a long way to preventing people of insufficient character and intelligence and unscrupulous intent from ever throwing their hat into the ring, wasting our time and possibly rising to the same level of threat that Donald Trump now poses. Requiring them to take a basic psychological profile, a basic intelligence and a basic emotional intelligence test as pre-requisites prior to running for office whether it's for local dog catcher or the presidency and making the results of these tests available for public scrutiny would also be a valuable and necessary first step in protecting our Democracy.

In addition, each candidate should be required to present a White Paper, as a condition for registering as a candidate, that they themselves write and in which they present their views and positions on key issues of our time and, at least, some of their recommended strategies. Finally, candidates for state-wide and national office – especially the Presidency - should be subject to a thorough background check prior to being given the approval to run. At the moment, this is required of every cabinet and high ranking appointee with the exception of the President.

Taken together these elements would be a good way to start to take the measure of who it is that is asking to serve us. For it is abundantly clear, that eagerness, money, a large ego and

family connections— qualities that appear to have gotten many in our government elected - are simply no longer sufficient qualifications for those who serve us in these complex and complicated times in our history.

### **Instituting Campaign Finance and Campaign Time Limits**

Another essential step we should take using the Power of One to demonstrate our political will is to limit the amount of money a candidate or anyone or any group associated with them can spend in any one election. And we should also put a time limit on each election campaign. In some countries campaigns are limited to anywhere from 2 to 4 months. Imagine the sanity that would give us. In fact, people in most other countries think Americans are crazy to let a campaign drag on for a year or two and cost hundreds of millions and, sometimes, billions of dollars.

### **Enforcing Truth-In-Advertising Standards**

Before the degradation of standards in public advertising became common place, it used to be that products and services had to pass a 'truth test' in regard to the claims they advanced. While these standards are now only a pale version of themselves, they should be significantly strengthened and, without exception, also apply to all television, print, digital and social media political advertising at all levels as well.

Enough of the bullshit, the lies, distortions, and the character assassinations that have become common place and flow out across our airwaves, clog the internet and fill too many of our newspapers, blogs, false news sites and social media. While this certainly fattens the bottom line of the media companies, gives the army of political consultants something to do and distorts the minds of people who actually believe this dreck, in the end it is a disgrace to our political process and corrupts not only those who perpetrate this sham, but the foundations of what should be a wise and noble society.

### **Re-constituting and Protecting the Fourth Estate**

There is little doubt that over the course of the last 30 or so years, what is today called the Media and was once proudly known as The Fourth Estate, has steadily lost both its purpose, its integrity and the importance of the role it must play within our Democracy. It has, of course, for the most part, also lost its standards and its commitment to truth.

So if we want to protect the well-being of our Democracy, we must inform and educate our population, and prevent the blatant manipulation and misdirection that currently goes on. And to do this we need to return the Fourth Estate to its rightful place as watchdog and protector of the common good in our society.

A first step in doing this is to ensure that all media companies remain independent entities, and not subsidiaries or divisions of large, multi-national corporations whose philosophies and interests are not always in alignment with those of the people. In fact, if one considers this

current condition, there is little or no difference between media owned by corporate entities and as state owned media organizations that exist under non-democratic forms of government. This is a situation that must change if we want to continue to honor our Democracy.

In addition, any media broadcast company that uses the public airways to reach its audience should be as neutral and fair in its presentation of information and news as possible. Like PBS. All other news and information sources should be required to clearly announce and identify their bias. If they are owned by a religious organization, they should be so identified. If they represent the views of a particular political party that information should be a disclaimer always visible and announced. And if any of these media organizations that use the public airways violate these and other standards, their license to broadcast should be immediately revoked.

### **Creating A National Ethics-In-Media Council**

In addition to freeing media companies from corporate overlords and the resultant censorship, we need to find a way to create a Professional Code of Ethics for Members of the Fourth Estate. Ideally this will be done by those who still remember what it means to be part of a legitimate Fourth Estate.

An independent body should also be established to monitor all television, print and digital and social media news and information sources to support compliance with this Code of Ethics. And individuals as well as organizations that do not abide by the standards should be fined and their names made public for all to see would be a second consequence.

And if the Media is not willing to clean up its act and self-regulate, in such a way that the Fourth Estate can regain the trust of viewers, listeners and readers, then we should help them to do this by turning away and turning them off.

### **Eliminating or Re-defining The Role of the Electoral College**

It is now abundantly clear that the Electoral College, another safeguard inserted in our political system by some of the founders who feared surrendering too completely to the will of the people, no longer works. There is a growing number of instances when candidates win the popular vote but lose the electoral college vote. This is a strong indication that it is time to rectify this flaw and make our elections truly speak to the will of our people and not advance the goals of a minority who rig the system.

In addition, now that we see how deep and painful the dynamics of division in our nation are and how easily these divisions can be manipulated and capitalized on by unscrupulous and unqualified disruptors who disguise their message, make unfulfillable promises and have access to unlimited amounts of dark money, we must commit to making the kinds of changes that will serve the needs of all of the people.

This change might involve a modification of the Electoral College or its elimination.



## **Activating and Strengthening The Power of Our Cities**

There is a very valuable and essential movement taking shape in various parts of the country, under the title Yes We Can, \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the name of your city here). It is a powerful and important movement that can support us in our efforts to prevent Donald Trump and his gang of reactionaries from having an open field to undermine our way of life and our Constitution. And this movement deserves our full support and collaboration. Declaring cities places of refuge for people currently covered by The Dream Act as well as other undocumented immigrants. Protecting the rights of minorities, of seniors, of members of the LGBT community, of our religious freedom. These are only a few of the things cities can do.

This city movement is, in my opinion, incredibly valuable and requires all of us to support it. However, when one considers the nature of the current threat, it may not be enough. Although this from-the-ground-up realignment of our Democracy is necessary and essential, it relies heavily on working within the current political structure and, as we are already seeing, Donald Trump and his not-so-merry band of negatives do not abide by the current rules or traditions and do not honor the form of government we value.

For this reason, I believe we will need to complement and expand the Yes We Can City Movement to also include the full range of options The Power of One offers us, and this will be explored in the next section.

<https://medium.com/@BComuGlobal/america-needs-a-network-of-rebel-cities-to-stand-up-to-trump-7c07202e7cc2#.3rvyk8qge>.

## **Reducing Reliance On Polls and Surveys**

Kenneth Arrow, American economist, writer, and political theorist and joint winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics in 1972 is known for the articulation of “Arrows improbability theory” and Arrow’s Paradox which demonstrate that one cannot arrive at truth through the aggregation of numbers, for data collected through aggregation can be shown to prove both a thesis and its opposite.

And yet to this day, we continue to run our elections and govern largely based on polls and research that aggregate the numbers.

Moving forward we would be wise to correct this deficient way of governing and instead remember that we will succeed best when we learn how to listen to and accurately assess the whole constellation of values, needs, interests, capacities and resources of the community.



*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”*

*Margaret Mead*

### **Exercising The True Power of One**

When I reflect on how we can best accomplish all or even just some of the recommendations identified above as well as implement countless others that have been proposed by individuals, groups and organizations and that can contribute to our greater good and move our Democracy along on a path to fulfill the scope and promise contained in our founding documents, I believe they all require that we exercise of The Power of One.

**Vote with Our Ballots** – It’s been said that Democracy is not a spectator sport and nothing demonstrates this truth more than this most recent Presidential election. Although Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by almost three million votes, she purportedly lost a number of states that she should and could easily have won if voter turnout had been higher.

We know, of course, that among the reasons for the lower than expected turnout was the egregious restriction of voter rights in a number of parts of the country, the gerrymandering and redistricting by the Republican controlled Congress and the tactics approved by Republican Governors and Republican controlled legislatures in a number of key states to discourage and limit the number of people voting.

However, even with all of these obstructions, plus Hillary’s low likeability factor, and the 30 + years of intentional assault on her character by the Far Right, the bottom line is that Americans who most needed to defend their own well-being did not turn out in sufficient numbers to ensure the election of the candidate who had the intelligence, experience and stability to be President of these United States.

Even in the face of the fact that Republican’s had done a hatchet job on Hillary, even though she was a woman who Trump characterized as untrustworthy, even though Bernie Sanders did a lot to further damage Hillary’s reputation, and in my opinion, nowhere near enough to ensure that many of his most naïve supporters would not cast protest votes for one of the Third Party candidates - over 3.5 million such votes were cast in this election. As a result of these and other factors and the reality that too many Americans were complacent and did not exercise

their right to vote, we now face this significant threat to our Democracy. It is as simple and clear as that.

So if we do not want a minority within our country to impose their will on the majority of us, then each and every member of the majority must exercise “The Power of One” and vote in each and every election.

If we do this and do it consistently, we can ensure the fact that the absence of our systems of Checks and Balances will not last longer than two years and we can begin to return sanity and stability in America from the level of local and country boards and counsel to the Chambers of Congress and the Presidency.

We can also pay close attention to the valuable handbook and the resulting movement that has been created by a group of current and former Washington Staffers – Indivisible, A Practical Guide For Resisting The Trump Agenda - <https://www.indivisibleguide.com/> [It an outstanding guide by insiders on what we can do to rebuild our Democracy.](https://www.indivisibleguide.com/)

**Vote with Our Money** - It’s been said that “money is the root of all evil,” but we all know that money is neutral. It is the things we human beings do in accumulating and spending it that can sometimes be evil. The Confucius quote used earlier reminds us, “*The superior man seeks what is right, the inferior man what is profitable.*” So “The Power of One” can help us to vote with our money as well as our ballots in highly constructive and positive ways and in this way regulate and, if necessary, deny the supply of money to men and women who may be inclined to do us harm.

Yes, if we want a sane and successful future for ourselves and future generations we need to take our money back - from the ‘too big to fail’ banks, from those investment houses whose practices and values are clearly out of alignment with the greater good; and from governments, like the one just elected, that is clearly not going to be supportive of the needs of all of our citizens. Instead, let’s put our money in reputable small banks and credit unions that do not play roulette with it; make investments in industries and companies that do not abuse us, our habitat, the rights of their workers and the well-being of their communities; and let’s stop contributing to unconscious politicians and office holders. For if we take back our money, we take away their power.

**Vote with Our Time and Attention** - Many of us claim we are tired of the sorry state of the media and the undigested opinions, half-truths and outright lies propagated by those who have the audacity to call themselves journalists and news commentators. If this is true, we need to start turning off our radios, televisions and computers when the news comes on. Stop buying newspapers, reading blogs and false news websites that distort the truth. For we must remember that it takes two to make a lie – the liar who tells a lie and the one who agrees to listen.

If we turn away and turn off media that is not truthful, then in silent communion with our own hearts we can discover what we truly believe and already know. This is just one of the things 'The Power of One' can do for us. And if we can't yet bring ourselves to take a media holiday for long periods, at least we can do it for a day or two a week! Trust me on this. Not only will we feel how good it is to get our sanity back, but by turning off these panderers and pushers of illusion they will, like beached whales, start gasping for financial breath. For if we deny them our attention, we'll deny them advertising revenues.

**Vote with Conscious Consumerism** - Every day each of us makes a number of decisions as to what products and services we use and buy. What we can start doing is asking questions about the companies that make and provide these products and services before we buy and use them. Does the company have good and aligned values? Do they treat their employees fairly and pay them honest wages? Do they pay for their healthcare? Do they stand behind the quality of their products and services? Do they protect the environment? Do they pay their fair share of Federal and state taxes? Do they abuse us through the media they own?

Imagine what will happen if we ask these questions and demand honest answers. Imagine what will happen if we only purchase products and services from companies that are committed to the wellbeing and true health of our world!

**Vote with Sit-ins, Protests and General Strikes** - Although members of the 'Corporatocracy' and those committed to elevating the few over the many have done a deadly job of disparaging the rights of individuals to protest - especially the right of union workers to strike - those of us who value this Democracy cannot let them perpetrate this fraud. Protest is one of our basic rights.

Yes, each of us has the right and, more importantly, the responsibility, to say "No" in a positive and constructive way to anything that violates our Constitutional rights – to refuse to do things at work that violate our own or other's integrity and ethics; to say "No" to things in our communities, churches, schools, homes, clubs or any place if things violate the common good.

And don't be fooled by those who will dismiss this idea as 'un-American'. Our Constitution not only supports but encourages this action. If you don't believe me go back and read even just the first two paragraphs for yourself.

So let's exercise our God-Given, "Power of One" to execute sit-ins, protests and strikes in a non-violent way and "declare the causes which impel us to the separation." Let's stop empowering individuals, organizations and governments that violate our rights. And trust me on this as well. If enough of us make the decision to strike, even if only a few hours or a day or two at a time, we will signal the kind of standstill we can create and this will get the attention of those who wish to abuse us for their eyes are always on the money. And remember David O'Connell, former President of Catholic University of America's statement, "Nothing is politically right that is morally wrong." So let's sharpen our protest skills.

**Vote with Our Tax Dollars** - “The Power of One” can also defend our freedoms and rights in other ways. One of the most powerful ways involves what we do with our tax dollars. For our tax dollars constitute approximately 90 percent of the money used to operate our government. And there is a contract - both explicit and implicit- between each of us as citizens and our duly elected government whose representatives, especially our Presidents, take an Oath of Office in which they swear, “To Protect and Defend the Constitution of the United States of America, So Help Me God.”

So, if our government representatives – and I stress the term ‘representatives’ for they are not anointed as our absolute leaders and certainly not as Kings or dictators, fail to abide by the terms of their Oath of Office, each of us should withhold our taxes until such time as these representatives fulfill their duties. For the bottom line is this – THEY WORK FOR US! Our taxes pay their salaries, give them operating expenses, provide them with lifetime retirement benefits, cover their single-payer healthcare costs and give them the means to pay for the programs and legislation they advance.

It’s as simple as that. So if our elected officials insist on advancing their private agendas or imposing their personal religious beliefs on us, as their employers we should deny them the funds they need to operate our government. For as Eric Hoffer once said, “No matter how noble the objectives of a government, if it blurs decency and kindness, cheapens human life and breeds ill will and suspicion, it is an evil government.”

Yes, ‘The Power of One’ Is quite remarkable, isn’t it? It also happens to be our best and quickest way to take our individual power back and to protect the well-being of our Democracy for our own well-being and that of future generations.

### **Exercising The Power of Some**

In addition to exercising The Power of One, we will also be wise if we remember the power of collaboration and coming together with others to share our talents, recommendations, resources and concerns, to gain new perspectives, experience the tremendous healing power of community and to put into practice the wisdom of the African Proverb that reminds us – **“If you want to go fast go alone, but if you want to go far, go together.”**

Hopefully, by now, those of us who are committed to fulfilling the promise of our Democracy and to leading lives of greater sanity and sustainability recognize that all of us on this Earth are in it together and that what happens to the least of us, happens to all of us. Indeed, not only is our world getting smaller by virtue of the speed of digital communication and various forms of transportation, but we now better understand the nature of our interdependence for indeed, when someone sneezes in Tokyo or Beijing someone in New York or London or Moscow must reach for a tissue.

So we are indeed much stronger together than we are separate. And although the world at large seems to be in a period of forgetting this fact and, out of fear, attempting to withdraw

behind artificial boundaries and false theory of nationalism and illusion of security, if we hold to our vision of higher consciousness and demonstrate both patience and the true Power of One, we will emerge from this darkness and once again continue our inevitable movement toward harmony and the greater good.

Let us close this section with a quote by Eric Hoffer, author, social and moral philosopher and winner of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

*“No matter how noble the objectives of a government,  
If blurs decency and kindness, cheapens human life  
And breeds ill-will and suspicion –  
It is an evil government.”*



## Part Three - Other Things We Can Do

In this closing section, I want to include just a few additional tips and tools, articulated briefly, that each of us can do each day to strengthen the Power of One.

### **Vision, Mission, Values**

Seneca, the Younger, is reputed to have said, *“If you don’t know the harbor you are heading for, no wind is the right wind.”* In my experience, this is a fundamental truth that far too many of us fail to remember. So just as we hopefully spend time in our businesses, organizations, and places of worship defining vision (the where), the mission (the why and the how), and core (values the what we are going to do and demonstrate along the way), if we really want to strengthen The Power of One, we would be wise to take time frequently in our lives to articulate and keep revisiting and refining our personal vision, mission and values.

### **Healing Our Hatred and Violence With Love**

Individually we will also be wise to stop supporting those religions, political parties, and social, fraternal and community organizations that foster and spread the message of separation and division; that disparage and condemn those who are different. Yes, if an organization or institution is so narrow in their focus and short of vision that they create environments that are the breeding ground for ignorance, hatred, divisiveness, isolation and violence then they should be avoided and hopefully run out of town as quickly as possible.

We would be especially wise to shine the light of truth on religious leaders who claim to represent the Divine, but who instead abuse their sacred trust by distorting the precepts of their faiths and thereby contribute to this climate of fear and distrust. Indeed, to be successful in raising our level of consciousness as a nation we must be particularly vigilant as individuals in publicly discrediting religious leaders who manipulate our need for guidance as a means of spreading falsehoods and distortions that suggest that some of God's children are more deserving or entitled to His love and grace than others. We must recognize as Jonathan Swift once said that, *"We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another."*

In the political, social, and economic sectors, where the distortions are sometimes harder to see because the motives of those who perpetrate them are hidden under the guise of overly obtuse theories and complex philosophical and economic arguments, we must exercise greater discernment. In these sectors where secular leaders abuse our need for guidance and their sacred trust by playing upon our most basic fears -- security, safety and control -- they should be called out and then run out of town. This calling out is one of the jobs our media has abdicated. The running out of town is one of the jobs we, the people, are failing to exercise.

### **Listening to Our Inner Voice**

If each of us has the courage and discipline to listen to that 'still small inner voice' inside us, the one that knows the difference between what is constructive and what is destructive; between what contributes to the common good and what is simply self-serving, then we can also do our part in strengthening The Power of One and halting this downhill slide.

And please, don't misunderstand me here. I am not talking about instituting a rigid thought-control state where the ideas, opinions and beliefs of one group or one individual become the rule of the day. I am not talking about imposing arbitrary standards of false morality or sanctimonious ethical standards. I am not talking about bringing back The Reformation or The Inquisition or ushering in some new version of the Dark Ages – for the age we live in is already dark enough.

What I am talking about is returning decency, honesty, trust, mutual respect, truth, civility, responsible behavior and genuine, responsible and transparent public discourse to their rightful place at the center of a way of life that is both sane and sustainable.

What are some other antidotes to the poisons of hate and fear? When each of us admits to ourselves that no amount of wishing or hoping for a better government or a more enlightened leadership will ever produce them and that no level of material accumulation or financial wealth will ever bring us genuine security, safety and control or protect us from the things we ultimately fear the most -- loss of loved ones, disease, emotional pain and death -- the attempts by the greedy, the gluttonous and the power hungry to manipulate us will be seen for what they are -- the sleights of hand of the unethical who want to obscure their baser motives for their own gain.

Are these the only or even the best antidotes and recommendations? Absolutely not! The best antidote to counter the virus of fear and distrust is love, love as limitless as demonstrated by the scope of our individual and collective imaginations and the depth of our willingness to know the truth and live according to the fundamental principles our hearts tell us are right and just. The one essential factor, however, that must be present for these and other antidotes to work, is our genuine desire to get out of our heads long enough to reconnect with our hearts and through this reconnection to live according to our essential spiritual values -- the values that our founding fathers referred to as 'the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God.' Only in this way can we wash away the ashes that cloud our vision and allow our natural desire for the bright and beautiful light of a new day to be satisfied.

Indeed, when each of us chooses to value our dignity and freedom most highly, to practice integrity, reclaim our sovereignty and do the essential individual work of raising our consciousness; when each of us commits to participate actively and intelligently in determining our own destiny and in renewing our commitment to our Democracy; when each of us demands of ourselves and others the best that we have to offer, we will have begun to take the next and the best steps on the path to curing the disease of fear and distrust. We will also have begun the next phase of The American Revolution.

So let us be courageous enough and patient enough to conduct a new kind of public and private discourse. Let us commit to bringing greater diligence and discernment to our search for real solutions and greater vigilance to the process of identifying, electing and then monitoring our leaders. Let us commit to the individual and personal work necessary to regain our balance and realign our thoughts, words and deeds with the natural laws of harmony. Let us also remember that without our investment in these qualities and practices we will continue to be played and played badly by those who are willing to sacrifice the greater good for their self-serving personal agendas. Let us remember that without our investment in these qualities and practices we will continue to squander this most precious gift called democracy and all of the promises it holds for the well-being of humanity.

### **Retaking The High Ground**

We can certainly take some major strides forward in reclaiming the high ground if we have the courage to heal the wounds of the past and do all that we can to limit **further wounds** we inflict on others or receive ourselves in the present. And there are other things we can also do.

In this and each present moment we can, for example, do all that we can to align our actions with our individual visions, missions and core values and thereby model for ourselves, our children and for others around the world, the kind of behaviors that contribute to a genuinely sane and sustainable democratic world. And this does not mean that we will not make mistakes and have our stumbles. It only means that when we get off track we will do our best to get back on track as soon as possible



In order to accomplish this, we would be wise to stop all of the empty posturing, cut out all of the misleading rhetoric and the flaunting of holier-than-thou, so-called Christian values that have characterized so much of the behavior of so many of late and yet are nowhere to be found in the lexicon of love and truth Christ shared with us. Instead, we can start demonstrating the kind of genuine compassionate and enlightened behavior that lie at the foundation of Catholic, Christian, Judaic, Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim traditions and that will allow us once again to speak with and relate to people everywhere.

### **Writing Your Chapters in The Power of One Manifesto**

I could take time here to identify countless other tips and tools that each of us can practice in our lives, but you can find a lot of these in other books I have co-authored with Sedena, my wife and partner. These include Say Yes To Change, Authenticity, Do Not Go Quietly, and The Best is Yet To Be. You can learn about them at [www.agenation.com](http://www.agenation.com)

There are many other books, and course programs you can also consult and, of particular importance, the next chapters in The Power of One are yours to write. That's the ultimate truth and strength of The Power of One. Each of us has both the ability and the responsibility to expand and deepen it as we are called to do by our hearts and by the values we hold most sacred.

In closing I leave you with this quote by Helen Keller. May it inspire you to fully explore The Power of One as it has so many others.

*“Join the company of those who make the barren places of the earth  
fruitful with kindness. Carry a vision of heaven in your souls  
and you shall make your home, your college, your place of work  
and your world correspond to that vision.”*

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