

Innovation: From Inner Movement to Outer Form Birthing New Blueprints for the Future, From the Future

Edited extracts from two talks given by Stephen Busby in 2015 on the theme of innovation and consciousness

"I believe that innovation is a frequency of consciousness that we can choose to embody in everyday life, with transformative effect. I also believe that most of us experience the invitation to innovate in our lives as tension. If we allow ourselves to more fully enter this tension then we are lead through it to some essential questions, and to what I believe is the true nature and experience of innovation in our lives. This talk is part of innovation's compelling invitation to us all."

Listening to the discussion in this room on innovation just now, the tension I can feel is between what tends to get named as the past and the future. Yet we are complex multi-dimensional beings who live as much in the subtle as in the material realms of life - as much outside of time and space as within it. As fields of subtle energy, rather than as autonomous self-contained and bounded entities, we are continually managing a tension between what we represent to ourselves as the past and the future.

On the one hand, we're attempting to find our right place, to orient ourselves, by pulling back to where we came from: the history that we bring with us that is alive in us: the cultural, familial, societal, educational conditioning and inheritance that we also are in our human energetic structures. While, on the other hand, we glimpse a flavour or a potential flowering - a strong magnetic calling - of something which we represent as being 'in front of us', as if we were also being called forward towards some yet unknown place, identified as the future.

The tension that we may experience when invoking innovation springs from a belief that we know where we've been and where we come from, while we also have an inner sense, a vibration that resonates inside us, that calls us forward to - we know not where, at all. Is innovation a struggle to reconcile those two forces or magnetic poles?

I want to represent innovation in the context of this tension and see if we can find a way to relate to it in an entirely new way so that it becomes *part* of the flowering, of the scent of something entirely unknown, even - within our usual frameworks - unknowable.

Felt-tension and inquiry

I can explore first how I hold such tension within my body - in my practical everyday aliveness and confusion. How is this tension manifested, taking form in me right now, as somatic experience? What is its intelligence and how do I respond to it?

I notice there is a felt tension or struggle in me that is connected to a task-driven or 'management approach' to the future. When I pause to feel more deeply into this, I find a foggy and elusive place of fear - a fear that I will not have or get everything covered or taken care of that I need to. This fear has me forever straining forwards as I attempt to anticipate, second-guess, or accommodate what is not yet apparent. I feel this fear as essentially rooted in the past and I'm guessing there was some form of trauma, perhaps inherited, where something was disrupted, or not taken care of, or fragmented in its flow.

This forward-leaning posture seems to me endemic in our postmodern cultures - as a compensatory strategy that we have developed in order to not feel too much of whatever else is driving us, at deeper levels, inside.

When I slow down enough to presence and dive into the inner experience of tension, dive through it rather than avoid it - when I become curious about how my life is lived *as* tension, what then becomes possible? In this context, innovation becomes an alive and intimate inquiry. I *become* a space of research: a place to allow curiosity about how the tension seems to be trying to work itself out.

Do *you* have the impression that something is trying to work itself out through your life? As if all the lessons of your path, the larger crises as well as smaller problems, are representations of energy that is trying to work itself out through your life-circumstances. Perhaps you have also found that the more you cultivate intimate connection to this unfolding journey then the more clarity in terms of perspective on yourself emerges.

Recycling the past into the future

If we have the impression that the present sits somewhere in the middle of a horizontal line-of-life along which we're moving in linear fashion, then we may find that the tension I've referred to keeps us pushed forwards, away from the centre of this line. And that one of our most conditioned tendencies - if we are somebody for whom the future is at times frightening in its unpredictability, in its unknown quality - if we are not somebody who is able to embrace the future in its total unknownness, is that we want to tie down some aspects of the future that look like some aspects of the past.

In other words, we attempt unconsciously to render familiar that which is unknown, so that we can make it less wholly unknown, a little bit familiar, so that we feel we have at least some modicum of firm ground on which to stand. Probably then we are going to bring elements of the past along with us. And one possible consequence of this could be that as we step towards what we believe is the future then we end up recreating versions of the past.

I recognise this in myself: the insecurity and the shakiness. Surely the future that I claim to seek cannot be so totally unknown? I will strive to tie it down at least a little in order to be able to accommodate it at all. What then I end up with is a new version of the present but with many familiar facets to it. This version is also based upon the past, to the extent that I am still unconsciously dragging with me, or within me, those features of my past that I have not yet succeeded in fully embodying and integrating, and am therefore projecting forwards on to the blank canvas of the future.

The blank canvas of the Future

I feel irritation and anger arising from this familiarity of the future – in all that I am projecting onto the blank canvas, onto somebody or something else. I realise that I'm not fully accepting that it is me who has brought along these familiar structures and who is perpetuating them.

Part of the familiarity that we carry within us are older inner structures of consciousness, as I call them. These are patterned ways of being in life, often learned at a very early age, many of which we inherited probably through the walls of the womb or in other systemic ways - certainly from the culture, from all the conditioning forces to which we are subjected in early years, so that they take place in us, they hook into us, at a very unconscious preconditioned level.

Even the way I am relating to you now - as a group of people outside of myself: I'm feeling the uncertainty that this prompts in me, as well as the challenge and the opportunity - everything is coloured by how I learned to *be* with and accommodate this uncertainty, and how I identify with what then feels like personality: as a composite result of my coping mechanisms and strategies. How I show up in life, how I present myself in public, how I speak, everything about myself is to some extent coloured by the past. In this sense innovation as a representation of the future would seem impossible: doomed to outmoded familiarity before we begin.

Having acknowledged that - having acknowledged our rootedness in things of which we must be barely conscious, we are then free to allow for a very different future. One that is beyond that which we're simply tending to recreate through familiar patterns and life circumstances. That's very different. We might write it with a big 'F' for it is a very different order of future.

To begin to smell and taste what this Future might consist of, I find that I need to paradoxically become much more interested in this backwards motion, the one that lies behind the strained leaning-forwards. How come I still trail behind myself so many of these older structuring and shaping forces, so much of my subconscious make up? Even to the extent that I frequently recreate things that fail to satisfy me, and are destined to fail? How come I so often act compulsively in minute addictive ways according to inner blueprints or imprints, while at the same time I dream of - and smell in the distance - the possibility of the unknown?

Borrowing from the Future and completeness

What I am suggesting for our inquiry into innovation is to use tools and approaches which are *of* the future. Because if I go about my research in the same familiar ways then I will end up with familiar results accommodated within familiar frameworks. I need to be innovatory in how I approach the research journey-of-life, so as to not fall into the same patterned structures.

In a sense I want to borrow from the future something that enables me to become much more creative and freed and, in this borrowing, as perhaps many of you are also finding, I discover that I am often flung out into more unknown places. This is a movement that happens more spontaneously and more naturally the more I allow for it. Fortunately it is beyond my mechanisms of control.

So if we are interested in not creating a future that resembles today then we need to begin to do two inner things. We need to become curious about ourselves in a different way, and we need to sense into *ways* of being curious that seem to come from another place, so as not to perpetuate the same cycles.

We could, when we begin to become curious about this, also see that generosity towards ourselves is helpful. We cannot judge ourselves harshly, for something authentically new through our research is attempting to emerge. In our repetitive cyclical movements, in constantly recreating facets of the past, *something is seeking expression* - in the way that intimate structures, business structures, social structures, political structures, tend to recreate themselves in obviously out-of-date and inappropriate ways. Something is demonstrating that it is not yet worked through, not yet exhausted in its usefulness. Which I think is part of our inquiry.

So the inquiry then becomes a question: *what is it in my life that is seeking to work itself through energetically in order to be complete?* What is seeking to become more complete and not constantly recycled, so as to then enable me to become somebody else, rather than the person whom I know?

Fear and dance

This question needs to draw me forwards – I need to become an embodiment of a walking question in life, one that is *of* the future rather than primarily constrained by the past. And I cannot approach this conditionally. I can't bring conditions with me. I can't say: I'll keep a little of this in my back pocket because I've already figured that's what I need in order to be okay here. No. This demands of us total unconditionality: not being contingent on the past in any way.

This is a sobering realisation for most of us, and can bring us into contact with some of these uneasy older structures that are intrinsically fear-bound and designed to keep us in security, away from the totality of this question. We are wired in a way to prevent ourselves from doing or being this. It's strong hard-wiring and not personal. It's systemic, societal, locked into human experience. So this is not a little thing we're inquiring into here. It is a totally new representation of human experience - off the scale of what we know and off the scale of our societies, of how we have constructed our societies and how we subconsciously make ourselves a victim of them, of ourselves.

Does this question mean, in our inquiry work, that nothing from the past comes with us? Evidently not. Like many of you, I've learned various approaches to business environments, or to transpersonal development environments, which were essential to my next steps. Without them I wouldn't be the whom I am today and neither would any of us.

From all these approaches I take those aspects that seem most resonant with this question; those pieces of my past that seem most supportive and most alive in terms of their energetic vibration. Then all the rest of the scaffolding that I brought with me tends of its own accord to drop away, just as we might allow a new dance to emerge. It's not that we're a new-born being who has never danced before. We have all kinds of learned energetic reflexes to fall back on but we also want to explore and embody a new alchemical form through the dance as it moves through us.

It's a very healthy thing: to arrive at the end of something, to see with clarity that this is where this framework has been able to take me, whether it's a healing methodology or a business application or a dance, whatever it might be. And I can see with clarity now, looking back, its clear limitations.

Frequency, evolution and higher consciousness

I believe that the hidden essence of any initiative vibrates through its outer form. Something gave birth to it through an original impulse, something moved through the founder and may be vibrating still. You might detect different frequencies of aliveness too, where for instance an approach that you know has been added to or taken in different developmental directions by different people over time. Such frequencies - which represent the original essence of whatever came into life - are not something we are simply implementing when we work with a given approach: they *are* us. We become those most resonant aspects of our approaches, strategies and frameworks.

Our structures of consciousness are also resources, and may be looking for new manifestation through us all the time, as innovation seeks to emerge despite the magnetism we maintain for the past. There is an evolutionary impulse here, sometimes seeming to fight its way out, or to suggest a different tonality in the most subtle of ways.

With what consciousness can we arrive at this new question? Clearly we can't arrive there with the same consciousness that we embodied before in our lives. I'll suggest this: what becomes available to me in the present is a form of alignment with another stream of consciousness. I experience this as a higher or deeper stream of consciousness. When living more in

alignment with this stream then I know it is of an entirely different order than the consciousness I've learned to embody so far. This higher alignment gives rise to a very different form of movement I believe, because it is *of* the future.

Learning to explore how I am embodied consciousness and how I am active in this, I learn to align differently with consciousness and this resources me in my inquiry and in life. Cultivating a capacity to return continually to an experience of felt alignment with a higher stream can become the central driving passion in my life, and everything else then tends to fall into place around this.

That's my experience. I'm learning ways of exploring and cultivating this alignment, so as to become more available - more here - to witness its effects. I'm not interested in these effects as manufactured outcomes, as results to get to. Rather I'm noticing side effects to my inquiry, by-products of this subtle inner process.

Future 2.0

Returning to align with a higher stream of consciousness means that the future is creating through me. It's not something I can go out and track down. It will continually emerge through me. And exploring practises to come into alignment with higher consciousness will have several different effects.

One of them will be to expand the radius of my horizontal everyday attention and containment, so I will embrace and literally contain much more of outer life within me. The frequencies of which I am a manifestation don't need to be selective or narrow. I become an on-going alignment practice and apply this with curiosity to movement that seems to be familiar and to recycle in me. In other words, I can use my embodiment of consciousness to change the way I attend to these inner structures, changing the quality of attention that I give them.

When I do that, although it may not be an intention, one other related effect will be a very different kind of apparent innovation generated 'outside' in life. Which here we'll call Version 2.0 of the future: Future 2.0. Here I am progressively bringing into contact, exploring and re-integrating dissociated energy from these inner cycles. I am including whatever was previously lost or disassociated from, and I am finding the capacity to transcend its limitations, rather than stepping over them or continuing to exclude something. In this cycle then, we are breaking out from – or birthing - something authentically new.

Grounding innovation

Happily, we don't need to find out what Future 2.0 might be. Its emergence is a natural consequence of our paying attention and bringing passion and curiosity to bear on inner processes, and there are practices that support us in doing - or rather in being - this. Through them we find that what we call innovation is often a surprising effect of newness: a newness that doesn't obviously fit into any future that we recognise. It seems to come from a different place: a paradigm that doesn't fit in to the existing frameworks that make innovation possible. It's of a distinctly other flavour.

You can recognise the quality of this innovation because it's markedly different from anything that we hope is innovative, and which is usually some kind of variant on whatever existed before. It also has the characteristic that makes you wonder: how come we didn't think of that before? That should have been obvious, and it wasn't.

So our question becomes, in evolutionary terms: how can we create or allow a new enough context - in ourselves individually and when we gather collectively - to contain and nourish this level of innovation? We could claim that much of this innovation-potential doesn't land or appear on our radar because there isn't a context sufficiently formed enough to support or reveal or hold it. I sometimes feel – and also perceive in others – the potential for ideas to form. Sometimes it is as if an idea or impulse needs to form and then disperse or collapse almost immediately. It is as if there isn't a sufficient grounding context available for it, so it doesn't manifest.

That isn't necessarily a bad thing. It's just that in evolutionary terms something is not yet prepared or ready to receive and hold sufficiently. My own level of inner coherence - my inner receiving environment - isn't yet aligned with the coherence that would be required to presence and reveal and fully manifest a higher impulse.

In which ways are my inner structures of consciousness - the state of my inner coherence - defended against higher frequencies? That would be a more pragmatic way into exploring this potential. In other words, whether in collective terms (for instance: organisational) or in individual terms: what are all the structures that evolve through an organism so as to limit the realisation of its fuller capacity?

Practicing Future 2.0

Here we would need crucially to look at those subterranean shadow and systemic influences that have evolved for excellent defensive or protective reasons. There are many ways of doing this and we need to choose those ways or practices that are themselves available to Future 2.0. We need to make sure that our approach is spacious enough to allow for its own higher next-level innovative unfolding.

The higher consciousness practices that are available to us are at least tainted with Future 2.0. We know this because when we pursue them we are taken to some radically new inner places and spaces, and often begin to embody versions of ourselves that are clearly pointing to the unknown. These are versions of the self that are replete with new human sensitivities and capacities in evolutionary terms.

As we embody more of our Future self in this way, we may begin to perceive all kinds of phenomena that are working themselves out through the way we function every day, and the same holds true for any organism I think – certainly for those organisations that I've known. They have never been worked through in the way I mean here, and are therefore recycling successfully, just as we are too.

I find this humbling and inspiring. There are endless strata within myself that are being progressively revealed, each one laden with past treasures, pointing to new potentialities.

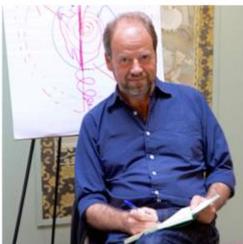
The world of We Space

In summary, I am advocating practices that bring us into alignment with higher streams of consciousness. The effects of doing or of becoming this alignment include the unfoldment of Future 2.0.

The broad field of such work or research has become known as We Space practices. My variant of these has evolved over recent years in the collective inquiry groups I host in various countries. Through dialogue, systemic constellational process and inner work, the practices facilitate our sensitivity to the subtle and soulful realms of life and explore the impact of invoking higher frequencies of consciousness on individual and collective levels. An impact that is increasingly innovative, helping us to ground a much higher human potential and blueprint.

At the core of this work is a deepening capacity to presence oneself, other people, and a collective, as transpersonal space. In the groups we use interpersonal attunement, witnessing and transparency principles to focus subtle perceptual capacities and to heighten sensitivity to the energetic vibrational qualities of We Space. Our competence in nourishing unfoldment of potential within collective arena is strengthened, as is emergent leadership and our innovation capacity.

We are learning to become responsive to more of the subtle content of life, as we experience and presence collective fields from within. We attune to the essence of such fields: to how the shadow aspects that are surfaced there co-exist on individual and collective levels, and to how these are rendered accessible to subtle inquiry, and often result in healing and transformation.



Stephen has a coaching, consulting and healing practice and has been serving higher human potential and purpose for over thirty years. Born in England, he's based at the Findhorn Foundation Community: a centre for holistic education, organizational and cultural innovation in Scotland, where he also served as Director of Studies.

Stephen has distilled new applications of phenomenological systemic methodologies to healing in collective fields, from which his distinctive WE Space practices have evolved. His several careers in education and consultancy have spanned the corporate world, transnational public service institutions and not-for-profit organizations in Europe, Africa, Asia and North America.

More on Stephen's higher consciousness and We Space work is at www.stephenbusby.com