

3D Democracy: An Interview with Jan Inglis

Russ Volckmann

I have known Jan Inglis for several years as we are co-directors of ARINA. Also her articles have been published in the Integral Review of which I am an associate editor. I know that she has been very focused on using developmental and integral approaches to respond to some of the very complex issues that challenge us these days, specifically climate change. I was curious to know what motivates and sustains someone to work in the public realm since many people in the integral or developmental field have chosen to focus instead on personal development, organizational leadership or academic teaching. I also wanted to know what specific and effective methods there might be for how communities are engaged in political or social issues considering that I recognize that people are all over the map when it comes to their diverse lines and levels of development.

Russ: Jan, I'm so glad to have the opportunity to chat with you today. I'd like to start by asking about your interest in politics.

Jan: I haven't been directly active in what most people would consider politics—as in party politics and lobbying. But I have been involved in public decision making which is the broader definition of politics: how we make group decisions regarding public issues. I call it “3D Democracy” referring to the multidimensional aspects of decision making. That interest is a continuation of earlier observations in the work I was doing re how people make choices—how they weigh things out and subsequently make decisions. I've long had a fascination with that.

Russ: Is there a particular context in which you've been concerned about that, or is it across the board?

Jan: A long time ago, I was working as an occupational therapist with people who had many types of disabilities. They faced multiple physical and emotional challenges. I would observe how they responded to those challenges; there were incredible differences in how people would rally to face those challenges. I was fascinated by how people arrived at their choices, what supported them in the context of their beliefs, families, their culture, etc. That was something that moved me into the field of therapy: Integrative Body Psychotherapy. I did a lot of work with the internal processes of how people looked at their issues in the context of their values, their current sense of energy and what they assumed blocked them from getting what they wanted in life. I noticed that as they would examine what was in the way of them achieving their goals, and look more deeply at potential influences such the history of their childhood patterns, and assumptions they were holding, this would change their relationship with their “problem.” They could find ways that those blocks could surface, be sorted, understood and coordinated and it would help them move forward, beyond their obstacles to make healthier choices.

Russ: At that point in your work did you notice any patterns?



Jan: The more self-reflective people became, the more they were able to look beyond their external problem situations and examine their internal responses to their situation: was it based on assumptions that had been holding? did it have to do with how their assumptions might be different than those of other people around them? So that capacity to inquire and see connected layers underlying problems and be self-reflective made a huge difference in how they created new options and resolved their situation.

In parallel, I was doing a lot of community work and dealing with issues regarding the environment, social justice, and peace. I was looking at how this process of self-reflection, that seemed so available and worthwhile for individuals, wasn't present when we were in our public groups. Behind the closed doors of a therapist's office, individuals were able to become more aware and create change, but there was little transference to how that showed up in our cultural work and social change efforts.

I became increasingly concerned about environmental issues some time ago and felt we needed to find ways of ways of looking more deeply at the patterns re how our problem issues have formed and were impacted by our views of them and each other. It was that question of how we make decisions—and why we make such bad ones that endanger our very survival—that eventually pushed me into looking more deeply at adult development in a social context not just personal growth. This opened up a whole new field of understanding about why we had differences in how we approach things...and why change is not simple.

Russ: *You're addressing both individual levels of decision-making and all that is compounded into that process, as well as how communities are engaged in that process when it comes to political or social issues.*

Jan: Yes. For quite a few years, there was a disconnect in my work and in what I saw occurring around me that felt really uncomfortable. My therapy students could be doing a lot of deep personal work, but not have any concern at all about the health of their communities or world. Or, I could focus on the bigger issues in the world but work with people whose own dysfunctional way of communicating with others was actually a key part of what was creating the issues, and they were totally unaware of that. I felt I needed to find a way that could bring coherence to those two fields. At that point, they were two separate fields; inner personal work or outer community work. I felt that I needed to work on them together, not just view them separately and needed to find a method to pull them together.

I was doing a lot of reading and research and understanding of what other people saw regarding this. I found some of Wilber's early work—he mapped out the exterior and interior—and it was helpful to have that split acknowledged. I knew I wasn't the only one feeling the split and that it was part of a larger context of development.

Working with Integrated Body Psychotherapy was helpful because it was about working in real time—not just from a conceptual understanding of what was happening in terms of problems and issues but with the experience of being present and the impact

that had on our ability to observe and understand. It was an integrative process as well, supporting people to focus attention into their gaps and make sense of what they were seeing. I moved on into studying Bohmian dialogue, Spiral Dynamics, Robert Kegan's and Bill Torbert's work. And meanwhile I was learning from my own processes as well. I was seeing that my community work focused on the issues being "out there" and a lot of my earlier activism had been about finger pointing and blaming "those" people "out there" that were doing those "bad" things, whether it was the corporations or the politicians. As I became more aware of my own processes and question this patterns of blaming and creating "in" group "out" group polarities, I was also seeing how that perpetuated the very issues I and others seemed to want to resolve. It is so easy to blame, harder to get at dealing with it all being about 'us.'

Russ: Given your professional background, this probably came relatively naturally to you. In addition to the reading, what were the kinds of things that helped you bridge that distance of consciousness and understanding?

Jan: I've been lucky to live outside of the mainstream culture most of my life. I grew up on a farm where you really do get a sense that everything is connected. My father was very involved in the cooperative movement and concerned about the common good, and also money was only available for practical things. So the combination of all those things meant I wasn't part of the consumer culture very much. Although that was not much fun as a teenager, I think that allowed me to follow things of interest as an observer rather than an enmeshed participant. In the early eighties, I came across Joanna Macy's work, ecofeminism and deep ecology. I was doing programs with groups and really seeing the difference that could happen when minds came together. I was part of intentional communities and started working with consensus decision-making, mediation etc. I was searching for a method under which we could come together as groups but finding limitations of all those previous processes. I found there was a lot of great intentions and 'feel good' energy in much of the personal and spiritual development work but none of this was sufficient to actually, pragmatically, assist us in responding to the complexities of our social ecological or political issues. In fact, it seemed to serve as a distraction.

I felt I needed to find something else—I was looking for something to help me understand the process of how we make decisions in a way that groups or cultures can create change, much in the same way I had found change could be supported to happen step by step with individuals I came across the work of Sara Ross. She had taken a lot of the large fields of research and theory about adult development and behavioral sciences and complexity, and put them into a form that could be applied at a community level.

Russ: I'm interested to learn more about the role of marginality or the role of being at the boundaries of social systems that has its implications for people in their development. It sounds like it was important in your case, and it resonated with me. Is there something in that we should discuss?

Jan: There's a certain push and pull in that. There's a sense of wanting to belong, at the same time as wanting to individuate and not be enmeshed with a group or culture. You need to take a step back to see it and yourself in that. The tension feels like a struggle and a gift.

One thing that helped me in my early career when everyone else was only focused on career moves and earning a lot of money, was that I came across the work of Joe Dominguez and Vicky Robbins. They had put together the "Financial Independence: Your Money or Your Life" material especially for people who were headed into being social change agents. Working with them made me rethink my goals and evaluate how I was putting my money, time and my life towards them. My biggest goals were certainly beyond just gaining more paid holiday time, or making car payments. Their work helped me validate my priorities. It offered an articulation and a concrete doable structure for how to step back and look at the whole idea of working just to earn money and helped break the trance of that aspect of mainstream culture. So to answer your question...I guess that marginalization can be another name for outgrowing the old forms and not yet settling into the new, and so that means dissonance which offers motivation to find a better way. But besides dissonance we also need supports such as models and methods of better options and validating experiences so we can move to a more satisfactory next level. I am very grateful that I have found both internal and external structures that have supported me... although there have been some times on the desert.

Russ: *It's clear that all of us go through a variety of developmental experiences in our lives and we find ourselves centered in different levels or sets of capabilities on multiple lines. One thing that I'm curious about is that when we're working in a collective context, we're dealing with people who are all over the map along those lines. Is there anything that you discovered in your work on adult development that was an important lesson for you around working in collectives?*

Jan: Initially when I was a therapist, I could see the great changes that people could make. So then I jumped to an assumption that if everybody could just get on with doing some inner work then that was what was needed to change the world. I felt that was what everyone could and should do and I felt they could do it in a short time. From the lens I was looking through then, I failed to recognize that this capacity for self reflection was just not available for everyone. Eventually from my own observations and understanding from adult developmental theories of Robert Kegan's, Bill Torbert's and Michael Commons I came to respect the fact that we're all going through different places at different times based on many different aspects and life conditions. The stage we are at is just where we have to be. Then social change work wasn't about pushing someone else to do something; it was about looking for structures that could intentionally hold the richness of that diversity and work with it as active grist for the mill.

Russ: *One of the big challenges is the creation of structures that allow for the richness of that diversity to be brought together to support our collective creativity and innovation. I'm wondering if there's some patterns or principles around structure that have been significant for you.*

Jan: The term “scaffolding” is being used to describe what it is that supports us as individuals to develop, and what supports us as groups to deal with more complexity. I think that with the challenges that we’re facing—the climate change or any number of issues that we’re dealing with: economics, health care etc. — these are all such complex issues. But we’ve attempted to deal with them in a simple, linear way. And our public interactions are tending to come from a very adversarial stance. We need processes that are as complex as the issues. We need systematic methods of dealing with issues, but we don’t have processes in place in our politics for dealing with them that way.

I think our public processes need to be designed to match the challenges of those public situations. I think we take our public interactions, like politics and community development, for granted. We’re not seeing how poorly we interact. We’re not seeing that by using an absolutist form of thinking and talking together that it forces us into simple yes and no responses, inadequate for complex issues. That doesn’t allow us to bring together the diversity of perspectives on the issues. We are not seeing that the issues exist in relationship to the whole context of other issues. We’re not seeing them as a system, within systems, that is, as a metasystem. We’re trying to deal with poverty, violence or climate change as simple issues when they are truly complex. One core principle then is to commit to methods to address the complexity of our issues. They need not to be dealt with as fragments, but rather integrally.

Russ: How would one go about seeing the diversity of an issue rather than the diversity of the population around the issue?

Jan: We need to see and address both. There is both the multi facets of the topic issue that make it complex like crime for example, and the multiple perspectives within the population regarding potential solutions to crime that need to be considered before we can agree on and support actions. So we need to see the issue within this broad context. For example we tend to talk about climate change as though it were a single “it” and really there are many diverse aspects and sub issues and they all need different ways of being responded to . We can use the movement towards biofuel as an example where one perspective of a “good” solution was used without adequate exploration of other perspectives or implications. Converting fields to corn crops to produce biofuel supposedly was a solution to create alternatives to fossil fuel but it was done without considering all the repercussions that it would have—impacts on markets, on availability of food, land use, etc. When we don’t look at an issue’s interconnectedness, that’s a failing on our part. To gain a broader understanding we need to work with those most knowledgeable about the issue, who bring necessary and diverse perspectives based on their life experiences. Starting with inquiry into the context and causes and creating a map indicates graphically that issues are complex and very interconnected, and gives an understanding of why we will need deeper consideration than just quick fix it solutions.

Russ: I think of what you’re saying as a shift in the way we think about phenomena. it takes us from an engineering perspective to a more gestalt examination of the phenomena.

Jan: Yes, absolutely. Everything's connected and you can't just pull one string without knowing that it's connected to other threads in the tapestry. Yes, the engineering model would have been an approach to a single cause, a single problem and was based on the assumption that we understood the problem, could just plug in the solution and then predict the outcome. That's a very simple, linear approach, using formal logic, instead of realizing there are many causes and many effects that have to be understood within a context, a post formal logic. Part of the 'gestalt' is the many very legitimate perspectives that are connected with the phenomena. So being able to talk about "the" problem in terms of the many perspectives that we bring to it is absolutely necessary.

Russ: *We're touching on one of the added values of bringing a complexity theory perspective to issues. On one level, it's about recognizing that everything is connected; on another level, there are other lessons that can be drawn from that complexity perspective. such as small changes that can create large results? Interventions can be less grand than the whole phenomena itself.*

Jan: Well I look at the enormity of all the things we're dealing with on the planet and can wonder where I should start. It helps me to recognize that if we work with the patterns of how we interact and make decisions, and even if that is just one group working with its issues in a different manner than they have before, that that is setting the potential for a bigger change. That learning can then be used again and there's an incredible impact of how that can ripple out. Without digging too deeply into complexity theory and patterns, it's vital to recognize the importance of what happens when we are able to change a pattern and have it work at a level that is more adequate than some of the structures of thinking we've used before. This gives me hope.

Russ: *So it's not just about structures and processes, but it is also patterns over time. By intervening in a way that alters one of those patterns, we're beginning to build the neural networks among us that allow us to shift the patterns to make them more effective in the future.*

Jan: Yes, I think that nothing is isolated. If we're learning something and reflecting on it, then that can become something that we will start using and eventually over time can consider institutionalizing. That then gives us the foundation upon which we can build our next pattern and a culturally recognizable way to deal with the next issues that we'll be challenged with. Hopefully we will move beyond thinking our minds operate in isolation. And it is exciting to think that at some point we will be able to have neurobiological evidence, not just social science evidence of those changes which are occurring.

Russ: *You've referenced Sara Nora Ross' work. I wonder if that's an example of an intervention or a set of interventions that is about changing patterns.*

Jan: Very much so, and I think it works on a lot of levels So much of what drives evolution is dealing with challenges and unmet needs and finding ways to resolve them in a more complex way than was available before. Right now, we have big challenges and potential

for major unmet needs as a result of climate change and we will need to evolve to deal with them and that involves collective decision-making. We can be supported to do this better when we work with the universal developmental patterns underlying how humans make decisions.

These are built into the process that Sara developed, which is called the TIP Process—The Integral Process for Working on Complex Issues—within that there is both very specific and detailed methods of working with the community or group to make a decision on complex issues. There is also processes that scaffold our individual development and the group’s capacity to work together. It’s designed from a developmental and behavioral science understanding. It also supports us to move forward because we’re having to face into the complexities and interconnectedness of issues and multiple perspectives that we bring to the issues. With a series of steps we can move through that process. The issue we’re working on can benefit and the individuals and groups that are working on the issue can also increase their capacity for more complex thinking.

Russ: Can you expand on what that process and those steps are?

Jan: Sure, I can attempt to go over the basics and hope the answer does not get too long. A lot of the first steps help us build a sense of focus and attention, which is lacking in a lot of our public interactions. We often just come in to a meeting, and just start to talk and we’re all over the map. We’re talking about some general topic assuming we are meaning the same thing but we haven’t really agreed about what the main focus is. There is a need to be able to help people focus and build their attention span, and do this in a manner that isn’t triggering an absolutist stage of thinking where we fight over the ‘right’ or “wrong” answer. Using the action inquiry process that Bill Torbert had put forth, we inquire into our understanding of the issues. In that way, we start to build a common meaning of what we are thinking the issue is really about.

Some of the early steps include seeing the issue in its context with other things and building a broader understanding from hearing different people’s views. We need to use inquiry to get us beyond thinking there is a right or wrong way to see an issue. This sounds simple but it is where many meetings regarding a public contentious situation get stuck. So in the first steps we’re building the basis for more complex and connective thinking. We move through understanding what the issue is, looking at how it got there and its root causes. That takes us below the usual surface desire for quick fix solutions to starting to make connections between multi-causal points of how this issue came about. We move bit by bit into understanding what the causes are in relationship to our behaviors as individuals, or as whole group or community policies, or non profit, business or government practices and priorities. And also how these reflect our individual and organizational values and attitudes. When we get to a point where we define causes and priorities of what we want to focus on, we have a much larger context to work from than if we were just working at the quick fix solution level. We then are deeper into the systemic understanding of an issue after these earlier steps, so then our choices of actions are likely going to be more systemically focused.

One thing that happens in politics and in our public interactions is we don't trust people's capacity to know the issue very well. But when given this kind of scaffolding and by asking people, we find they do know what their issues are, especially if you provide a setting by which they can actually explore their knowledge of issues together. Then they can start moving towards agreements and come up with some responses and create potential solutions that could shift the deeper aspects of their problematic issue.

There is a method of framing the naturally-occurring multiple perspectives, so we see it is not just my favourite perspective against yours, which is quite often how our public processes work. Instead we're going to examine the fact that there are 3-4 different perspectives on how we should proceed and deal with this issues and come to realize that of course our response to this issue will differ based on our perspective.

That, then, moves us into the next step, a process of "deliberation." I realize that that term probably requires some background. We all deliberate all the time, but we don't realize it. So for a real life example, —remember when you and I were in Oakland at the Integral Theory Conference and you gave me a ride in your Prius? I remember you saying that when you bought it, it was an "easy" decision to make. I was thinking that while the decision may have been easy, there must have been an inherent deliberation as you calculated how best to satisfy your needs in your choice of car. You probably considered the purchase from the point of view of several needs: first, a security need, that is the safety of the car, and your financial ability to purchase it. Second, a stability and accountability need, that is your view of the reputability of the company and its ability to make and service the car. Thirdly, a competitive or entrepreneurial need, that is, is this the best car in the hybrid market. Then you settled on your more obvious responsible citizen motivation, that is, the impact your purchase would have on the planet. Within that "easy" decision, there is the whole universal stack of viewpoints and needs that probably were sorted through unnoticed but had to be met before you could arrive at an easy decision.

I think we do that kind of internal deliberation all the time. If you take that and apply it to another entity—say you sit on a board of a nonprofit organization—then you add a whole different level of complexity. Now it's not just you deliberating; it's a group, with different needs, and priorities that all need to be considered and included before reaching a decision that everyone can support. If you move that up the rank to bigger and bigger entities such as the State of California buying a fleet of cars you add more complexity and layers that need to be considered to reach a decision and take action.

So with more complexity we need to be more intentional about including all the factors or our attempt to reach decisions will bog down or not feel satisfactory. We have to weigh costs, consequences and trade-offs, and we need a structure to do that well, especially with public decisions. If we simply leave our decisions to leaders we can end up with an apathetic, passive or frustrated citizenry and likely bandage approaches. We need more participatory and deliberative decision-making so people can go through and weigh out the decisions that impact them. They can look at costs and consequences that affect them. By the time a decision is reached, we can take action on that decision as a

public because we spent time examining the trade offs. It isn't just a reactive decision, which is quite often what our usual public processes set us up to do.

Russ: You're talking about something critical. It brings us back to this piece about the developmental levels of participants. Have you considered the values of people who might have different worldviews and different capabilities around hierarchical complexity or subject-object relationships? How have they been able to transcend those differences to work together deliberatively?

Jan: Yes that is a core aspect. The invitation of different viewpoints in the exploration of the issue and in the people talking about the issue from their real-life experiences is accommodated in what is called a framed issue booklet. These diverse perspectives or frames of reference clearly describe the legitimate views and we can see these issues from different places based on different life experiences. The differences include those same universally different voices which occur inside us, just like the ones I was saying you might have needed to listen to in your internal deliberation about what car to buy. We need to ensure that those different voices are included, and especially included as concrete examples of where they do rub up against each other and create tensions in our communities. The deliberative process is built so that tensions between these different viewpoints are used, not avoided. We're using the diversity to push our process to come to terms with the differences and reach a more complex understanding and do it in a way that the diversity is both welcomed and necessary. It is giving people a clear shared way of meeting with no bias as to what perspectives have been invited onto the table.

We're so often are used to being scared of that diversity and we don't know how to give it room at the table. Without structured process and with just open-ended speaking or blurting—like what occurs at town hall meetings—we just push against each other and the diversity of voices creates arguments and isn't given equal space so we can learn from each others real experiences. By doing a developmentally-designed deliberative decision-making process, those different voices don't have to compete, because they're actually given space and attention, not just to be nice, but because they are necessary to forming complex decisions and that result in many people being motivated to being involved.

Russ: I'd like to examine this from game theory. There are zero-sum and non-zero-sum games. Zero-sum allows for winners and losers. I'm thinking about things like the legitimacy of gay marriages. In issues like that where there is an either-or decision it seems to me there is no deliberative process that will bridge the gap for those who are deeply committed to their blue values versus those who want to create a space to allow for diversity.

Jan: Quite often we start talking about an issue and give it a label without taking time to flesh out the sub-issues. The issue of gay or straight marriage has been a topic that is laden with multiple issues. To go back to an early principle of the TIP Process, we need to look at the topic systemically and be willing to open it up and examine other possibly connected issues that are there. If we're trying to deal with it simply, it will be narrowed

down and will force people into an either-or camp. By doing so, we're ignoring the complexity of the issue and no one will end up with a satisfactory result.

Russ: So that could result in using this example to break down the intricacies of an issue—for instance, how do we allow gay couples to see each other in hospital rooms, get health benefits, etc. How do we make it possible for them to have the same kinds of rights that heterosexual couples do?

Jan: Looking at those topics, what are the many other aspects that are connected to views and needs re hospital visiting or health care that make it feel problematic to address for certain individuals or groups? There are issues regarding a whole context of intricacies: cultural history and identity, economics, social structures, legal aspects—there are many things connected to the issue. So you need to consider which issue is the troubling tip of the iceberg topic and how can we have the quality of discussion to examine the root causes, so as to look deeply and systemically at the issue.

Russ: Are there further steps in the process?

Jan: Yes an important step is that once the group has moved through the deliberation process, then decisions needs to be made, actions taken and coordinated over time. In North America there is more of a movement towards more recognizing citizen engagement and building better processes. A lot of these processes though aren't designed so that there are actual decisions made that people can take specific actions on. Many citizen engagement processes are used for public dialogue or ways to gather public input only. But to get to where we can make informed decisions and engaged actions, there needs to be steering committees who support the actions and follow up to maintain coordination and follow-through. It's not just people talking conceptually about something—they need to actually work through steps to take action on something that challenges them. It is only through this real involvement with real issues that we get the systemic results on issues that we need and evolve the systemic thinking we need.

Looping back to your earlier question about politics and political involvement—when there is group decision-making that can lead to action, some of those actions will be policy, and some will be volunteer initiatives by individuals or groups. It's this broad based comprehensive involvement that shifts and activates our politics in a different way.

Russ: Does this approach operate within the existing structures of government as well as outside these structures?

Jan: I think one of the challenges that has happened in the field of public engagement is a that a sense of separation has developed between elected officials and ordinary citizens. That's a gap that needs to be overcome, and trust rebuilt. We need to define our issues, work on deliberating them and choosing action with ordinary citizens and public officials working on them together.

Russ: So this process makes it easier for any kind of structure that's created or currently exists to open the door to multiple stakeholders.

Jan: Yes, because multiple stakeholders are those who are impacted by the issue or can impact the issue. Those people all likely have different perspectives, so their voices all need to be in there.

Russ: The kind of approach that Obama has been advocating for, which is essentially a learning political system as opposed to a confrontational political system, is not unlike what you're talking about. Essentially it's about getting people from diverse points of view engaged and arriving at decisions to take actions. We can evaluate and adjust those decisions as we move forward. Is this parallel obvious to you?

Jan: Many people who are working in the field of public interactions are feeling excited and hopeful about the climate regarding engagement that the new Administration seems to stand for. Seeing it as an educational process is so appropriate because we need to learn how to make decisions together. We fail to see that as a learning process. Engaging in a developmentally-designed and deliberative process—whether it's a small nonprofit group or international consortium—requires a pedagogical aspect. It is action learning; we do it, we reflect on it what worked or didn't, and decide how to do it differently the next time. We learn about not only the issue, but also about the process of working on issue through participation not abstract theory. We learn about how we can change our culture by doing that. We also need research to see if what we are doing makes a difference, and develop training programs for those who want to be agents of social change.

This all needs that “scaffolding,” that support built up over periods of time and I think that certainly has been one of the big challenges of trying to bring in a different process into our politics. People are still hoping for quick, short-term, low-investment processes. Let's get at it, make a decision, grab the answer and get going. People's attention spans to actually ask those bigger more complex questions need to increase—What are the different perspectives? How is this issue related to other issues? What do we need to consider in terms of trade-offs? What actions will we be willing to agree upon? It takes more time and commitment to use structures to help us make our decisions wisely, but really wastes time if we don't and considering the state of the world we cannot continue being so sloppy in wasting time. We spend a huge amount of time dealing with the bad decisions we've made. It's a difficult thing to get across. Until people understand that public decision-making is not an easy task, they won't agree with the need for a different process or an educational approach.

Russ: One of the big challenges is first attracting a sufficient number of stakeholders to engage in the process, because it's different than what they're accustomed to. There are structures in our society that militate against it that also need to change. Two examples come to mind: (1) In regards to the Obama factor, there are major power-holders who are taking a strategic approach that acts against those kinds of stakeholder involvement developmental processes; (2) Our media—it seems to me that public media has a

tendency to couch things in either-or terms, to set things up in opposition to increase rancor, further divide people and make it more exciting. There is a whole media culture and political culture that we're dealing with historically. It creates a challenge that needs to be addressed. The strategy of building on success is a wonderful one, but are there other activities that you see that need to be introduced to help us move in the direction of such a process?

Jan: I agree that our tendency to having a short attention span and to see things simplistically while at the same time sensationalizing is a huge challenge. As we move through our natural stages of development and see that there is more complexity to our issues, we may notice that we don't get results or a high level of satisfaction when we operate that way. Hopefully we'll realize that those processes are taking more resources and keeping us trapped from our key issues like our economic crises or issues with water or food. If we can build in a self-reflective process that demonstrates why issues take a lot of time to resolve well, we may be able to find ways through them. I think that hopefully we will be able to institutionalize different decision-making processes into our culture that keep us from jumping into those either-or camps and impeding the process towards more systemic social change efforts.

There are more instances of media using inquiry. I hear more situations where media is now reflecting on its own self and the bind they get in when reporting on touchy issues. There is more awareness that shoveling fuel onto that fire isn't necessarily the best move. I'm seeing more capacity for self-reflection within the media and certainly within some of our governance. Would I like to see it happening faster? I certainly would. That's what my work is about.

Russ: *Yes, and it's parallel to the kind of strategy that Ken Wilber implicitly and explicitly been manifesting around trying to build a critical mass of people with development and experience that can help move society forward in a developmental path. What are your next steps?*

Jan: One thing I've jumped into recently is making a documentary film. I don't see myself as a film maker although I did make some films quite a few years ago. I feel a film needs to be made regarding the challenges in our public interactions and our decision-making. A lot of the material regarding better processes regarding our social evolution and adult development stays within academia. I felt that it's not very accessible for people there. I wanted to use the type of imagery and metaphor that could be available in video for a documentary regarding the challenges that we're facing re climate change and the gaps that we have in our capacities to respond. We need to focus and concentrate long enough to consider different perspectives adequately to make decisions to deal with these issues. I'm in the process right now of putting that together.

Russ: *Do you have a completion date?*

Jan: I do—well, I keep setting one and it seems to escape me.
(laughter)

Jan: Either other things get on my plate or when we assume that we have a plan in place, our own processes of learning along the way changes the original plan. It's a dynamic process. I'm hoping it will be done in two months... I've done all the initial interviewing, so it just needs to be edited in a lively, coherent and accessible fashion.

Russ: *And who have you interviewed?*

Jan: I've got Thomas Homer Dixon who is very well-known in Canada—he's like a Canadian Al Gore. He does a lot of work in the field of climate change, and he is currently the International Governance Innovation Chair for Global Systems. He's written *The Upside of Down*—fascinating book. I've interviewed Robert Kegan who many people will know as being a developmental psychologist and the author of *The Evolving Self* and *In Over Our Heads*. I've interviewed Bill Torbert, another developmental psychologist and author of *Action Inquiry*. Also, Shawn Rosenberg who works at the Center for the Study of Democracy and is the Director of the Graduate Program in Political Psychology at the University of California in Irvine. I interviewed Sara Nora Ross who is an associate editor of the *Integral Review* and the developer of the TIP Process. I have been very privileged to gather so many viewpoints and such wisdom from these good people who have worked really hard in this field. I'm hoping to have the capacities and resources to put this project together in an interesting and inspiring way to be useful for those working on the climate change issues, or any complex issues, who are in the field of adult development and/or the field of public engagement and deliberative democracy.

Russ: *I appreciate your spending the time with me, and I wish you all the luck in your endeavors.*

Jan: Thank you, Russ, and I appreciate the effort you put into your work.

Russ: *Thank you.*