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[This is] a book of insight as well as of foresight. A book important as few others. It provides essential orientation in our times of change—of accelerating critical change.

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Waking Up in Time

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Waking Up in Time

Finding **Inner Peace**
in Times of **Accelerating Change**



Origin Press

Origin Press
PO Box 151117 • San Rafael, CA 94915
888.267.4446 • originpress.com

Origin Press is a division of Wisdom Media LLC
wisdommedia.us

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Cover design by Phillip Dizick — pdizick@earthlink.net
(Based on the original cover design for the 1998 edition by Blue Design)

An earlier version of this book was published in 1992 by Harper San Francisco as *The White Hole in Time*.

Book design by Claudia Smelser Design, Berkeley
Special thanks to Joseph Sohm for the use of his photographs.
Photographic credits appear on p. 201.

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication
(Provided by Quality Books, Inc.)

Russell, Peter, 1946-

Waking up in time : finding inner peace in times of accelerating change / Peter Russell. – Updated new release.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

LCCN 2008929080

ISBN-13: 978-1-57983-020-5

ISBN-10: 1-57983-020-X

1. Life. 2. Evolution. 3. Metaphysics. I. Title.

BD431.R77 2008

110

QBI08-600155

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Acknowledgments

Many thanks go to many people; without any one of them, this book would not be what it is. Anne Pauli lived through the whole of the book's gestation and birth, contributing feedback and criticism on just about every page. Ian Farquhar, Marilyn Ferguson, Oliver Markeley, Paul Wheeler, Judith Meynell, Lindsay Cooke, Cynthia Alves, Ruth Strasberg, Ray Gottlieb, Roger Evans, Bryn Jones, Leah Landau, Jane Henry, Chris Hall, David Wynne, Tessa Strickland, Juliet Weston-Lewis, Sheila Cane, Hag, Chris Coverdale, James Fraser, Edward Posey, Kindred Gottlieb, Joe Sohm, Jan Bakelin, Gisela Pauli, Roger Doudna, Robert Taylor, Christopher Bowers, and Sheila McCleod also read the book at various stages of its evolution and helped me clarify my thinking and expression. I'd also like to thank Marion Russell, Alexander Shulgun, Sylvia Timbers, Wendy Feldman, Pat Markeley, Terence McKenna, Linda Hope, Bill Whitson, Rupert Sheldrake, John Reilly, Willis Harman, Michael Toms, Mark Salzwedel, Eileen Campbell, and Anne McDermid, each of whom was of invaluable assistance in his or her own particular way. Julie Donovan was essential in the design and production of the 1998 version of *Waking Up in Time*. And last, but not least, my thanks also to my publisher Byron Belitsos and his book designer Phillip Dizick, without whom this 2008 release might never have appeared.

I would also like to thank Oxford University Press for permission to use the lines from Christopher Fry's play *A Sleep of Prisoners* and Harper & Row for permission to quote, from Stephen Mitchell's book *The Enlightened Heart*, his translation of the Rilke poem.

The Second Coming

*Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.*

*Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?*

—W. B. Yeats

Foreword

In his preface to the third edition of this remarkable book, Peter Russell writes that he decided not to do a “complete overhaul” of its content to bring it into the twenty-first century because he considers that the essential thesis holds true today as it did fifteen years ago, when it was first committed to paper. He is entirely right: This book doesn’t need to be updated, since it is not dated. It’s a book of insight as well as of foresight. A book important as few others. It provides essential orientation in our times of change—of accelerating critical change.

Let me add a few thoughts of my own on the topic of accelerating critical change. Evidently, if change is both accelerating and critical, waking up “in time” becomes ever more important. Why we need to wake up, the author discusses with a clarity and insight matched by few others. How we need to wake up, he does likewise. But what can we say about the element of time—the timeliness of waking up? Russell emphasizes the great urgency in his new preface and this deserves to be taken seriously. It merits some further remarks to bring it fully into focus.

It is true that change is constant, and is constantly accelerating. But here constancy refers to the overall envelope of change—which goes on relentlessly—not to the rhythm and modality of change. Change is not even; in the language of science, it is not “linear.” As Russell notes, it involves points of crisis which are at the same time

points of opportunity—the opportunity to innovate. Crisis is the womb of creativity. But evolution, which is ongoing, progressive change over time, does not come with a built-in guarantee of success. Crisis can trigger creativity and produce innovation, but it can also produce breakdown. The biological record is littered with species that became extinct, and the history of humanity is littered with communities, cultures, and entire civilizations that broke down and disappeared. Modern civilization could go down in a holocaust; the human species itself could become extinct; and none of this would be exceptional in the annals of history and the records of evolution.

Wherever it occurs, progressive change follows a recognizable rhythm and modality. A basic beat holds true whether we look at the evolution of species or the development of societies; it in fact holds true for the evolution of all complex systems no matter what their particular origin, environment, and the nature of their principal components. These are systems that are both complex—made up of many different kinds of parts linked together through multiple networks on multiple levels—and open, receiving energy, matter and information from their surroundings, storing and using them, and then discarding, radiating, or communicating them back to their surroundings. These systems, as Nobel Laureate Ilya Prigogine has shown, are not in thermal and chemical equilibrium, that is, not in the inert “dead” state that is physically the most probable. Complex open systems are not even near such states; they exist in an entirely remarkable and intrinsically improbable far-from-equilibrium “third state.” Stated another way, all living things and entire ecologies—even human communities—typically abide in this structurally unstable but dynamically self-stabilizing “third state.”

This is important. We must know that the kind of stability that characterizes human beings and human societies is not the kind that characterizes a bridge, a building, or a dam. Expectations that the living world would be intrinsically stable are mistaken; there is a stability here, but it is not the stability of the Eiffel Tower, the Empire State Building, and the Aswan Dam. It is the stability of a human pyramid created by acrobats when they climb on each other’s shoulders. This is not a structural, but a dynamic stability.

If wind, or an earthquake, shakes a well-constructed building, it moves, sways, dances with the pressure. Its structural stability has

limits, however: a quake of catastrophic intensity can destroy even the best-conceived structure, as was seen in the partial collapse of the Bay Bridge in the 1989 San Francisco Earthquake. By contrast, the kind of stability that a human pyramid possesses is both more vulnerable and more resistant. It is based on a constant adjustment of all its elements to the strains and stresses that reach any one of them. If one of the acrobats loses concentration, he could fail to compensate for the small involuntary movements made by the others and the structure would collapse. In this proneness to collapse resides the structure's vulnerability. But the structure has an element of self-procured stability. When all goes well, every acrobat in the pyramid adjusts instantly to the changes that affect the equilibrium of the others.

Evidently, the higher the pyramid, the greater its vulnerability. But within the limits of the ability of the acrobats, it is dynamically stable. Unlike a building, a human pyramid is a self-adjusting, self-stabilizing system.

Complex open systems have the capacity to adjust to changes that affect their equilibrium. This is the reason why they can climb the ladder of complexity, notwithstanding the increased vulnerability that comes with their increased complexity. It is in this respect that today's world has reached the limits of its dynamic stability. This is not a surprise, and should not be a cause to despair. The beat of evolution is a sequence of states of dynamic stability interspersed with periods of critical instability. It is a constant, and constantly nonlinear, beat. The points of instability—also known as “chaos-points” or “bifurcation-points”—are not necessarily the preludes to disaster. They are tipping points; they lead either to the breakdown of the system, or to its breakthrough to a more sustainable form.

The constancy of evolution is the constancy of this basic beat, repeating over and over. It is also the constancy of the acceleration of the beat. As systems climb the ladder of complexity—inasmuch as they didn't fall off the ladder—the periods of dynamic stability become shorter, and the points of critical instability more frequent.

The evolutionary stability-instability dynamic, with its accelerating periods of stability and points of instability, comes to the fore in every process of progressive change. It is expressed in an exclamation known in some form in almost all cultures: “This is the last straw!” This saying refers of course (though we may have forgotten it) to the loading of weight on the back of a camel. Adding loads to the camel's

back is a smooth, linear process: a little more load; a little more exertion by the camel to support it. But then comes the critical point: We add but a straw, and the camel collapses; we have reached the limits of its carrying capacity.

This “nonlinearity” recurs throughout nature. A living species can cope with changes in its environment—up to a point. When those changes accumulate, the stress reaches a critical point and the species dies out—unless, of course, it mutates. In relatively simple systems critical points lead to breakdown. In more complex systems these critical points can go one way or another. They are tipping points that do not lead inevitably to breakdown; they can lead to breakthrough.

This is well-tested theory, for these processes can even be simulated and mathematically described. This description of our current evolutionary challenge may seem like a merely abstract theory, yet it is far from abstract. At the present moment in history, it is the most concrete fact before us. It decides our future—even whether we have a future.

In human societies critical points create abrupt, and usually unforeseen change. In 1989 a group of East German refugees received permission to cross the iron curtain from Hungary to Austria. The penetration of a hitherto iron-clad barrier created that in-itself small but at the time critical shock to the Communist system that broke its back. It was “the last straw.” In a matter of weeks the East European states seceded from the Soviet Union, and less than a year later the Soviet Union itself ceased to exist. The Soviet Communist Party, the most powerful political party in the world, not just lost power, it was outlawed. The republics that comprised the former Soviet Union did not disappear: after a period of chaos and near-breakdown, they managed to transform into the more open form in which they have maintained themselves ever since.

In the year 2008 it is not just one society or one system that is at the threshold of a critical tipping point, but the global community as a whole. The reason for this is unsustainability throughout the human world: economic, political, financial, social, and ecological unsustainability. Russell describes them in this book, and I have done so as well, in *The Chaos Point*. I need not rehearse them here. The point is that the outcome of these unsustainabilities is not yet decided. We still have what Russell calls a “white hole in time” and I

a “chaos window.” We can still reestablish dynamic equilibrium with each other and with nature.

In this book, Russell tells us what we need to do, and how to do it. We must wake up. Waking up starts with fostering inner growth—a timely and positive change in consciousness. This is a major challenge, but not an impossible one. Thinkers who have devoted their life to researching the evolution of human consciousness—Sri Aurobindo, Richard Bucke, Jean Gebser, Stanislav Grof, Don Beck, Ken Wilber, and Peter Russell himself—have forecast the coming of a more evolved consciousness, a consciousness that moves beyond the ego-bound insularity of the modern mentality to a deeper or higher “transpersonal” form. This could happen, and is even likely to happen. But we should add a word of caution. Though the outcome of the coming tipping is not decided yet, it will be decided before long—possibly (and I think very likely) by the end of the year 2012, the widely prophesied watershed in humanity’s tenure on this planet. I say that because by that time many of the processes that drive our world to a critical point (and climate change is just one of them) will have become irreversible.

But the breakdown of our world is not fated. It will come about only if we refuse to change in the vain belief that tipping points either do not exist, or that they can be somehow managed once they appear. And there are feasible alternatives to going on as we have been: We could live, produce, and consume in a sustainable manner; we could relate to each other with understanding and mutual accommodation; and we could be respectful of the balances that define our world and accept to do our part to safeguard them. If we explore and make use of the alternative lifestyles, technologies, and relationships that are available to us, the tipping point known as 2012 will not be a prelude to disaster but the springboard to a sustainable world. This would not stop or contradict the evolutionary beat; it would make constructive use of it.

We must wake up in time. This, to my mind, means learning to act like the acrobats who maintain a human pyramid. If each acrobat were to think only of his own equilibrium, he would not respond in time to the pressures that affect the equilibrium of the others, and the entire structure would collapse. But collapse need not happen in the circus, and it need not happen in society. We can wake up to the many ties that bind us to each other and to our environment.

Sensitivity to each other has always been at the root of the kind of cooperation that enabled intrinsically unstable human societies to maintain themselves in their environment. In modern times we have suppressed this sense of connection to each other and to nature, but the connections themselves are there, and we can rediscover them.

The next evolution of our consciousness points in this very direction. It is the direction of transpersonal consciousness—a consciousness of unity with others and oneness with nature. This evolution will be vital for our future. It could reestablish the coherence we lack in today’s world, a coherence found in well-integrated systems where all the parts are finely tuned to all the other parts. A human pyramid is just such a highly coherent system, and so is nature—and so is our body. But not contemporary society. We have filtered out the perceptions that would tune us to each other and to the environment; we’ve dismissed them as mere imagination or plain superstition. The result is growing alienation, fragmentation, frustration, violence, and chaos.

The next evolution of human consciousness could reestablish coherence in our world. If we allow it to unfold, the acceleration of the evolutionary beat will be matched by the growth of our ability to cope with the tipping points that come our way.

The future is open, and it is not bleak. There is no reason why humanity could not survive as long as humans with awakened consciousness walk the planet.

Ervin Laszlo
January 2008

Author's Preface to 2008 Edition

Much has changed since the second edition of this book was published in 1998—which is most fitting. The accelerating pace of life was one of the key themes of the book, and I was then predicting that humanity would experience as much change in the following ten years as we had in the previous twenty. This alone is not that new or breathtaking; many have commented on the increasing pace of change, and most of us experience its impact in on our lives. But the book went further, encouraging us to pause, to step out of our immediate concerns of home, family, job, finances, politics, and our next vacation, to consider where this accelerated change might be leading in the long term. I showed how, on the one hand, science and technology appear to be taking us ever-more rapidly into a world so radically different from today's that it may be quite literally “unimaginable.” On the other hand, we are facing formidable challenges as ever-increasing material growth wreaks havoc upon the planetary systems that have nurtured and sustained us. The opportunities have never been greater; nor have the dangers been more severe.

The seeds of the book were sown fifteen years earlier. I had always been fascinated by accelerating rates of change—probably because the mathematician in me could see more clearly into the pattern and its long-term implications. I had already touched on this theme in my first book, *The TM Technique*, and developed it further in *The Global Brain*, so it was not unusual that one day I was talking with an acquaintance about this pattern in the history of economics. Then it dawned on me: This acceleration could not go on forever. Or even for very much longer. If civilization did not break down under the pressure of ever-more rapid change, then we were heading towards a point where the rate of change would become so fast it approached infinity. Mathematicians call this a singularity—a point where the equations run out, the laws break down, the patterns of the past no longer apply, and the future becomes undefined. I called this point a “white hole in time,” and that became the title of the first edition of this book, published in 1992.

Today, the idea that we are approaching some kind of singularity is no longer so novel. In his best-selling books, *The Age of Spiritual Machines* (1999) and *The Singularity is Near* (2005), Ray Kurzweil has explored the implications of the exponential growth in the memory and speed of computer chips (often called Moore's law after Gordon Moore, the co-founder of Intel, who first drew attention to the trend in 1965). Kurzweil extrapolated Moore's Law to the time when computers would become smarter than humans. This, he projected, would happen around 2025. From then on, all bets were off. Our model of society breaks down when it tries to predict a future with smarter-than-human computers. We would have reached a singularity.

What Kurzweil and others are foreseeing is a technological singularity. But this would not spell the end of development, only a point in time when we would enter a radically different world. Change would continue accelerating, leading possibly to other technological singularities. But what about the overall pattern of ever-more-rapid change? Where is that leading? Our general development would seem to be spiraling towards a point of infinitely rapid change. This is the singularity that fascinated me—a singularity in the evolution of the human species.

A Crisis of Consciousness

However, the other side of the picture also has to be taken into account—something many proponents of a technological singularity fail to do. Our accelerating development has brought with it some very unwelcome side-effects. The human population has ballooned. More and more of us are consuming resources faster and faster. Half the rainforests have gone. Mineral resources such as copper, zinc, and nickel, are running out. We have extracted the easiest and cheapest oil; yet the world demand is still growing—a recipe for systemic meltdown. We are pouring waste into the oceans, atmosphere, and soil in ever-increasing amounts. The growing concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has begun affecting the climate, with untold consequences. We are in a global crisis—a crisis caused by the accelerated growth of humanity's ability to change the world for its own ends.

It is also a crisis in consciousness, a crisis in human thinking and human values. Take the case of climate change: Fifteen years ago, climate change was not on the collective radar. Today it makes newspaper headlines, shapes government policy, and is on almost everybody's lips. The problem lies not in a lack of technology. Renewable energy technologies—solar, wind, wave, and geothermal—have been around for decades. We could, if we put sufficient commitment to the task, develop and implement them to the stage where we could rapidly wean ourselves from our dependence on the fossil fuels of coal and oil. What holds us back is a lack of will.

For seven years, the Bush Administration in the US, then the largest producer of carbon dioxide, sought for its own political reasons to distort or deny the scientific evidence for global warming, and refused to sign the Kyoto protocol arguing that it would be bad for business (not recognizing, it seems, that if we do not meet this challenge there may be no business left to do). Meanwhile, China—which in 2007 overtook the US as the largest contributor of carbon dioxide—argued that it needed to develop its own economy, and continued opening two new coal-fired power stations per week. Nor were other nations really stepping up to the plate. The European Union struggled to get a commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 20 per cent by 2050, whereas most scientific research suggested we needed to reduce emissions by twice as much in half the time.

Of even greater concern is the growing awareness that if we do not act very quickly we may trigger runaway climate change, with catastrophic consequences. The most worrying scenario concerns the billions of tons of methane frozen in the permafrost of the Arctic tundra—a problem I singled out in the second edition of this book. As a greenhouse gas, methane is twenty-times more potent than carbon dioxide. The Arctic regions are warming three times faster than the rest of the planet, and are already two degrees warmer than they were in the 1980s. Consequently, large areas of the Siberian tundra are now beginning to thaw, releasing their methane into the atmosphere. This will lead to further rises in global temperatures, and even faster rises in the Arctic. The tundra will then thaw even faster, releasing even more methane. Within a short time, a global tipping point will be reached at which global warming becomes unstoppable. It will then only be a matter of time before the temperature rises the six or so degrees that would bring planetary catastrophe. Most of us are by now familiar with the projected consequences of a two-degree rise in global temperatures: more intense storms, longer periods of drought, crop failures in many developing countries, the destruction of nearly all the coral reefs, the melting of much of the polar ice, the flooding of many low-lying urban areas, the possible collapse of the Amazonian rain forest, and the extinction of numerous species.

If the temperature were to rise by six degrees, the prognosis is extremely bleak. At this temperature, the entire planet will be ice-free. Sea levels will rise by seventy meters. Many species of tiny plankton will cease to exist, and the problem would echo up the food chain, bringing the extinction of many fish and sea mammals, with similar repercussions for many species on land. Much more of the land would then be desert. Hurricanes of unimaginable ferocity would bring widespread ecological devastation. It would be a planetary catastrophe. If there were any human beings left, they would probably be reduced to small communities trying to eek out an existence in the polar regions.

Nor is climate change the only problem facing us. Our burgeoning material development has brought in its wake a number of other crises—food, water, resources, pollution—each with their own threats and challenges. Even if we do manage to curtail global warming sufficiently, these will each need dedicated attention if they are

not to wreak their own brand of calamity. Moreover, they too need committed action now.

Unsustainable Consciousness

Twenty years ago, the phrase *sustainable development* was almost unknown. Today we are all familiar with the principle: It refers to development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Current practices are clearly unsustainable. We are raping the planet, leaving it hardly fit for our own needs, let alone future generations.

Behind our various unsustainable actions and behaviors lie unsustainable policies and practices. Behind them, human thinking and decisions, based on human needs and values. In the final analysis, it is our current mode of consciousness that is unsustainable. The real impediments to progress lie within our own minds. As the oft-quoted line from Einstein reminds us, “The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.”

As well as doing everything we can to curb the tragic abuse of our environment and repair the damage that has already been done, we also need to do everything we can to step out of the materialist mindsets that now prevent us from dedicating our full resources to the problems at hand. We need to move beyond our personal fears and prejudices; beyond the short-term, self-interested modes of consciousness that dominate too many of our thoughts and too much of our behavior. We need to wake up. Wake up to what we are doing, and where we are likely headed if we don't change. Wake up from the social trance that has us believing that, if only we could just get enough of the right things and experiences, we will finally be happy. We need to wake up to what is important, and what we really want. That was the call of the book—and it still is.

Re-valuing Spirituality

The world's various spiritual traditions have also called for such an awakening. In modern times, however, religion has had a bad rap. For a start, science would seem to have done away with God. Astronomers have looked out into deep space, to the far edges of the

known universe; cosmologists have looked back into "deep time," to the beginning of creation; and physicists have looked down into the "deep structure" of matter, to the fundamental constituents of the cosmos. From quarks to quasars, they find no evidence of God. Nor do they find any need for God. The universe seems to work perfectly well without any divine assistance.

Yet the real concern of the spiritual traditions is not with the realms of deep space, time and matter, but with "deep mind," the one realm that science has chosen not to investigate. Those who have investigated this realm are the mystics, yogis, rishis, roshis, lamas, shamans, and other spiritual adepts who have explored consciousness first-hand—which, it could be argued, is the only way to explore consciousness. They have delved beneath the surface levels of the mind, observed the arising and passing of thought, and looked beyond, to the source of their experience and the essence of their own consciousness. There they have discovered how to free the mind from its material attachments, and through that find the ease and joy for which we all long.

Whereas Western science and technology has sought to relieve us from unnecessary physical suffering, the spiritual traditions have sought to understand how our minds become trapped in dysfunctional patterns and have developed various techniques and practices—we might call them spiritual technologies—that free us from the inner causes of suffering. They free us to act with more intelligence and compassion, so that we can attend to the needs of the situation at hand rather than the dictates of an anxious ego.

We need more than ever to re-evaluate spirituality. This does not mean a return to traditional religion; there is huge difference between spirituality and religion. Most of the world's spiritual traditions began with the awakening of an individual to what Aldous Huxley called the *Perennial Philosophy*—the wisdom that comes from an experience of unity with all things. This can be a profoundly transforming experience, so much so that many have sought to convey it to others. But their followers, being less enlightened than the teacher, tended to misunderstand some of it and forget other parts. What they did assimilate they passed on to others, who got even less of the original truth. Thereupon, the translation from one language to another and interpretation within existing belief systems, further

distorted the original, and before long the religion that appeared was very different from the wisdom that inspired it.

Contemporary writers, such as Richard Dawkins, may be justified in criticizing religion for beliefs that fly in the face of modernity, and for the horrendous sufferings that adherents to one faith have inflicted on those of a different faith. We would, they claim, be much better off without religious belief. But to then dismiss spirituality altogether is to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Beneath the many surface differences in the world's spiritual traditions lies a common wisdom concerning how we become attached to our desires and aversions, and ways to liberate our minds from their dysfunctional egocentricity. This is one of our most critical needs, for, in the words of E.F. Schumacher, author of *Small Is Beautiful*, “Our species is far too clever to survive without wisdom.”

A Spiritual Renaissance

Whilst we are facing the gravest dangers to humanity, we are, I believe, also in the early stages of a worldwide spiritual renaissance. It began back in the sixties when many young people (and a few older ones) started exploring different modes of consciousness. It reached its symbolic zenith in the summer of 1967—the famous “summer of love”—with The Beatles' live recording of “All You Need Is Love,” the first ever global satellite broadcast. This simple message has been at the core of all spiritual traditions. If we can love every other person and every other being, then the world would be many times better, if not ideal. But the question remains: How do we do that?

In the following years, people began looking to Eastern religions for ways to reach higher states of consciousness without using drugs. Training programs emerged purporting to encapsulate the essence of this wisdom. Books were written—so many that within twenty years the “mind-body-spirit” market had become the fastest-selling sector of the publishing industry. Today, we have unprecedented access to the spiritual teachings of just about every tradition and culture. We are discovering their common underlying truths, and translating that perennial philosophy into the language and terms of our own time. Something completely new is emerging: we are rediscovering that essential wisdom that inspired so many of the world's religions. But today we are discovering it together.

This search for awakening is following its own curve of acceleration. This pattern is to be found not just in terms of numbers of people involved, and the number of organizations, publications, and websites, but also in the quality of awakening. Forty years ago, our understanding and appreciation of spirituality was relatively naïve. Terms such as "cosmic consciousness" and "enlightenment" conjured ideas of being transported into a very different state, perhaps seeing the world bathed in light, or accessing some higher knowledge. While this may be possible, we have realized that such altered states of consciousness are not the essence of awakening. Rather than seeing a different world, it is more about seeing the same world, but in a different light. The quest for self-liberation is gravitating towards what is often called the "non-dual" position: There really is nothing other-worldly to attain, nowhere to get to. It is about being more fully present; it is about opening to the natural state of mind before it gets trammled by attachments, aversions, and the machinations of the ego. From this perspective, there is nothing to do. Awakening is a letting go, an undoing of what keeps us apart from our true nature.

This, too, is not new. It has been a recurrent theme of many traditions; but today it has become the cutting edge of the quest for self-liberation. At the same time, a growing number of people are becoming fully awake, and proving themselves to be excellent teachers. Together, we are learning the most effective ways to awaken ourselves from our cultural trance. And the more we learn, the faster our awakening.

Collapsing Time

Can we wake up in time? Who can say? The future has always been hard to predict. And the faster change comes, the less reliable any prediction. When this book was first published, no one apart from a few computer scientists had ever heard of the Worldwide Web, let alone search engines, online shopping, and video streams. If we could not then predict just fifteen years ahead, we certainly cannot now. Nor, given the acceleration, can we foresee developments even ten years ahead. Perhaps the only thing we can say with certainty is that "the unexpected will out."

I wrote those words as the conclusion to an essay I was preparing on future scenarios back in 2001 — on the evening of Sept 10, to be

precise. Twelve hours later, I was awoken by a voice on my answering machine telling me the twin towers were down. The unexpected had arrived. A little sooner than expected.

For me, there was an added dimension to this momentous event. In previous editions of this book, I had sought to bring home how the rate of development had been speeding up, by charting the history of Earth up the side of New York's World Trade Center. On this scale, homo sapiens appears an inch from the top. The Greek and Roman empires thrived a hundredth of an inch from the top. And the whole of modern history occupies less than a thousandth of an inch—less than the thickness of the top layer of paint. What, I asked, did the next, even thinner layer hold in store?

When I was preparing the first edition of this book, I considered using an alternative parallel, imagining the history of life on Earth condensed into a year-long film, but finally decided in favor of the more visual image of what was then the world's tallest building. Today, six years after that pivotal day, this illustration has so many other associations it is no longer appropriate. So in this edition I have returned to my original idea. Modern history now occurs in the last frame of a year-long film. And the question becomes, what does the next frame hold in store?

Other than that, I have not made major changes to the book. Various facts and figures have been updated to bring the book more in line with current times, but the main text remains the same. I did consider a complete overhaul of the book in order to bring the content into the twenty-first century. However, as I started on that project, I realized it would effectively entail a whole new book. Yet I also saw that the essential thesis holds as true today as it did fifteen years ago. So I have left the book's main themes and structure as they were, letting them serve as a testimony to my thinking then, and to the times in which it was written.

Peter Russell
May 2008

*To keep abreast of my current thinking on the issues discussed in the book, and other areas of my work, check my website *The Spirit of Now* at www.peterrussell.com.*

