



Transactional Musings

Volume 2, Issue 1
January 29, 2011

Special points of interest:

- Whoa - a - a - a - a
- Vallejo, California Update - Bloomberg News Report says City pensioners may expect to get 5–20% of what is owed them, that is if the “plan” is OK’d by the Judge.



Platitudes and Marshmallows

The State of the Union Address recently staged in Washington, DC brought most of the body elect together. Reportedly three Supreme Court Justices stayed away. One was said to regard the gathering as “juvenile.”

The speech did raise one question in particular: what’s being served up this year? Many media and pundit hours have been spent debriefing and debating the speech. I imagine government employees are trying to decode what was said, too.

I’ve seen it before. The man and his speech writers have to fill up an allotted amount of time and they have to make their supporters feel included.

The time was mostly filled with “platitudes.” I got the impression that the

President hadn’t given the speech much thought. It sounded as if he had left it up mostly to others, on a committee. It seemed, well, solicitous, almost mocking Congress. Oh yeah, he had dinner with the visiting Chinese delegation a few days before.

Webster’s Dictionary defines platitude as (1) *commonplaceness; flatness; dullness.* (2) *a commonplace or trite remark, one especially uttered as if it were fresh or original.*

*SYN.— a **platitude** is a trite remark or idea, especially one uttered as if it were novel or momentous; as **commonplace** is any obvious or conventional remark or idea; a **truism** is a statement whose truth is widely known and whose utterance, therefore, seems*

*superfluous; a **cliché** is an expression or idea which, though it was once fresh and forceful, has become hackneyed and weak through frequent repetition; **bromide** is an informal term for platitude that is especially dull, tiresome, or annoying.*

Some pundits said the Presidential address lacked clarity.

I’m sure his supporters thought well of the speech.

Marshmallow anyone?



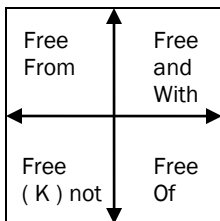
Self-rekidding is To Deceive Oneself

Eric Berne’s introduction of Transactional Analysis to his readers enabled them to begin understanding the importance of Parent-Adult-Child. Since the earliest days it was understood by students of transactional analysis that the first job with a patient, a student, or for that matter anybody, is for him to be able to reliably identify and access his own Adult. The next is for his Adult to recognize his own Child self and become able to separate his Adult from

his Child. Following this, the third task, is to focus on that portion of the person’s behavior where the Child persists on intruding into a person’s own Adult reasoning (process and behavior). Put differently, this job of decontaminating a person’s Adult is to identify the circumstances in which **his Child (being permitted by his Adult)** keeps on contaminating his own Adult. The Child self of a person can and does, in specific circumstances, “borrows” reasoning to “substantiate” a

strongly held emotional belief. This is called “His Adult is kidding himself.” These are instances where a person persists in using his reasoning apparatus in order to justify emotionally based behavior with seeming reasoning.

This variant of the Parent-Adult-Child (PAC) diagram was dubbed the self-rekidding diagram to emphasize the problem. It has reference to those who remain persistent in pressing their beliefs onto others despite facts to



Freedom Diagram

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Continuing Self-Rekidding

the contrary, and the resulting alienation of friends.

The word “kid” is both a noun slang term for child and a verb “to deceive, to perpetrate a hoax.” People do kid themselves at times. This self-rekidding colloquialism describes the person whose Child does have a strongly held, emotionally charged set of beliefs about what is for him a “truth.” And when he is corrected about this belief, he

disputes and disagrees in the face of objective, verifiable data to the contrary. Such a person in fact, when seen, will be vigorously marshalling more “personal facts” and “reasons” in support of his belief. When this occurs, it is evident that this believer’s Childself is moving in on his own probability estimating Adult.

His Child is contaminating his Adult reasoning appara-

tus. He is deceiving himself. The repeated doing of this is called self-rekidding. Impassioned reasoning contains more than factual, objective reasons.



See “Self-Rekidding” by F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D. at www.ListeningActivity.com

Whoa - a - a - a

We’ve all been hearing about the federal government deficit. This talk has been going on for decades. And yet government continues to expand. So where does it end? In what shape, and in what form?

Any sensible household and private business knows you can only get so far before the creditors catch up or as the drawing here implies, you run out of space.

State governments at least are dealing with the requirement of frugality. California is cutting back, Illinois is increasing taxation. Idaho is seriously considering selling/leasing 30,000 acres of land south of Boise to the China-PRC as a “Free Trade Zone.” (Trojan Horse?) These and other programs are surfacing. And so on. Some states are very seriously looking into having alternative currencies ready to go when the dollar and FED fails.

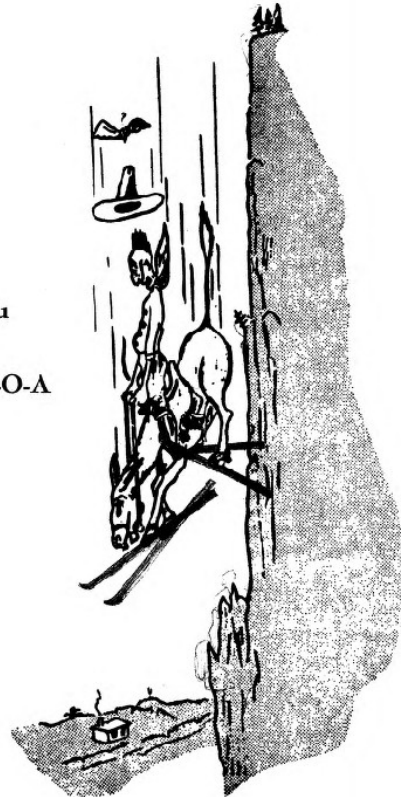
Local government is deal-

ing with less, too. I know; I’ve seen first hand, living here in Vallejo, California. Other cities and county governments are letting employees go, cutting back, deliver-

ing fewer services.

Curiosity, the local congressional delegation is going along with the bailout activity. They occasionally come to town to hand out

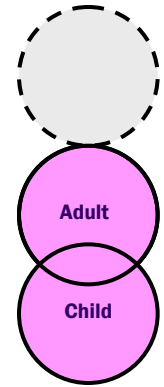
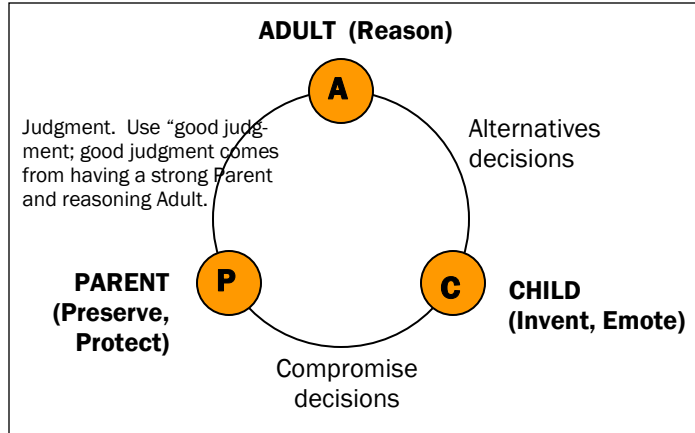
Whoa-a-a-a You
Son-of-a-Bitch
WHOA-HO-O-O-A



more federal grants (with more money \$ as usual) for various programs [fighting back, education, recovery, etc.]

At the end of the day (the end of the ride) it will not be business as usual.

Enjoy the ride. Fasten your seat belts, and remember to change your shorts.



Vallejo, California Update

Vallejo has become a financial laboratory: the closure of Mare Island Naval Base, collapse of the housing market, collapse in retail market, collapse in educational fiscal management, collapse in moral standards, Bankruptcy. I gotta say though, there are approximately 50 churches within a mile of my place here. And many Mom and Pop stores are hanging on. However, it is very difficult to compete with the BIG BOX stores on the outskirts of town.

The major and local media outlets have reported Vallejo's bankruptcy quite thoroughly: Bloomberg, Reuters, NY Times, Wall Street Journal, Vallejo Times Herald, CNBC, CBS, NBC, ABC, many others. A recent Bloomberg article said "General unsecured creditors would collect 5 percent to 20 percent of their claims under the plan of adjustment filed late yesterday in US Bankruptcy Court in Sacramento, the state capitol. ... Vallejo's plan assumes the city can't provide essential services, like police and fire protection, while also paying its debts ... Should the city succeed, the case 'may become an impor-

tant precedent.' "

Vallejo is a complex place, though not untypical from most other places. We have a multi-cultural city made up of mostly good people. The complexities have been around for a long time, since the California gold rush and before, when General Mariano Vallejo established his horse ranch on Mare Island.

Vallejo grew with Mare Island Naval Base. And its strength and respect came with a strong sense of purpose. Vallejoans built and maintained many ships, including nuclear powered submarines. We are a proud people. With the START treaty came the closure of Mare Island Naval Base and the abandonment of Vallejo by the Department of Defense of the United States of America.

In its day "the downtown" was a grand place. Now its basically a ghost town with 75% vacancy rate in the commercial and office space. Vallejo city hall is one of the largest tenants, along with a U.S. Post Office and Library shared by the police depart-

ment and fighting back people upstairs. The people try, but its difficult to shed the rampant crime and "housing requirements" of redevelopment. Millions of dollars are being spent on a new parking garage and bus transfer station. Many people question the judgment of those continuing with projects in a ghost town.

"It" started when I was a teenager, in the early 1960's. Lady Byrd Johnson had this vision of urban renewal. Many old buildings were demolished, bull-dozed out of existence. New banking and government buildings were built. Parking lot constructed south of Georgia Street. Somewhere along the way of years the "Redevelopment Agency" and "project area" were formed. Nearly 50 years later there is little future to show for all the money and many tens of thousands of man hours spent on it. "Redevelopment" is going for a century.

The downtown is made up of some beautiful buildings. They are museum quality architectural work. The Architectural Heritage District has protected the old Victorians to the east. I'd recommend to

In the case of the "Situational Personality" the personal PARENT has been replaced by the "Situational-Committee" PARENT.

"Personal judgment" is absent when the personal Parent is absent.





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"Mastery of the universe is proportional to the symbols man has by which to represent his universe."

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any architectural history class to visit the downtown to see the work from the various periods of Vallejo's history. Leave the planners behind. Vallejo's downtown would make a great movie set. Mare Island has a few gems, too.

The I-80 corridor bisecting Vallejo has possibilities and the Solano County fairgrounds, on the "corridor," is now regarded as "prime" real estate. The county owns it, and the city will have a

say in how it is developed according to city general plan, zoning, and environmental law. Despite the rancor between up county and Vallejo elected delegations, that project may benefit Vallejo. However, here again is the presence of the Vallejo Redevelopment Agency. Hopefully this is not another 100 year plan. I think you begin to see what has happened. Same with the local schools, retail, commercial, etc. People are opting out. Taking their kids

to private schools, some seeking medical care out of town, shopping out of town, moving out of town. The demographics have changed dramatically in 50 years, especially in the last 10. And so it goes. Many of us hang on though.

Will America (USA) go the way that Vallejo has gone? When we were known as an "All American Town," we were a proud city.

"Vallejo Assessment Report" January 25, 2011

The City of Vallejo has a new City Manager. The most recent in the seemingly endless line of administrators. He has, as he said, met most of the city employees personally. He has listened to their concerns and listed them in a published assessment available for viewing which is part of the City Council Meeting agenda staff reports for January 25, 2011, Item #10.

This is heartening, to see this happening; that someone cares to get to know the people. Staff moral has picked up. Some of the staff are beginning to open up, and the report reflects this. Still though, the promises made to them in the past about their pensions have been, well, ah,

The report gives a glimpse of the state of the

city. I knew the city was in bad shape, but I had not realized how far gone it is. It is a long ways to go to get back up to just "business as usual." City Council elect are going to have to do more than "do their homework, study," sit thru meetings. It is time to (really, for real) think outside of the box. Get used to it. It will never be "business as usual," again.

It would be best the City of Vallejo honored its promises, commitments; to its bond holders, former employees, and others. Some people have openly questioned the lucrative pay scales granted to the police and fire union employees years ago. Some people predicted the bankruptcy then.

As for the list of 297 recommended actions, here are some thoughts:

#58 "Leveraging Resources" is a vague concept.
#63 makes a reference to "Best Practices." Is that code for something? Make sure this is transparent.
#110-128 Mare Island, Waterfront, Downtown. Are these part of the on-going hundred year plan ???
#145 Redevelopment, Transportation. Is this part of the same 100 year plan?
#146 Redevelopment study in light of (3rd term) Governor Brown's pronouncements to abolish redevelopment is a new parameter.
#149 Meet with Federal and State elected delegations. Will partisanship control?
#151 Newsletter. Who will do this?
#166 Administrative Rule 2.12, Beneficial Suggestion Plan. How does the public access this?

Lunar Eclipse of the Moon December 21, 2010

Dad, Franklin H. Ernst Jr., MD, would have been 88 years old on his birthday, December 21, 2010. He passed away on June 16, 2009, 18 months prior to the eclipse.

Happy Trails Dad