

**Welcome to [ASK] - Always Seeking Knowledge!**  
**ASK #20 - Making decisions based on core human values: October 31, 2005**  
**Written and Published by Bruce Ward, Holistic Results Pty. Limited**

In this issue you will find:

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**1. Quick [ASK]**

We want to lift the level of discussion, so that people begin to consider what is happening around them in the light of a bigger picture - a holistic goal, rather than simply engaging in how-to arguments. Barry Jones was correct on Wednesday: in the end, people will move towards human values if they are strongly and skillfully articulated.

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**2. Welcome**

Two excellent recent meetings to report. At Dandaragan, WA about 30 locals who have previously done the Holistic Management(tm) program met for dinner at Waddi Bush Resort. It was a wonderful evening, and followed a wet visit to Rob and Tasma Harper's Velyere property.

At Dungog a couple of weeks ago more than 50 people met at Dougal and Libby Alison's property, Nulla Nulla. The meeting served as both a 'refresher' for about half the people, and as an 'overview' for the remainder.

This year we have assisted a number of Management Groups/Clubs to form. We hope that the success of these groups will inspire others to form in coming months, and we plan to promote such activity.

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Many people have asked what action is being taken to replace the Holistic Decision Making Association (HDMA). The answer is, it is being worked on. There is a reason why HDMA 'failed': Because it was membership based, it left out of the loop anyone who was not a member. The whole purpose of it was to 'assist and make easy the practice of holistic management'. When we formed it, we genuinely thought it would do that. It was only through experience that we realised it was structurally flawed. In Section 8 of this email are some words we found on flogging dead horses. The HDMA horse was dying, so it was put to sleep, rather than risk being put into one of those categories. Another, better model will rise soon, one that incorporates the learning gathered by HDMA. So long as the lesson is learnt, HDMA was not a failure, but simply the feedback loop working. No decision is ever right or wrong, simply the best you could make at the time. By assuming you could be wrong, you tend to find the evidence early enough to take another action, so you get to where you need to be.

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As predicted last [ASK], the Australian government had a big rush on the HIBIS satellite internet subsidy program. They are now out of money! Hopefully there will be more money soon. In our view, we must now accept two things about electronic communications: Firstly, When Telstra is sold, it will remain difficult to access communications technology in the bush; and secondly, that we each ignore changing communications at our peril. Like it or not, the internet and spin-offs from that technology are the way of the future. Ignoring this will be tantamount to 'holding the line' on candles once electric lights were invented. You can do it, but you could become very alone.

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Chris and Jacqui Henggeler report that their recent event at Kachana was a great success. Judi Earl was a guest speaker, and we are aware that Tony Lovell (Gold Coast), Phil Diprose (Melbourne), and Glenn and Julie Humbert and kids (no fixed abode - they are travelling around Australia after selling their farm) were all there. There will soon be details of the event at:

[www.members.westnet.com.au/satlink/ENVIRONMENTAL%2DLITERACY/](http://www.members.westnet.com.au/satlink/ENVIRONMENTAL%2DLITERACY/)

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Assisting people do their holistic financial planning has kept us very busy this year. There has been a big realisation by people who have 'lumpy' incomes - eg grain income at Christmas, or a wool sale once a year etc. The secret is to match last years income to this years expenses.

Let's say that you receive 80% of your annual revenue in October, then start your plan that month. Begin by sweeping off your (P)- profit. Set it aside for your tax, and for whatever discretionary purposes you desire - debt reduction, additional

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money to strengthen the weak-link in the coming year, or to spend on family development, etc.

Then allocate the W-I-M expenses you plan to incur in the next year. This way you are selling your product first, then matching the entire next year's expenses to a known amount of revenue. This is a quantum change in ones view of the world, as expenses can be predicted with much greater certainty than income, especially income a year out. Call on +61 2 9929 5568 if you want to discuss the application of this thinking to your situation.

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Most people are in the midst of a seasonal change - either from Non-growth to Growing season, or vice versa. Just a reminder that like holistic financial planning, holistic grazing planning is an important aspect of managing 'holistically'.

As always, it helps to remember when grazing planning that your plan may include periods where animals are set stocked, a legitimate and useful activity at times. Make sure you plan for set-stocking, if you need to use it, so it is fully effective, and don't forget to also plan for the transition back to more frequent movements.

This issue of [ASK] considers world events and political posturing with and without a holistic goal. What do you think would be the outcome if our political processes really considered 'Cause and Effect' and 'Sustainability' in relation to a national holistic goal for whatever nation we are fortunate enough to reside in? There is a challenge for you at the end of Section 3. Give it a go, and let us know what you think.

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### **3. Making decisions based on core human values**

In this issue we take a helicopter view of conventional decision-making, and how it has influenced our political processes in recent years, particularly in Australia, although the actions I describe are well known in NZ and in many other parts of the globe where this email is read.

The purpose of this item is not to make value judgements - that is up to you! It is to ponder whether, if our government was managing holistically, their actions may be different to those we relate here. In order to position the discussion, some items of information, which we believe are 'facts' have been stated. Here are the brief facts as we understand them to be.

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This week the President of the Australian Labor Party (ALP), Barry Jones, addressed the National Press Club luncheon in Canberra. The ALP are the other major party in our 'two-party' system of government here in Australia, and they have been in opposition since the Liberal-National coalition won the 1996 election. Since that time they have changed policies and swapped leaders several times. Jones' speech outlined what he considers the ALP must do if it is to regain the government benches.

Jones described how, in recent years, the ALP has been unable to articulate its 'values' to the Australian people. He cited some of the occasions the party has previously drawn a line in the sand and declared, 'we stand for this as a core value!', including being against conscription and the Vietnam War, and their opposition to capital punishment.

He noted that in each case enough people moved towards the ALP position over time, and the existing government was voted out. He suggested that as the people thought more deeply over time, and realised the 'human value' of the ALP position, they moved their vote as a matter of principle.

He talked at length about two impending pieces of legislation here in Australia, one of which we discuss here. He also talked of an existing circumstance that he considers should have been a 'line in the sand' for the ALP, the story of David Hicks, who is accused of fighting for the Taliban in Afghanistan. Jones noted that Hicks has been detained by the US Government in Cuba for more than three years, with limited consideration of his human rights. The Australian government has supported this detention. Apparently no Australian law has been broken, so he cannot be tried in Australia. Hicks will not be tried under American civil law, or under the prevailing processes of US military law. A special judicial process is being developed under which Hicks will be tried.

Next week we will see new legislation in Australia that will effectively allow our security services to detain without charge for an extended period any person they believe may be a 'terrorist' or associated with a 'terrorist'. The same legislation appears to have implications for freedom of speech if, as some reports suggest, it will deem reporting of such detention to anyone to be an act of 'sedition'.

Dictionary.com defines sedition as:

"an illegal action inciting resistance to lawful authority and tending to cause the disruption or overthrow of the government".

On 'Catalyst' this week, ABC-TV showed an amazing story of some Banteng cattle - about 5,000 head - on Coburg Peninsular. Here are the ABC's comments from their web site, which were put up prior to running the story: "A shy and elusive animal is proving a difficult test for our existing attitudes to conservation and feral animals. The Banteng is a type of cattle indigenous to South East Asia but a small herd of them were released into the remote Cobourg Peninsula in the late 1840's. Today they are endangered across most of their home range but the

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Australian population is large, healthy and stable. So what do we do with an animal that is feral in Australia while in danger of extinction in its homelands?"

As you might guess, there was a bloke running around with a gun wanting to blow them all away, because they are 'non-native' and therefore 'feral', although he conceded they do much less damage than either buffalo or wild pigs! More importantly, as the ABC web comments show, these cattle are absolutely genetically pure, have not crossed with any other breed of cattle, and are the largest herd of healthy, genetically pure Bantengs in the world.

What would you do?

Here is what we would do if we were the government. We would consider each of them in the light of a holistic goal, and pass the actions we are considering through the testing questions.

Those actions again are:

1. Supporting the detention of David Hicks before eventual trial by a specially created US military court, for an alleged action which is not illegal in his country (We should not confuse Hicks supposed actions prior to his arrest with his treatment since his arrest. It is the circumstances surrounding his detention and trial that is being discussed here, not the emotive issue of whether his actions were correct or not - those actions were actions Hicks chose. The actions discussed are the subsequent actions of government).
2. Legislation that provides for lengthy detention of Australian citizens with very limited representation, if they are suspected of terrorist actions or thoughts
3. Potential criminal proceedings against people who publicly or even privately advise others that they have observed or are aware of the detention of an Australian citizen suspected of terrorist activities
4. The elimination of a herd of cattle in northern Australia because they are not native to Australia

Each of these situations are contentious. Why? Because, in every case people are arguing about short term objectives (lock them up, get them out, etc). Very few people are talking yet about the outcome of these actions, only the actions themselves.

How long is it since we have seen a political leader stand up and say out loud:

- a) These are the experiences we want the citizens of our nation to enjoy (ie the Quality of Life Statement in a holistic goal);
- b) These are the conditions we are going to foster so that people can more easily enjoy those experiences (the Forms of Production in a holistic goal)

- c) This is how we will be known by others; how our infrastructure will become; how our communities will become; and most importantly, how our ecological processes - the basis of all our endeavours, will function, so that our citizens can indefinitely enjoy the quality of life they desire.  
(The Future Resource base of a holistic goal)

How about sitting down and writing just a few sentences from a national perspective about each of those headings (a, b and c immediately above). Then pull out your testing questions and use them to test actions 1 to 4 above.

In particular, consider carefully the 'Cause and Effect' question

- Is this action addressing the root cause of the problem?;

and the

'Sustainability' question

- If we take this action, will we tend to move towards or away from the Future Resource Base we have described in our holistic goal?

There are no right or wrong answers here. The answers will be correct for you, so long as you have tested the action. You make the judgement - against a holistic goal!

We want to lift the level of discussion, so that people begin to consider what is happening around them in the light of a bigger picture - a holistic goal, rather than simply engaging in how-to arguments. We suspect that Barry Jones was correct on Wednesday: in the end, people will move towards human values if they are strongly and skillfully articulated.

We hope it will not be seditious to wonder aloud the consequences should an influential person stand up and declare what they really stand for. They might well begin a movement towards a new tomorrow that is less about politics and more about sound governance.

Who might she be, this new leader, do you think?

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#### **4. Update your Diary**

Bruce is available and will be providing coaching in:

New Zealand - between November 28 and December 3

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NSW - between November 1 and 10, and December 6 to 20, and most of January and is available at other times on request, by email [blward@holisticresults.com.au](mailto:blward@holisticresults.com.au) or by phone +61 2 9929 5568

Courses will be held at Bombala next February, March and April. See the website [www.holisticresults.com.au](http://www.holisticresults.com.au) for details

Bruce will be speaking at the Woodford Folk Festival, Sunshine Coast, on December 28, 2005 at 11:00am This event has been organised for the past three years by well known nutritional consultant, Graeme Sait, and over the years has included work by some of the worlds leading human, soil, plant and animal health speakers. Bruce's task is to give the entire process a holistic spin.

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## 5. Notices

We are very impressed with the recently released KLR Marketing program, and are now working with the KLR people to provide the program to our practitioners early next year. KLR contains the livestock marketing aspects of Bud Williams work in the US. It has nothing to do with Bud's low stress stock handling. You might like to mark the following provisional dates in your diary. More information will follow shortly:

NSW - 22 and 23 February, 2006  
WA - 1 and 2 March, 2006  
NZ - 15 and 16 March, 2006

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## 6. Books and Materials you can use

1. "A Short History of Progress"  
Ronald Wright  
ISBN 1-920885-79-X

This book runs rings around Jared Diamond's "Collapse", in our view. Ronald Wright originally presented the material as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's 2004 Massey Lecture series. It is a slim volume - only 132 pages of text, so it is true to its title.

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In the early pages Wright talks of the three big questions: 'Where do we come from?', 'What are we?' and 'Where are we going?' The book specifically addresses the third question, but in doing so, has to look backwards to a degree.

Like Jared Diamond, Wright walks all around decision-making, without ever asking the simple question, 'How did people in these past civilisations make their decisions?' Let's hope he gets the message one day, as he writes so well that he could make a huge difference to the sustainability of our civilisation.

2. "1421"

Gavin Menzies

ISBN 0-553-81522-9

Guy Mead, Dingleburn Station, NZ put us onto this book. On March 8, 1421 the largest fleet the world had ever seen set sail from China. Some of the ships were up to five hundred feet long, with rudders up to 36 feet high. The admirals in command of this, the sixth and by far the largest such fleet, were all eunuchs, who had each been ordered to 'proceed all the way to the end of the earth'.

Menzies, formerly a Royal Navy submarine captain, spent fifteen years piecing together the story of their travels over two years. By the time they returned home in 1423 they had reached the Antarctic, circumnavigated the globe a century before Magellan, reached America 70 years before Columbus, and Australia and New Zealand three hundred and fifty years before Cook. In fact, there is evidence a large part of the fleet was wrecked off the South Island.

The fleet returned home just after China entered its long period of self imposed isolation, and much of the material was lost. The story is skillfully told, and Menzies mounts a strong, credible discussion about this amazing naval exploration. You will like this one.

By the way:

Most books we recommend are available at The Book Connection in Dubbo, NSW

Ph: 02 6882 3311 Fax: 02 6882 3311 or email

orders@bookconnection.com.au

(Also ask David Pankhurst about their Mail Order Catalogue - it is terrific) or Scorpio Books in Christchurch, NZ

Ph: 03 379 2882 Fax: 03 379 2886 or email scorpbk@ihug.co.nz

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## 7. Quotes that mean something

"Maintaining a complicated life is a great way to avoid changing it."

-- Elaine St. James

"It only takes one person to change your life - you."

-- Ruth Casey

"What is best?"

-- Robert M Pirsig

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## 8. Joke

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: "Take only ONE. God is watching."

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A child had written a note, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."

Further information on dead horses

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The tribal wisdom of the Dakota Indians, passed on from generation to generation, says that, "When you discover that you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount." However, in modern business, education and government, a whole range of far more advanced strategies are often employed, such as:

1. Buying a stronger whip.
2. Changing riders.
3. Threatening the horse with termination.
4. Appointing a committee to study the horse.
5. Arranging to visit other countries to see how others ride dead horses.
6. Lowering the standards so that dead horses can be included.
7. Reclassifying the dead horse as "living impaired".
8. Hiring outside contractors to ride the dead horse.
9. Harnessing several dead horses together to increase the speed.
10. Providing additional funding and/or training to increase the dead horse's performance.
11. Doing a productivity study to see if lighter riders would improve the dead horse's performance.

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12. Declaring that as the dead horse does not have to be fed, it is less costly, carries lower overhead, and therefore contributes substantially more to the bottom line of the economy than do some other horses.
13. Rewriting the expected performance requirements on all horses.
14. Promoting the dead horse to a supervisory position.

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This publication is intended as information and not advice. You should test any ideas contained herein towards your own holistic goal.

Regards, and keep well  
Bruce Ward