



The New Age of Entrepreneurship

The Transformation of Business

A Dialogue by Claire Papin | Sandy Penny | December 2005

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Intro bio: Today's guest, Sandy Penny, is a visionary, a highly intuitive spiritual advisor, an accomplished entrepreneur and a published magazine author. She has built businesses from the ground up with little or no up-front investment, incorporating her creativity, lifestyle interests, and spirituality into unique expressions of her authentic self. Sandy has been a graphic designer, a marketing and financial writer for fortune 100 companies, and the publisher of two newspapers, *The Rising Sun*, the first metaphysical journal in Houston, Texas, and *Family and*

Friends, a resource journal for kids and parents. Currently reinventing herself as a marketing consultant and inspirational speaker for New Age and spiritual businesses, she is traveling the world and developing material for several upcoming writing projects. ###

INTERVIEW

People talk about the New Age and the Aquarian Age all the time, but very few people talk about those terms in concrete ways. Can you define those terms for us?

There are many casual references to New Age people and thought and the Age of Aquarius, but few discuss it in a practical way. The “Old Age” was called the Piscean Age, and the fish was its symbol. It corresponds to the sign of Pisces on the cosmic astrological calendar. Our world has moved from the energy of the Piscean Age into the Aquarian Age, also called The New Age.

What was the Piscean Age about?

The Piscean Age was associated with the experience of hierarchy, structure, power and control, deep emotion and addiction - and the positive outcome of addressing the inherent lessons is to master the ability to build lasting structures while honoring the earth and the people who help build and sustain the structures. There are many extremes offered in the Piscean Age, drug, alcohol, work and relationship addictions. All that and more was readily available for us to choose. Once the planet moves out of a cycle, the lessons of that sign are no longer appropriate, even if we have not mastered them. The energy shifts into new patterns, and the old structures begin to break down so the energy can be used to build the new age structures. We have been witnessing that breakdown of the old age

since the 1960s, slowly moving through the dawning of the Age of Aquarius into the full onset of Aquarian power.

How does the Aquarian Age differ from the Piscean Age?

Aquarius is the water bearer. It is heralded by events concerning wind and water - like hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis, and as a complementary energy, fires that are spread by the wind. In the past few years and this year in particular, the transformation has become more intense, and few people have escaped experiencing it or at least feeling it in some way. The impact has been to bring up all the old Piscean karmic issues for us to look at because as a famous TV therapist says, "You can't change what you don't acknowledge." We have the opportunity to make significant growth and change at times like this. We can integrate the lessons of the old age and embrace the challenges of the new one. The good news is that a great deal of energy has been freed up for us to use in new and different ways, ways that are in harmony with the new energy of Aquarius. For those who resist change, events of wind, water and fire will free them from old attachments and create radical change. However, we can make mindful decisions about change, using our intuition and inner guidance, prior to being forced into a change by external circumstances.

What are the attributes of the Aquarian energy?

The sign of Aquarius includes what I call the four Cs: communication, cooperation, creativity and community. These are the challenges and the areas that will offer the best opportunities for success and growth for the next couple of thousand years. The internet is the ultimate symbol for the Aquarian Age. It offers instant world wide communication, the ability to build and change communities and businesses quickly and to respond to changes as they occur. It also offers the opportunity for a great deal of

creativity and cooperation as a result of the connections it offers globally and the marketing strategies available to businesses.

How do these attributes affect us on a personal and business level?

On a personal level, we have seen how the internet offers us the opportunity to connect with people all over the world, to communicate, to cooperate, to date and just as easily to shut down that communication instantly if we choose. It offers us the ability to live in remote locations and access a global marketplace, to order what we need and have it shipped to us from all over this planet.

In the same way, the world of business is changing just as fast as the World Wide Web these days. The traditional business model with its hierarchal structure is giving way to the flatter, more fluid nuclear model that can respond quickly to new trends and plug in experts at all levels and phases of a project. Business owners and executives have to be thinking on their feet all the time and learning new skills and technologies. The days of the big behemoth companies are numbered, and their dinosaur bones will fuel the new economy as oil fueled the old one. Even Wall Street now offers a sustainability index so people can choose to invest in companies that are focused on what will make them last, like good environmental policies, employee ownership and commitment to fiscal health.

We have been seeing many of those changes in business recently, and there seem to be a lot of people out of jobs these days. Why is that and what does the New Age offer us in the way of financial support?

“To paraphrase W.E. Butler, a spiritual person serves by what he is, not just by what he does. In other words, there is no mandate for

spiritual people to subjugate themselves to a collective ideal of servitude, for their very existence is a conduit by which spirit enters into and transforms society, no matter how subtle and unnoticed it may be.”

What I mean by using that quote is that the jobs of the past that we have lost recently are not coming back in the same numbers, and rather than worry about what kind of jobs we will have, we have to refocus our attention on small businesses that offer us the opportunity to use the four Cs: communication, cooperation, creativity and community. We have to become more self-sustaining instead of depending on large businesses to support us. The days of the lifetime job and retirement after 30 years are gone. The energy of the Aquarian Age will not support that structure.

More good news is that it offers us the chance to evaluate the lifestyle and work choices we have made and to consciously choose something that brings us joy, challenges us, and expresses our creativity. We all have strengths and activities that we love that can be converted into money-making ventures once we accept that we can truly be paid to do what we love.

What kind of business ventures do you think will thrive in this new business world?

Anything centered around communication, radio, TV, all media will thrive. Entertainment ventures will become more and more desirable, computer games, more complex cell phones that can do so many things, creative movie making, travel, ethnically diverse foods, clothing and cultural events. All creative ventures: writing, painting, sculptures, music, photography. Personal service businesses like massage, personal trainers, meditation, yoga and t'ai chi instructors, nutritional counseling, alternative healing and preventive medicines. Unique and excellent organic products like

coffees, teas, wines, canned food and frozen items. Environmentally sound products of all kinds. Non-violent toys, educational items and entertainment for children. And, there are so many things that have not been thought of or invented yet: light and sound technologies for healing, experiential homes and office buildings, so many wonderful changes that can occur if we continue on our current path.

So many people think humanity is headed down the path of destruction, how do you respond to that?

Well, I like to point them to research that was done more than ten years ago identifying the fastest growing market in the western world. It was originally called Cultural Creatives, and over ten years ago, it was calculated at around 35% of market share, and now has grown to more than 50% market share. The interest and personality factors identified in this group of people include concern for the environment, focus on community and cooperation, interest in cultural diversity in friends, food and entertainment, commitment to personal and spiritual growth, and a desire for peaceful coexistence including religious and racial tolerance. This is the market for the New Aquarian businesses, and it's a huge market with a potential to thrive in ways we've never seen on this planet, good ways.

With encouraging numbers like that, why do you think so many people have a negative take on what is happening in the world?

At the same time that this number is growing, the aspects of our culture that need to change are aggressively asserting themselves in an attempt to preserve their own existence. The old age is struggling to hang on, even though it is destined to disappear. I believe that because most people are inherently good, there is a morbid fascination with our shadow side, and that's why the media

often focuses on the negative events that are happening. There is more drama and dynamic tension in what's wrong with the world, and a bad habit of trying to get attention for negativity has created a perception that we are all bad. I think it is our very goodness that makes us fascinated with what is bad. We can hardly believe such horrible things are possible for human beings, because, for most of us they are not possible. And so we gawk at the three-headed chicken because it's a curiosity.

How can we shift this habitual negativity?

We can just begin focusing on what is good in our life and putting our energy into projects that move us forward. We can consciously choose to work on our own negativity. We can refuse to watch violence and ask for more positive programming and support businesses and products that are environmentally friendly. We can vote with our dollars and express our opinions when people are running their fear and negativity. We can offer suggestions to people in our lives on how they can help support a world they choose instead of one that is forced upon them or accepted by default. Everything we do is a choice, even the act of not choosing is a vote for the status quo. We have to claim our power and put it into action. We're creating a new world for ourselves and our children. We have the power to make it better. We can create, communicate, cooperate and build sustainable community. It's a powerful opportunity, and we have everything we need to move in the direction of Utopia if we just let go of our fears and focus our power and energy in a forward thinking direction. This is the time of choosing and creating. Use it well.

What advice do you have for those in the throes of change and challenge who don't understand what is happening?

I urge them to assess their skills and talents and to evaluate what brings them joy in their lives and then to look at how to turn that into a business. Make sure it is something you want to do as a business. Many don't want to use their arts for money-making. They want to retain that as a joy-bringing experience only, and that's fine. I also urge you to look beyond logic and let go of the limitations of what you think you can do and beyond what you think will make money. Also, look beyond what you think you deserve. Move into the realm of possibility and dreams. Whether we ever allow ourselves to look at them, we all have dreams. We all have visions of what our lives can be. We have to get in touch with them. That is where our mission lives. It lives in our imagination, and imagination is the meeting ground of heaven and earth. It is the realm where creativity reigns supreme. It is also where our personal wants and desires meet the collective unconscious and find points of connection that allow us to serve the greater good while serving our individual wants and needs. If you ask any spiritual person what they want to do, they always want to serve humanity in some way. And if you ask them their greatest challenge, they almost always say: making financial ends meet, paying bills and providing for their daily needs. If you combine those two, you have a winning combination for a successful business venture: serve the greater good while meeting your personal needs.

What are some ways we can do that?

You can get help from life and business coaches to clarify and focus your vision and create goals. You can meditate and ask for an idea that incorporates the aspects of your life that you want to fulfill. For instance, sit quietly and pray or think about what you want a business to do for you. Don't say, make money. That's an overlay. What you want may be to meet your financial obligations, to provide extras like vacations and upgrades to your home and lifestyle, joy in your daily endeavors, use a particular set of skills

and talents you already have, bring together a harmonious group of people to work with. Things like that, whatever it is for you. You have to delve into your innermost wants and desires, and discard things like power and control over other people. That's also an overlay, and you want to find out why you feel powerless and controlled by others if that comes up. You may need someone like a therapist or a new age counselor to help you sort out the emotional pieces and identify your true heart and soul desires. Once you do that, ask the Universe or Spirit or God to offer you an idea that exactly meets those heart and soul desires. You may not even have to identify them. You may just have to connect deeply with your inner self and ask for the solution. You'll recognize it when you get it, and then you have to have the courage to act on it. Don't discount it and talk yourself out of it. Take steps in the direction of creating it. If you don't know the steps, ask in meditation or prayer for the steps to take, then follow them. It's always your choice to take the steps or discount them, but you will find your joy mounting as you move forward. That is the sign that you are moving in the right direction.

Will you always succeed if you do this?

It depends on how you measure success. I believe that no experience is wasted, and that every step we take leads us closer to our highest and best reality, so even if it looks like a failure in society's eyes, take what you learn and keep moving in the direction of your happiness. The experiences, the synchronicities, the magic that will occur will bring you great joy. And that joy is what makes life worth living. We are creating a new age society that is more honoring of people, animals and the earth system; more ethical and more accepting of diversity and creativity. It's exciting. What will you do with this great opportunity?