

New Idea – Next Status Quo

Expanding the range of your ideas

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PREMISE

If you have ever had a new idea and tried to get your organization to adopt it or any part of it, this book is for you. In the following fable *New Idea* is traveling to the *Celestial City of Tradition* in hopes of being renamed *Status Quo*. *New Idea* believes in her heart that every great *Tradition* or *Status Quo* was at one time a young, new idea. That passion drives her toward her desired destination. But, she soon discovers that passion alone is not enough for any idea to become status quo.

The journey in the pages of *New Idea – Next Status Quo* is the tale every new idea must take to become worthy of being referred to as *Status Quo*. In most organizations the culture is designed to hang onto what works and to be skeptical of what does not. Most who promote new ideas or innovative thinking fail to realize that the “barriers” to their thoughts and dreams are not really barriers or road blocks at all. Rather, each obstacle a new idea must overcome is a purification ritual that makes the new idea worthy to become status quo and another great tradition in the organization. A new idea isn’t simply worthy to become status quo because it is a new idea but must grow to status quo capacity.

As you turn the pages of this tale you can follow *New Idea* as she maneuvers to the *Celestial City of Tradition*. Each “obstacle” or “gate” along the way is there to accomplish the purification necessary for the maturity of *New Idea*. As you read through the fable there are “insight” boxes to assist you in the practical applications for your specific situation. Enjoy the fable or simply read the insight boxes. It is my hope that the insights you glean through this fable will increase the range of your own new ideas.

When I was growing up my parents went through a very dark time of life. As the fifth child of seven, I saw this darkness produced anger, misunderstanding, and suspicion and eventually divorce. One of the saddest memories I have is how they each began to refer to one another during those darker days. Although I loved my mom very much she would often refer to my dad as the person who “*dreamed wonders and produced blunders.*” I suppose that has stuck with me for these past forty years

because I dream so much. When I look back at my life I wonder if I too have simply produced blunders out of my life of dreams and ideas. *New Idea – Next Status Quo* is the result of a lifelong study of dreaming and struggling to have others see my dreams as their reality. As I look back I can see that many of my new ideas were ill-prepared, ill-equipped and untimely in their presentation. But, that does not mean the idea was not a good idea. Like many others who dream, I would eventually see my “new idea” from yesterday as status quo today but under someone else’s brand, patent, or copyright. *New Idea – Next Status Quo* is written to assist all of us who dream to continue to dream wonders but produce *winners*.

Enjoy the fable of *New Idea – Next Status Quo*. And don’t ever quit dreaming and producing new ideas!

INTRODUCTION

“*Tradition ... Tradition? Where have you been?*” The question was asked politely but firmly; almost motherly, but with respect. But of course, *Tradition* knew this was not a mother seeking the whereabouts of a wayward son. This was much more serious a matter.

“I went to the forest for a small journey,” *Tradition* responded, knowing full well that answer would not pass this inquisition, or, any inquisition for that matter. Not because he betrayed his false answer with his eyes or non-verbal body motions, for he had become quite superior at telling a tall tale. No, it would not pass this probing for two reasons: This questioner was much more superior at her craft than he was at his deceit. And, he knew his statement was a complete ruse.

“A journey to where?” she asked, the smell of the hunt for truth too powerful for her to suppress.

“A journey to nowhere to do nothing; shall we eat soon, I am famished?” *Tradition* answered and asked hoping to divert the conversation on to a more successful path.

“Are you ignoring my pursuit of truth, *Tradition?*” After all these years do you think that I, *Same-As-Always*, would not sense when you are avoiding my chase?

Tradition turned and looked *Same-As-Always* in the eyes and said, “*Same*, I simply took some foot soldiers outside the castle walls for some maneuvers. I assure you all is well.” He stared as long as he could into his partner’s prying eyes and then turned away. He felt guilty for the lie but, after all, this was the *City of Tradition* and he was King ... he was *Tradition*. *There are some privileges with royalty*, he thought. NOTE TO LAYOUT: INSERT TEXT BOX #1.

Text Box #1 – The thing that gives *Tradition* both its value and its weakness is the “*Sameness*” of it. The strength of a culture is its *Sameness*. A **fluid** culture can make for **frustration**. *Tradition* (*Sameness*) is the thing that makes a culture **fixed**. But, that fixed culture of sameness is also part of the weakness of a culture. When things are so fixed, so much always the same, new ideas have no place. This is where striking a balance between a fluid and fixed culture enables the culture to survive.

Same-As-Always turned and headed for the courtyard, appeased that her spouse for so many years had told her the truth. (Or, so she thought.) She did, however, detest him for simply calling her and always refereeing to her as *Same*. But she had lost that argument several years ago. Her husband was, after all, *Tradition*, the King of the *Celestial City of Tradition* and royalty does have some privileges. *He can call me what he will*, she thought as she passed the flower garden and headed down the marble stone steps of the courtyard.

Tradition turned and headed back to the stables, relieved that he had avoided the prying questions of his faithful wife. Yet, that is what disturbed him so much. *Same-As-Always* had been so faithful for so many years, why did he fail her so with his own unfaithfulness? *Same* was as steady as rock for him, but this last adventure had proved he was not equal to the task. This indiscretion would do great harm.

He walked slowly up the paddock and entered the stable of the steed that had taken him to that aberrant village. As he brushed down his white stallion his motions became quicker; increasing with intensity. As though each stroke could erase what he had done he pressed harder and harder against the animals strong muscles. However, like history itself, the horse did not change his stance. Nor would the past adventure change what it was.

Tradition knew in his mind that because he was *Tradition*, he and *Same-As-Always* would never allow anything to come between them. But, today he had failed her. All he could hope now is that his journey beyond the forest would be left undiscovered and soon forgotten by his mind as well as his heart. However, *Tradition* had forgotten that a trip to the village of *Never-Done-This-Before* could alter the *Celestial City of*

Text Box #2 – When *Tradition* has an encounter with a *Never-Done-This-Before* moment or event it can feel as though it were an adulterous affair. The less *Tradition* mingles with *Never-Done-This-Before* the more awkward the moment feels. The key to a healthy organization, however, is their ability to create events where their best *Traditions* meet up with *Never-Done-This-Before* moments. There can be great fruit from such a contact but not without guilt, at times.

Tradition. He had forgotten that once a seed is planted fruit is almost certain to follow. *Tradition* would soon regret his trip to the village of *Never-Done-This-Before* and his one night with *Different*. Or, would he? (NOTE TO LAYOUT: INSERT TEXT BOX #2)

(Yeas later ... in the village of *Never-Done-This-Before*)

“I will return as *Status Quo*! You’ll see! You’ll all soon see! I will meet him and he will change my name to *Status Quo*!”

“*New Idea*, please stay here. All you need is here. You are not ready for such a journey,” *Different* called out. But, it was no use. As her mother she always knew this day would come. But, she had hoped it would be delayed much longer. She knew once she had discovered the truth she would not be able to contain him. Like a young stallion held by weak cords, she knew *New Idea* would soon seek *Tradition* and the *Celestial City*. But, she also knew *New Idea* was not ready for the journey. NOTE TO LAYOUT: INSERT TEXT BOX #3

“I am ready,” *New Idea* shouted back as she entered the darkness of the forest. She actually knew little as to what it meant to *be ready* but there was something in her heart that she had to pursue. Something she had assumed was in the hearts of all the villagers of *Never-Done-This-Before*, but even more so in her own. And, now she knew the reason why. Despite the fears

Text Box #3 – When New Ideas set out they are seldom “ready” for Status Quo designation. The New Idea has not been proven nor has it demonstrated its ability to withstand the elements of time. The problem is every New Idea “thinks” it is worthy to be designated Status Quo. That is the beauty of a great New Idea: It thinks it can and should be consider as Status Quo immediately upon its conception. The challenge is to prepare New Idea to be worthy of Status Quo without crushing its spirit, zeal and benefits to the organization.

she had in her heart there was something that was always pushing inside her to reach the great *Celestial City of Tradition*. She had intuitively known for years that she was destined to be more than *New Idea*. She didn't know why, but she knew all the same. It was not until now that she had some foundations for her feelings: Not until she discovered that SHE was the daughter of royalty.

As *Different* watched *New Idea* fade into the darkness of the foliage her heart melted. It was as if the only thing she had left in life was vanishing before her eyes. As the green foliage and woody darkness seemingly devoured her only child a sudden rush of memories began to take *New Ideas* place. Her mind shot back to just a few years earlier. She was standing in almost the same place when the flora she now saw enveloping her daughter suddenly burst forth the man who would soon be his father: GREAT TRADITION.

Different was not like the other women of the *Never-Done-This-Before*. She was a self-proclaimed loaner and a free spirit. She was more than a dreamer. She had believed she would someday bring forth something or someone so remarkable it would change everything. Even in a place where wild thoughts are given birth, *Different* seemed to be out of place. That was what made the miraculous encounter with *Great Tradition* so remarkable. She did not feel at home where she was and he was definitely not at home where he had just arrived. The minute he burst forth it was like the two of them were meant for each other: *Tradition* and *Different*. NOTE TO LAYOUT: INSERT TEXT BOX #4

Even though the two of them were opposites they were still completely the same. The result of that one night encounter was the birth of *New Idea*. *Different* had often thought it was the one good thing that came out of a very awkward and chance encounter of her life. She had hoped to keep

Text Box #4 – The root characteristics of a long standing tradition and a brand new idea are similar in at least one way: Their relationship within their own time and space. Both are assailed in one way or the other. Tradition is constantly under attack as though it is no longer relevant and Different is under attack as though it is not yet relevant. That sameness can be a meeting point of new birth: The birth of New Ideas.

the secret of who her father was from *New Idea* during her youth, only revealing it when she thought important and needful in her development. But that was not possible. Not possible thanks to *Doubt*!

Doubt is always the one in *Never-Done-This-Before* who has endangered and prevented many like *New Idea* from reaching their full potential and leaving their little village for the *Celestial City of Tradition*.

Doubt had been in the village for as long as *Different* could remember. With a loud voice *Doubt* often heralded skepticism from his makeshift pessimistic pulpit in the town square. Pointing out all the reasons why local villagers should not and can't make it to *Celestial City of Tradition*, *Doubt* would cause each little idea to question their capabilities and values. Each question asked by *Doubt* would drive each idea back into their own burrows of birth, leaving them underdeveloped and lacking any stamina to travel the difficult journey to *Celestial*. NOTE TO LAYOUT: INSERT TEXT BOX #5

But there was something that made *New Idea* so different from the others. As *Doubt* was spewing forth his negative prognostications *New Idea* sat before him and fully engaged *Doubt* in a passionate argument about what could take place if any idea could but make it past the foliage. *Doubt*, feeling as though he was about to be embarrassed in front of other villagers, began to disparage the young and brash orator by attacking *New Ideas'* heritage. *New Idea* was, at first, shocked when *Doubt* referred to her as the illegitimate child of *Great Tradition*. But suddenly, as though some great power had over taken her, *New Idea* was propelled and filled with inspiration to not only take on the foliage but all that might be on the other side of it, as well.

Text Box #5 – *Doubt*, especially self-doubt, may be the biggest assassin of *New Ideas*. The purpose of doubt is to get us to question our ideas in regard to their value, practicality, acceptance by others, or a myriad of other areas. *Doubt* cast a wet blanket on any idea. But, the fact that *Doubt* starts typically at the very home of any idea demonstrates that it must be overcome. *Doubt* will cause us to question every aspect of an idea. If we use that *Doubt* to devalue the idea it does us harm, but, if we are able to use doubt as a way to purify the idea and to shape it so it is more worthy of status quo, *Doubt* will become a motivator, inspiring us to travel the long journey to *Celestial City of Tradition*.

“*Different! Different!* You need to control that young lady,” *Doubt* bellowed from the town square. “She is sure to fail in both her quest of reaching *Celestial* and changing her name to *Status Quo*. All *Ideas* are but minor players in the affairs of *Celestial* and have no stage by which to lift their names. How far does she think she will get on a passport which identifies her from the village of *Never-Done-This-Before*?

“She’ll get farther than *Doubt!*” *Different* answered under her breath. She knew, however, if she had even a small amount of her daughter’s courage she would not have whispered her response. Perhaps there was something different about her? Perhaps she was royalty? But, if she did make it beyond the foliage and the forest what would be there? Would just her passion carry her to the *Celestial City of Tradition* or would she need more? Would those along the way prevent her from becoming *Status Quo* or would they be able to purify her to be worthy to be called by such a name? And, when she confronted *Tradition* what would happen? Would *Tradition* reject *New Idea* or count her as one of his own? Would he be please how she turned out, or would he even know who she was?

(At the King’s Dining Table in *Celestial City of Tradition*)

“Your Highness, *Tradition*? May I have a word, Sire?” *Messenger* asked, knowing full well what it meant to interrupt the King and Queen’s evening meal.

“Yes, you may,” *Tradition* responded, standing from his royal chair to meet *Messenger*. “What is it? What message do you bring? Do you bring good tidings?”

“No, *Your Majesty*, I am afraid I bring upsetting news from the outer forest area,” *Messenger* answered, bowing to the feet of *Tradition*.

“Well, speak up, what is it?” *Tradition*, asked, knowing that a message would have to be important to be delivered during his evening meal time with *Same*.

“It seems there is an intruder probing around the outer foliage area making way through the forest. The information from our sources tells us that it is but a youth who is attempting to make his way to *Celestial*.”

“It is youth you say?” *Tradition* asked. “You disturbed the Queen and me for news of a youth? Why should my evening meal be interrupted by the news of a mere child?”

“Again, Your Royal Highness, forgive me, but the youth is from the village of *Never-Done-This-Before* and you have requested us to alert you as to any news associated with this treacherous village.”

“Why would you want to be alerted of news from that village, *Tradition*?” *Same-As-Always* asked, finishing off the last of their normal meal for the evening and preparing for their usual desert.

“Just precautionary, my dear,” *Tradition* lied. “What is the youth’s name and what is his desire?” *Tradition* asked turning to *Messenger*.

“The name is *New Idea* and the mother is *Different*. And, it is not a young lad, Your Highness, it is a young woman.” *Messenger* answered.

Had *Tradition*’s face been exposed to *Same-As-Always* he would have been discovered. For, it was impossible for even he to clothe his shock, concern and fear in any other look than what would be natural. And, although *Messenger* certainly observed the King’s informative face there would be no revelation to others of what was seen ... if he valued his position or, for that matter, his head.

“A young woman, are you sure? How far through the forest has she sojourned,” *Tradition* asked, diverting his fear and looking and acting as the royalty he was.

“Yes, we are relatively sure, Sire. However, she does dress like a lad. And she is almost through the forest and getting closer to the *Archers*, Your Majesty. They have been instructed to shot her on sight should she make it through the forest.”

“No!” *Tradition* shouted, not realizing that he had done so until it was too late. *Same-As-Always* was about to take a sip of her standard coffee but the level of concern in *Tradition’s* voice not only scared her it also caused her to spill the dark blend onto her typical evening dress.

“Why are you so alarmed over a mere youth and a young girl, at that, *Tradition?*” *Same-As-Always* asked. “Certainly we have had youth from that sorted village assail the castle before? Perhaps not a young girl, but certainly someone?” she asked, taking a moment to wipe the spill with her ordinary napkin.

“Yes, dear, we have. And, I am sorry to startle you,” *Tradition* answered. Turning to *Messenger* he said, “Simply alert me to the success of the youth through the foliage and to the *Archers*. If she is able to transverse through them both perhaps she will be a source of concern. But, until then, leave us.”

“But, *King Tradition*, our sources report that she is currently seeking you personally. Should we not eliminate her now, when she is so weak and unskilled? She is after a mere girl. Your Majesty, *Tradition*, you know full well some like *New Idea* is most susceptible in the early part of her journey.”

“She seeks me?”

“Yes, Your Majesty, it is said it is you she hunts,” *Messenger* answered, now weary of the King’s response.

“How old is this youth ... if I may ask?” *Same-As-Always* spoke, having cleaned the coffee mess before her and engaging personally in the conversation.

Messenger indicated to her that he only knew the approximate age of the youth and that her name was *New Idea*.

“What a delightful name! Don’t you think *Tradition*?” She stated, smiling and gazing.

Since *Tradition* did not know anything himself, he doubted if *Same* had picked up on the possibility of the youth being the same age as his visit beyond the forest years before. Never-the-less he took *Messenger* away from the dining chambers and gave further detailed instructions concerning *New Idea*, the forest and the *Archers*. He wasn’t sure what he would do, but he knew until he discovered who exactly *New Idea* was he did not want to give the command to the *Forester* to hurt her or the *Archers* to stop her using lethal force. Until now he would wait and observe both the strength of the girl and also her will power. For if the foliage and the *Forester* was not enough to discourage her certainly the sight of the *Archers* surrounding the *Celestial City of Tradition* would be.

But, if this were the child of *Different* could it be the result of that single night when he traveled past the same *Archers* and through the same dark foliage? He was sure he had covered his trail but what if he didn’t? What if the *Forester* betrayed him and showed the child the way? Certainly he couldn’t allow *New Idea* to hunt him, but he also could not allow the destruction of his very blood. Even if it was a girl! Time would tell him what to do, but he also knew if you give any travelers from the village of *Never-Done-This-Before* time they will certainly threaten any tradition. Time would be both his foe and his ally.

Chapter 1 - New Idea is purified by the Forester

(Overcoming the Doubt of Value Perception)

“You do know that you’ll never make it through this rough underbrush, much less past the strength of he who watches the forest?” Doubt asked, as he watched *New Idea* struggle through the foliage.

As *New Idea* stumbled through the thick greens before her they fought her more like chains than the vines they were. She had never come across something so beautiful but so harmful at the same time. With each step she took the plants seemed to grab her with more determination to stop her. It was if they were alive and designed to stop her from traveling forward and through the forest.

“Why don’t you return to *Never-Done-This-Before* and discourage others?” *New Idea* asked *Doubt*, while at the same time using her arms and hands to pull the creeping vines from her legs.

“Besides, wasn’t it you who said we should never leave the village? Why are you here traveling with me? Go back to your pulpit and spew more despondency unto someone who will listen. I choose to ignore you.”

Text Box #6 – Regretfully Doubt seldom or ever leaves those who think New Ideas. Doubt continues on the journey, even when the New Idea is appears to be accepted by the Status Quo. The Doubt may take on different forms and be directed at different aspects of the New Idea, but never-the-less it is there and it relishes the moment it can cause even the strongest of Ideas to pause in its journey to Tradition. It is not a matter of ignoring it or failing to recognize it as much as it is using its skepticism to further the energy and efficiency of the idea.

“First, you can’t ignore me. I am always with every traveler from *Never-Done-This-Before*. Second, there are more like me in the village square, in each little hut and especially in the minds of all little new ideas,” *Doubt* answered, pushing his chest out in pride of both his own quest in life and his past success at meeting that quest. NOTE TO LAYOUT: INSERT TEXT BOX #6

New Idea ignored *Doubt* and pushed her way through the final layer of thorns and stood firmly on the floor of the forest.

Exhausted, *New Idea* stood, hands on knees gasping for breath. Fighting through the vines of the foliage area had taken almost all the energy she had mustered. However, there was not time to rest. As she gathered air she began to scan the forest area. She could see very little of it, however, for its darkness was like that of a cave. The smell of the decay and rot in the air was so thick it actually hindered her will to breath. But, she was not discouraged. It was early in her journey and she was not about to turn around now. Besides, she had no desire to fight the vines of thorn again. *I will never turn back*, she thought.

“So, the vines will stop me? Is that what you said, *Doubt*?” *New Idea* asked, turning to look her foe directly in the eyes. However, as she turned she saw no one. She hadn’t noticed but during her last struggle to cut herself free from the rough thorns *Doubt* had disappeared.

Struggling to get any bearings in the darkness she began to feel her way forward, or at least she thought it was forward. She really didn’t have any idea which direction she was going.

“So!” she yelled into the air assuming *Doubt* would hear her, “You don’t have the stomach or stamina to follow me even this far? Why don’t you come out from your hiding place and walk a few more miles into this darkness?”

“Who are you talking to?” a voice above *New Idea* asked. Or, it seemed it was above her.

Startled, she looked up only to see a very large man standing over her with several tools in his hands. *New Idea* thought of him as a logger of some sort but saw no ax or lumberman saw. The tools of this man seemed to be those used more by someone wishing to flourish the growth of the forest than to eradicate its existence.

“Who are you and why do you travel through my forest?”

“Your forest?” *New Idea* asked, “I didn’t know the forest was owned by anyone. Who are you that you claim ownership of what is obviously owned by all.”

“I am *Forester!* I assume by your brash nature you are *New Idea!* Where you stand is property of *Great Tradition* and you have no right to trespass,” *Forester* answered, his deep voice bellowing and echoing through the forest’s darkness.

“You have no value here. Turn and head back to your wee village with the other misfits and hostiles. We of the *City of Tradition* know your kind can never make it in our city. You have no practical value to us and are wanting in both usefulness and appeal.” NOTE TO LAYOUT: INSERT

TEXT BOX #7

Text Box #7 – The Code Speak of those who doubt the “Value” of the New Idea is often focused on the practical side of the New Idea. It makes statements like, “That will never work around here.” Or, “You can’t expect that to fly.” Or, “It doesn’t look like you thought through that.” Identifying the code speak of the obstacle before you allows you to find a way to overcome it and purify the idea, again to make it worthy of status quo.

New Idea looked up toward *Forester* to respond. But, she knew the oversize gardener had a point. She really hadn’t thought through the practical applications of her journey and what it was she was actually going to bring to *Tradition* and the *Celestial City*.

“Practical value, you ask? And, what practical value do you serve, *Forester?*” *New Idea* asked, trying to give herself a moment to think through her own practical significance. Did she really have value to the *Celestial City?* Or, was this just a journey of ego and envy? Was she traveling to the *Celestial City of Tradition* to appeal to him or confront him?

“How dare you question me and my value to *Tradition* and the *Celestial City,*” *Forester* responded. “I have been a great servant for many years.”

“What value do you serve?” *New Idea* responded thinking she had touched a nerve and was on the offensive now. “You stand and bellow in the forest but I see no results of your work? You seem to

have the tools to do marvelous things here in the woods, yet the woods are full of decay and rot. Rather than caring for what you have been charged you seem to have allowed your tools for constructive nature to hang on your belt why you simply use the tool of your tongue to criticize others.”

“How dare you insult me!” *Forester* said, indignation echoing throughout the forest’s floor.

“Don’t think of it as an insult, *Forester*, but an observation,” *New Idea* answered with a laugh and with the sarcasm that had often brought her the anger of her mother and others back in *Never-Done-This-Before*.

Continuing, *New Idea* said, “As I fought through the foliage area alone I thought how great it would be to find someone with the capabilities and tools to cut a path through this thickness. Now I reach the forest floor and I see that you have the tools to cut down the brush but instead wish only to cut away the traveler who would want to enjoy your forest.”

“You might find joy, young one, in cutting me down but it is you who must prove your relevancy to *Tradition* and *Celestial City*,” *Forester* responded, maturity trumping the juvenile approach taken by *New Idea*. NOTE TO LAYOUT:
INSERT TEXT BOX #8

Text Box #8 – New ideas must find a way to show their practicality and relevance to the organization. They can’t simply rely on pointing out the failures of the current status quo. The *Foresters* in the organization may very well have forgotten their own meaning and neglected their own tools of trade. However, the new idea must find a way to demonstrate its own meaning or the journey will never leave the forest.