



# The Great Growing Up: Being Responsible for Humanity's Future

*John Renesch*

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"The Great Growing Up" is about an urgent collective choice: to opt for responsible adulthood over the largely adolescent ways we have been relating to one another and our planet Earth. The author demonstrates that it is not too late to create the future we all say we want for our children and our children's children--a future that is environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling and socially just. . This book is about a change of thinking that supports a paradigm shift--from adolescent self-centeredness to adult responsibility for all life forms. Anyone willing to genuinely "grow up" can make this necessary choice. Ever-increasing numbers of individuals today are already seeking self-actualization, growing in consciousness, and willing to take on leadership roles in bringing about the first conscious evolution of our species. This represents a somewhat invisible global movement of historic proportions. The Great Growing Up invites anyone concerned with humanity's future to participate in this new thinking. The work of growing up is not primarily about political action--it requires no government funding, no special trainings. The work is about a change of mind; we simply begin acting like mature adults. The author points out how. Taking the reader by the hand, Renesch presents a brief historical overview of the ideals and radical visions that informed this country's foundation. He invites us to consider what's been obscured, what's been lost, and when and why? He helps us to look courageously at the choices that have led to our personal, societal and planetary dilemmas. He identifies patterns of human behavior that currently prevent making the shift in collective consciousness and pops a number of myths/beliefs we have that are no longer valid. Finally, he details the behaviors we need to encourage and offers an optimistic option for the future despite many negative global trends. His friendly writing style encourages trust and agreement, and the vast resources of his lifelong collaboration with business persons, futures and systems experts lends strong authority to his proposals.

"John Renesch, renowned futurist and prolific author, has written a deeply provocative book to inspire the evolution of a new humanity. The Great Growing Up brilliantly captures the critical importance of the present moment and outlines a trajectory for achieving a mature, peaceful future for all. John's roadmap to our collective future is clear, compelling, and transformative. His new book is important and empowering. I highly recommend it." -- Lynne Twist, co-founder, The Pachamama Alliance

"Like a master painter, John Renesch provides a broad interpretive mural of the last half-century along with a sweeping and sense-making depiction of how humankind has encumbered itself with less than a fully human milieu. But he does not leave us in stoicism or anomie. He encourages hope that we can rebuild our future through new forms of conscious leadership. One is left with both an understanding of our past and a renewed sense of mission regarding a future on which mankind's very survival depends." -- Andre L. Delbecq, J. Thomas and Kathleen L. McCarthy University Professor, Santa Clara University

"John Renesch is a Renaissance Man who lives in the twenty-first century. In *The Great Growing Up* he shows how, through conscious evolution, we can put our predatory past behind us and create a dignitarian world. Prophetic yet practical, *The Great Growing Up* integrates science, philosophy, spirituality, and psychology into a compelling vision of a world that will work for everyone." -- Robert W. Fuller, former president, Oberlin College, author of *All Rise: Somebodies, Nobodies, and the Politics of Dignity*

"This book is about the art of the possible despite all odds in these turbulent times. It is a manifesto for all of us as humans to lead rather than follow our own evolution." -- Mark Thompson, bestselling coauthor of *Success Built to Last*

"In his new book - *The Great Growing Up* - John Renesch challenges us with authority, humanity, energy and optimism, to address the key issues facing society today, both globally and personally - and these two dimensions are closely linked. It is full of valuable insights, as well as being a call to action. These messages need urgent attention if we are to survive this century, let alone see a better world in the years ahead. Time is not on our side." -- Bruce Lloyd, Emeritus Professor of Strategic Management, London South Bank University

"Ever the optimistic realist, John Renesch makes clear from the beginning that *The Great Growing Up* intends to make us uncomfortable with the lies we tell ourselves about our world and our place in it. In debunking the myths that we think guide us, John offers a transformative manifesto of what is possible for humanity with the emphasis on "human." But this is not new age mumbo jumbo; John's background in business and the physical sciences is evident throughout. Read this book and share it." -- James A. Autry, author of *The Servant Leader* and *Looking Around for God*

"In *The Great Growing Up*, John Renesch meticulously describes today's dysfunctional societies and the dissatisfactions they have created. However, a well-functioning society is possible through 'conscious evolution,' the use of human intention to create alternative money systems, transformative learning, gender parity, energy independence, and a host of other paradigm changes. *The Great Growing Up* contains a vivid description of contemporary society that is as accurate as it is depressing; however, Renesch gives his readers a 'Great Dream' for the future that is rooted in the writings of the founders of the United States, yet rebooted for the tattered world of the 21st century . . . a splendid book." -- Stanley Krippner, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, Saybrook University, coauthor of *Personal Mythology*

"John Renesch has been a pioneer and visionary in the search for human values based on reciprocity and relationship rather than self interest and dominance. His search has led him to the threshold of a new awareness that he aptly calls *The Great Growing Up*. His book is an invitation to cross that threshold and together remake the world." -- Alan Briskin, author of *The Stirring of Soul in the Workplace* and coauthor of *The Power of Collective Wisdom*

"John's thinking and work about the direction we humans have to take is both challenging and timely. In *The Great Growing Up* we are given authentic hope. This book provides both an analysis and template for deep contemplation and action." -- David Kyle, author of *The Four Powers of Leadership*

"Inspiring, practical and thought provoking . . . *The Great Growing Up* challenges each of us to develop and stretch our capacities to generate a global reality that secures a preferred future 'that works for everyone'." -- Angeles Arrien, Ph.D., cultural anthropologist, author of *The Four-Fold Way* and *Second Half of Life*

"Have you ever wondered whether our planet is engaged in some epic transition to a better society? One where individuals, due to massive new technological and social interdependences, come to see themselves as part of a single integrated 'organism' or 'global brain,' as well as free, individual moral actors? Teilhard de Chardin called this coming event 'Planetization' and some foresight scholars see it as part of the natural developmental future of Earth. If we are to responsibly integrate our incredible new powers for self- and environmental change, and protect against ongoing environmental degradation and destruction, such a consciousness shift must occur. Read this sublime book, and start being the change yourself, every day. You'll find very few routes to deeper universal insight, peace and happiness that are as direct and valuable as this book." -- John Smart, President, Acceleration Studies Foundation

"John Renesch is not only a smart man, but also a wise one. *The Great Growing Up* offers a conscious choice for the kind of future we want to create and the role we each want to play in bringing it about. Don't just read this book - do it!" -- Alan M. Webber, cofounder, *Fast Company* magazine

"*The Great Growing Up* gives us vital and wise guidelines to the unprecedented emergence of ourselves as cocreators of our world. It is an important work for our own conscious evolution, self and social." -- Barbara Marx Hubbard, founder, Foundation for Conscious Evolution

"In *The Great Growing Up*, John Renesch has given us an astute diagnosis of what ails us as individuals and as a global community. He then gives us a prescription for treatment. But rather than a bitter pill to swallow, we have a recipe filled with hope for a renewed spirit." -- Gregg Magrane, Ph.D., geneticist, University of California San Francisco

"In *The Great Growing Up* John Renesch has brought together an impressive range of sources to provide a readable overview of our prospects for a renewed civilization. He manages to capture the essence of many concepts and ideas and to make them accessible. You don't need a Ph.D. to read this book - merely an open mind and a willing spirit." -- Richard Slaughter, futurist, Foresight International, Brisbane, Australia

"This is a beautiful easy-to-read book. Renesch weaves together the external and inner challenges humanity faces - ageing, inequity, gender imbalances, spiritual poverty, lack of reflection - and provides us with solutions forward. Humanity is like an adolescent, the transition to adulthood is not always easy, but through the work of John Renesch we are given an exploratory map on how this could be possible, and even more important, his book provides us with a pause, a time to reflect, on how each one of us can play a role in the transformation ahead, now." -- Professor Sohail Inayatullah, Tamkang University, Taiwan and the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

"The American Dream is under siege instead of being seized and society is at a significant crossroads. The Great Growing Up not only warns us of the destructive path our world is heading down, it provides a vision for a brighter, better..."

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