

The Need of the Times: A Catalyst for Change

We have been stucked with the constant problem of addressing issues and concerns brought about by the yearly flooding of Laguna de Bay. This year, our schools are experiencing an extended stay of evacuees which has affected the normal operations of 40% of our schools.

If we want to move out of this stuckness, then all of us should be a catalyst of change. We need to move from this problematic condition to one that will better serve our school children.

Our present condition is brought about by years of neglect and lack of discipline. The waterways have been obstructed by illegal settlers who built their houses in reclaimed areas almost in the bank of Laguna de Bay. Tons of non-biodegradable garbage have blocked the passage of water in the sewers leading to the sea, the reason for the slow rate of decrease in water level leading to water stagnation in the usual habitable areas. The lake has been silted due to the accumulation of sediments and mud brought down by the rains due to deforestation and illegal logging. We have brought this calamity to ourselves and we have no one to blame but ourselves. So let us assess ourselves if we have the mindset of a catalyst of change by answering the following questions while bearing in mind the three issues which I have raised: clogged waterways, deforestation and proper waste management.

1. Do I take my discontent as information that something needs to change?
2. Do I transform my complaints into constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement?
3. Do I personally lead change initiatives or just wait for others to do it?
4. Do I continue to advocate change even if I meet resistance or opposition?
5. Am I willing to tolerate the discomfort that occurs in the transition from the old to the new?

Of course, we acknowledge that to initiate and sustain change is difficult because it takes moving out of our comfort zones. For example, if we are just accustomed to just putting out our garbage in front of our gates and wait for the garbage truck to pick them up, why can we not embark on composting if we have adequate space and use the generated organic fertilizer to fertilize our gardens? This maybe a start of a composting club in our subdivisions. There are myriads of ways to initiate good practices along these three areas. And the time to start is now. By creating conditions within our sphere of influence that support and reinforce the direction toward which we want to move, we can induce change.

We cannot fight the existing reality. To induce change we should build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.