

If everybody does it, is it still wrong?

Written by Constance Scrafield

When I was considering having a child, in the '80's, I pondered. I cogitated and ruminated and worried. The world around me was in a mess with pollution rushing us to disaster. Politicians, either feigning disbelief or hamstrung by their handlers, held money at the head of every decision. Into all this was my yearning for the person - the child, teen and adult she would become. I longed to know her, be her mother, wonder at the friendship between us.

"Is it fair," said I, nevertheless, to myself, "to bring a child into this world, so full of woe and led by fools so determined to destroy it?"

Many mothers may well have likewise pondered these sentiments. Now, we stand aghast at how very dangerous are our children's futures and how they are confronted with the necessity of having to make the changes themselves.

Our children, who are even younger than those in the 1960's protesting the Vietnam war and singing for peace, are walking now to the offices of parliamentarians and the parliaments themselves to call for really serious changes - nay - stoppages.

"Stop the mining. Stop the bombing. Stop all of it that is tearing this world apart. You have everything you need to reverse the danger.

"Begin today," they demand. "Start now."

Our children have this burden of correction thrust upon their youthful shoulders: trying to stem the tide of melting glaciers; cleaning up the massive islands of plastic in the oceans and calming the corrupted weather patterns. So many of them are still too young to drive and still have years to go before they can vote. Yet they are the ones walking to the front lines, not to ask, certainly not to beg but to demand complete reversals of policy from governments.

Just imagine this: our children are afraid for the future of their home planet, earth.

In the offices of those very government buildings, politicians watch the children marching, through their windows and they turn their backs to carry on business as usual.

Everywhere around the world. Dismissive of children who "cannot possibly understand" how money works, how it is all that is important, they put their blinkers back on and refuse to consider, even minimally, the more pragmatic programs the children are calling for.

There is lots of money to be made, whatever way energy is produced. Thousands and thousands of jobs. These are transitions that can be made much more quickly than anyone wants to admit.

Perhaps, it has to do with the comfort zone of dealing with the familiar, like tar sands, pipelines and fracking, no matter how bad. After all, people are still smoking, still eating unbelievable crud that is really harmful and still drinking far more alcohol than is good for them. Now that pot is legal, let's see what sort of health problems trail in, as the increased number of people indulge in it and to a greater extent that they might have.

You see, once you have everything, as we do here in Canada, you simply don't believe that will ever change. Nothing that science tells you, not all the evidence in your face will ever convince you that having everything can come to an end.

You truly think ...nothing. You merely plough ahead with what has worked well so far to provide you with that everything. Why

would anything change?

Complacency is the industrialist's best friend. As long as people are kept as really comfortable, as we are here in Canada, they will not require anything different than the status quo, which has given them so much.

Sure, there will be storms, problems in the north with animals dying off, hideously, probably some pretty wild videos of that. So sad, have another beer.

People in far off countries will lose their homes, their lives ? more videos. Our own western provinces will suffer floods, maybe, fires almost certainly but no big threats to major urban centres ? let's just vote in the guy that talks the most about money and little about the environment.

Here's the deal: we do not mind doing that which is harmful to the environment or, indeed, to our own selves, if it is comfortable or satisfying in some way. Here, in Canada, where we are so comfortable with all that is harmful, we are complacent about the harm. Figure that one out.

Then, there is Mars. We can be sure the mad scientists and engineers, backed by mountains of money, are cobbling together the voyage to Mars, with plans for future settlements. Didn't Stephen Hawkins tell humanity we have done this planet in? He said, if humanity is to survive, we will have to do it on some other planet, where we will become some other kind of human.

Forget it. There simply isn't time.

The only chance of survival we have is to listen to our children.