

Summary of Conclusions on Echo Chambers

- **Echo Chambers are a reality of our existence.** They are ubiquitous... Social media, news outlets, blog feeds, churches, families, neighborhoods, communities. If there is a context where differences exists, a “safe room” (echo chamber) will emerge and like-minded people will seek refuge.
- **Technology is the power of Echo Chambers.** They are benefactors (victim?) of the digital and technological revolution. Technology has unleashed the inherent malevolent potential of echo chambers in ways never imagined. Some would suggest that the existence of democracy is threatened.
- **Echo chambers are incubators for human development** for good or ill. Awareness and understanding of echo chambers is important to personal and societal well-being. Echo chambers greatest peril for ill is their appeal to and nurturing of our natural inclinations toward tribalism, group think, confirmation bias and certainty.
- **Unrelenting pursuit of rightness** sustains the proliferation of and participation in echo chambers. It can hardly be overstated how important and powerful is our need/desire to be right. The extent to which we are willing to protect our rightness is frightening... from the mundane to the global...wars, genocide, racism, not to mention the sacrifice of relationships and professions.
- **Right/Wrong Paradox** Our desire for rightness is pitted against our incontrovertible fallibility. Without awareness and acceptance of human fallibility, echo chambers produce unhealthy consequences, a society that is increasingly polarized.
- **The personal and societal cost of echo chambers**
 - loss of individual creativity, uniqueness and independent thinking.
 - “illusion of invulnerability” (an inflated certainty of our rightness)
 - stereotyping
 - dehumanizing actions toward, dissenting persons
 - production of fantasies that don’t match reality.
 - Interpersonal communication is stifled outside the echo chamber
 - significant losses of family and community relationships
 - Echo chambers reinforce our natural tendency to restrict our relationships rather than expand our social interactions.
 - Residing within an echo chamber strips our lives of serendipity and wonder. We trade off the opportunity to engage the endless diversity of the world around us.