How does being afloat affect humanity?

Rik van Hemmen
Being afloat is different
We’ve been afloat a long time
Not all “afloat” is the same though
This is not really afloat
This is not either, I am sorry to say
This could be it
But this is more like it
People on a voyage on a boat
The voyage

• Has a beginning and an end
• A beginning requires planning
• An end allows review and evaluation

• A voyage is an adventure
• A voyage is an experiment
• A voyage is a test
The boat

- Is a total institution
- Is a compromise
- Is unforgiving
And then we have the people

A psychological experiment
We know about people being afloat

Stephen Crane (The lifeboat)
Joseph Conrad (An almost endless list)
Herman Melville (Moby Dick, but many more)
Robert Louis Stevenson (Treasure Island, the Wreckers)
Rudyard Kipling (Many of his stories, but Bread Upon the Waters is my favorite)
Jack London (The Sea Wolf)
Ernest Hemingway (Old man and the Sea, but also Islands in the Stream)
Guy Gilpatrick (Glencannon)
Jan de Hartog (Holland’s Glory)
Patrick O’Brien (The Aubrey Maturin novels)
We know the people

• Ahab
• Long John Silver
• Captain Aubrey

But are these characters the whole truth?
Well, Yes and No

- The authors wrote about the sea because they realized they could develop realistic conflict
- However, they did write about the extreme cases and often ignored the big truth
The Big Truth

• Is complex
• But it is not defined by exceptional fictional characters
• It is defined by real humans who “suffer” through these voyages and learn
They learn to cope
They learn to plan
They learn to cooperate
They learn to respond
They learn to be efficient
So how does this affect Humanity??

• Mariners have been running and refining a methodology for centuries that we need in today’s world
• Experiments that worked and failed and they all are lessons and will continue to be lessons
Humanity as it used to be

- Small communities
- Local resources
- If more resources are needed, move on to a new area
- Jared Diamond’s “Guns, Germs and Steel”
Humanity Today

- We’ve pretty much filled the world
- We’re not allowed to conquer anymore
- Our resources are finite
- We cannot get away from humanity
It requires a different approach

- From rules
- To refinement and analysis
- People on a voyage on a boat
- People on a voyage on spaceship earth
From

1. I am the Lord your God
2. You shall have no other gods before me
3. You shall not make for yourself an idol
4. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of your God
5. Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy
6. Honor your father and mother
7. You shall not murder
8. You shall not commit adultery
9. You shall not steal
10. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor
11. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife
12. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor
To

• First do no irreversible harm
• Consider the cost of action through the entire chain
• Look for efficiencies
• Moderation
• Communicate
• Fairness from both points of view
• Cooperate
• Allow individual freedoms to an extreme if they do not harm others
• One is personally responsible for actions on public knowledge
• Things are always changing (change is constant)
Which brings us to Waterpod
People on a Voyage on a Boat:
  • Certainly People
  • A Voyage (the experiment)
  • The Boat (but with a lot of visitors and contact with the shore)
Water pod is sending the maritime experiment ashore where today it is really needed