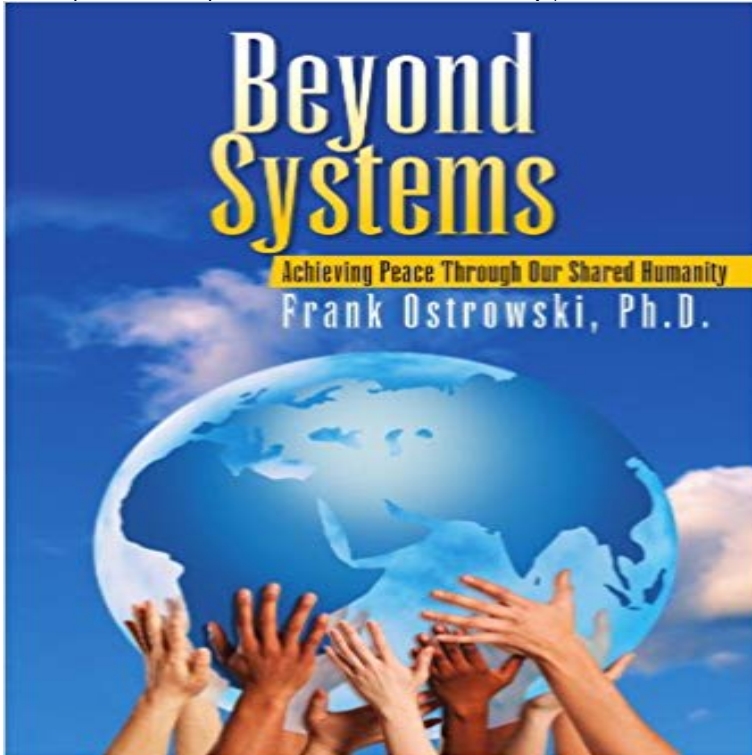


Beyond Systems: Achieving Peace Through Our Shared Humanity



The Systems inscribed on our psyches as accidents of birth, geography, ethnicity, gender, religion and nationality can operate to divide us, one from another-if we allow them to do so. Moreover, we tend not simply to be born into these Systems and to have them taught to us by all that surrounds us, but we also tend to study and learn these actively-often avidly. These Systems are solidified by three essential drivers: obedience, conformity, and loyalty. These drivers are often regarded as absolutely sacrosanct, not to be challenged in any way. The power of these drivers, however, has led humankind at times into the most hideous wars. The thesis of Beyond Systems is that all three of these drivers must be challenged if we are to learn to live in peace. In place of blind obedience, conformity, or loyalty there is demanded a different loyalty, one to the interconnection of us all, and the caring and compassion that this demands. This is a radical concept, yet as old-and as fundamental-as mankind itself. That it has been buried under the weight of all the loyalties that divide us, in no way means that it is an impossible dream. Indeed, there are signs on our planet that we no longer want to live by the old divisions, the old hatreds, the old subjugations of one group by another, the old wars that have afflicted us.

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