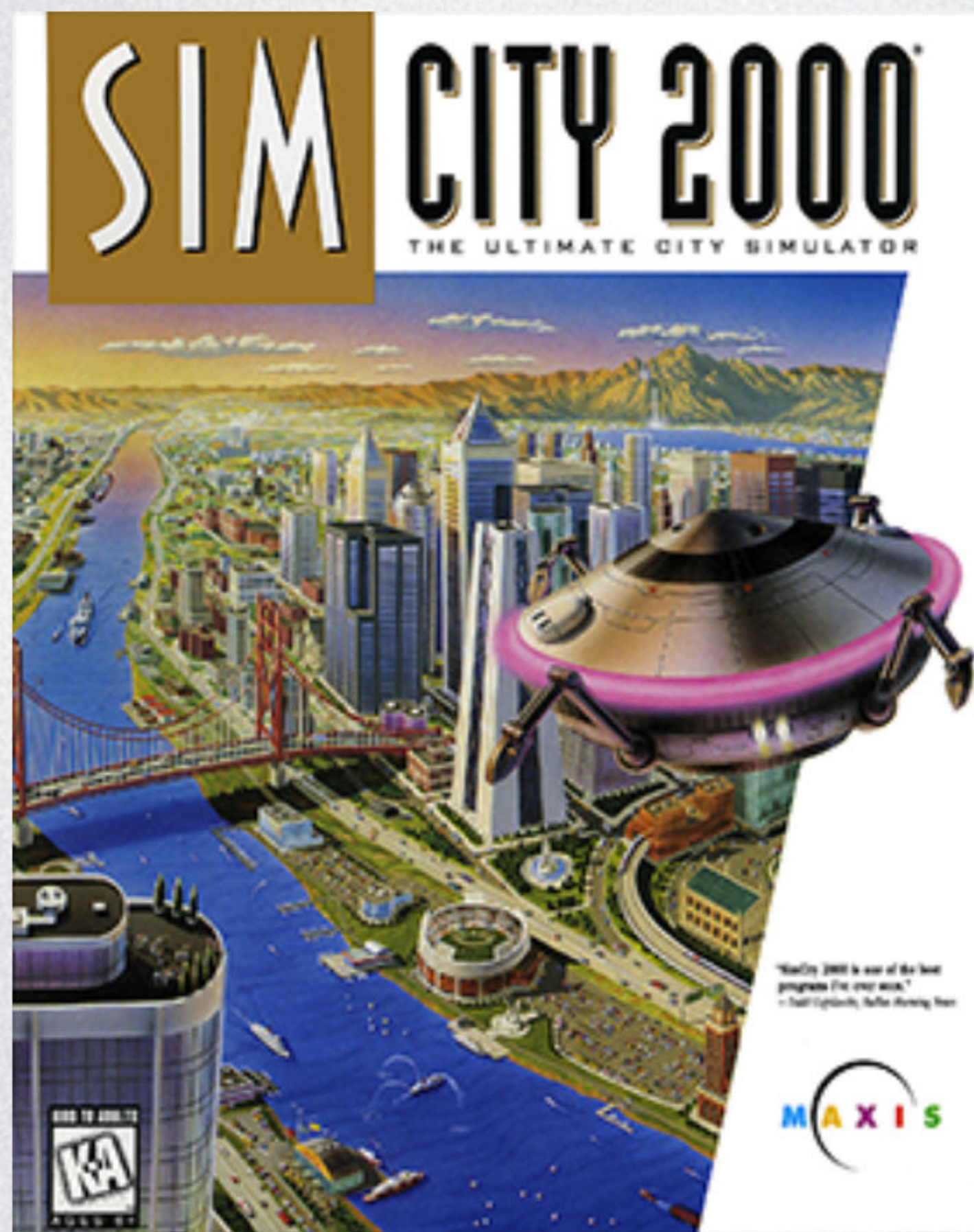


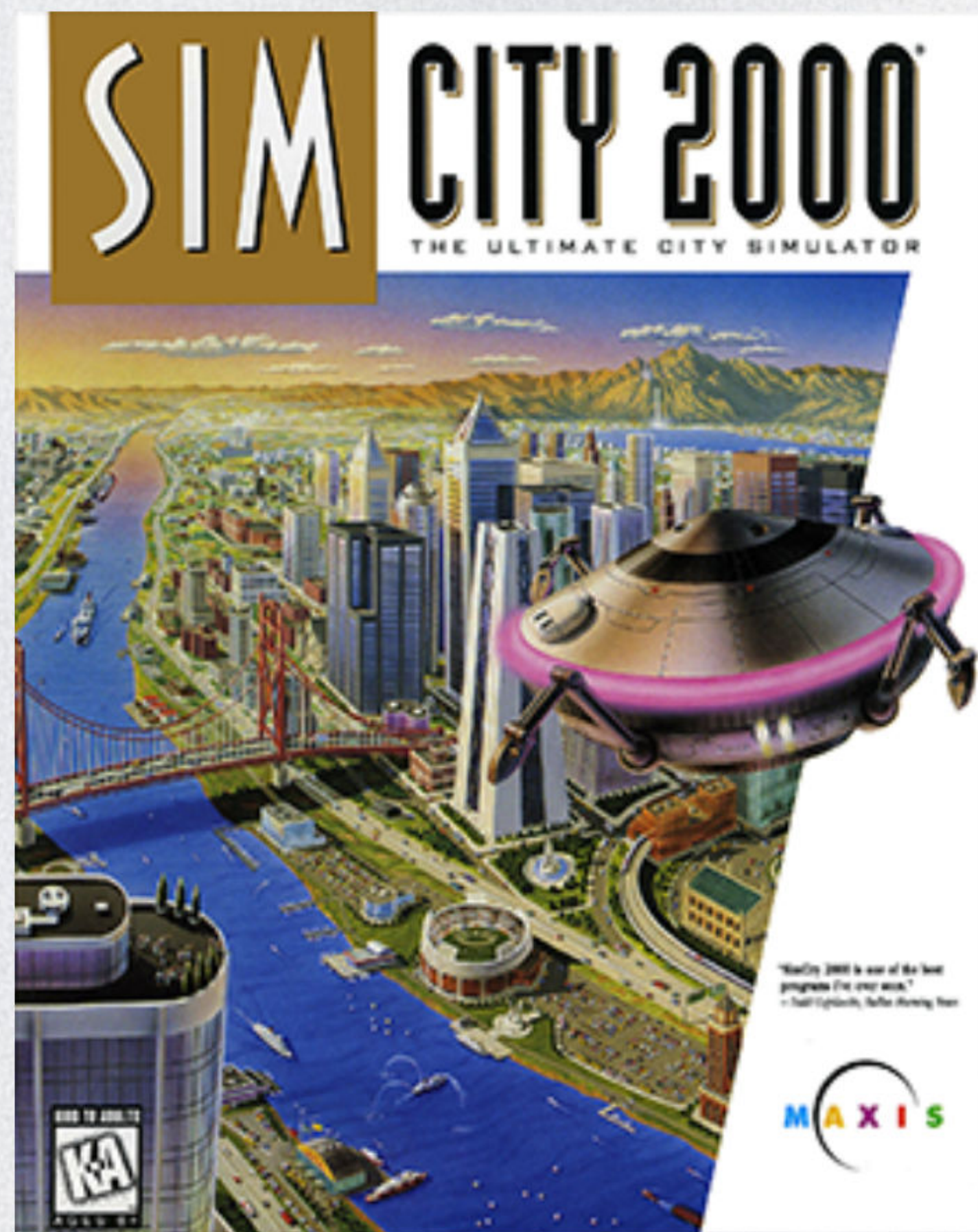


CHANGING FROM THE CENTER

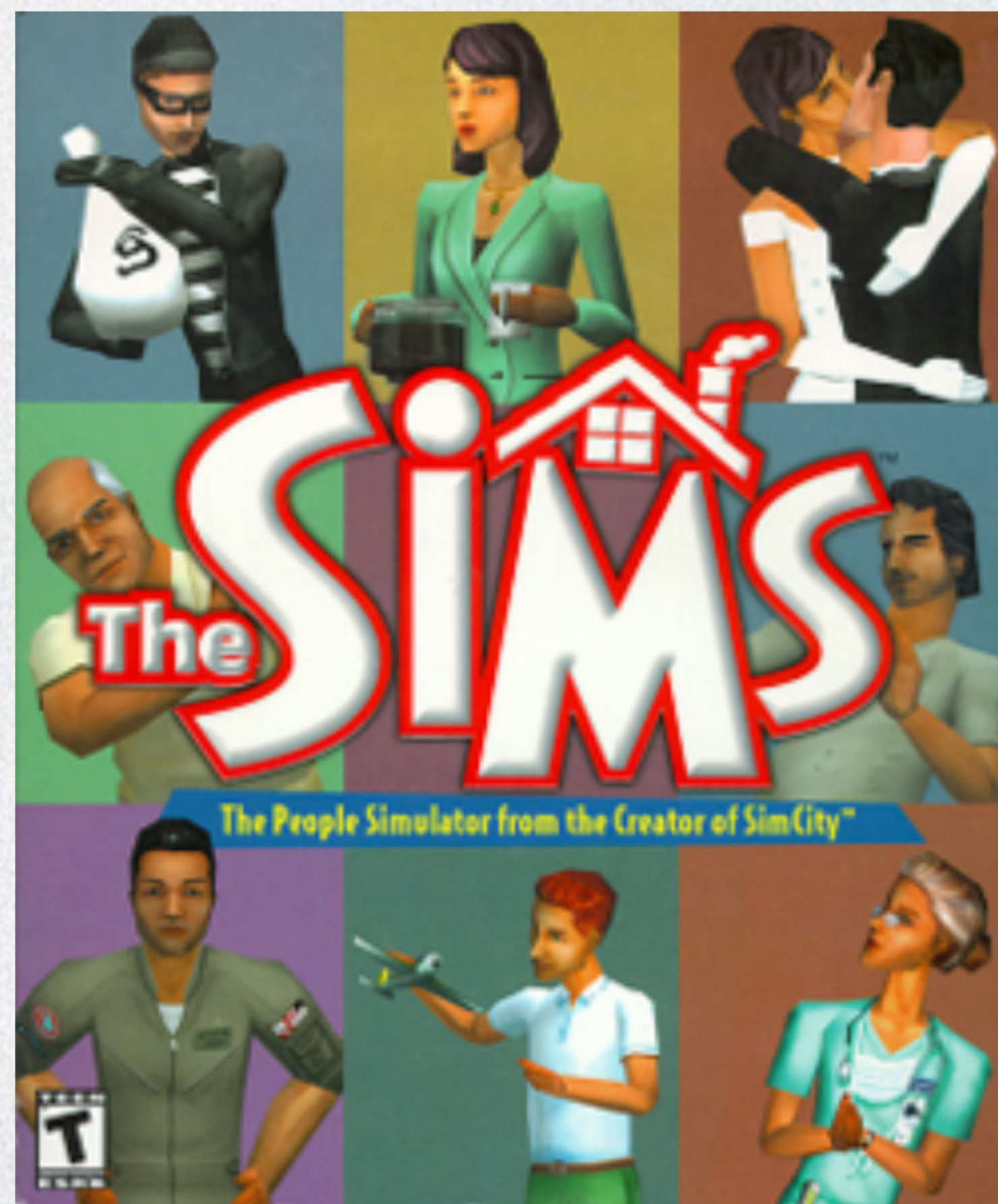
Are You Clinging to Control?

CHANGING FROM THE CENTER





CHANGING FROM THE CENTER



“Most of us do not like being out of control. Along with fear, control seems to be at the center of many of our issues. It takes a lot of energy to remain in control at all times. At some point, depending on our stamina, bearing up under the weight of control takes its toll. We find that we are unable to keep going while carrying the world on our shoulders.”

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

"We all have situations in our lives that aren't going the way we want. But much of the anxiety we carry is actually brought on by our own fears and a desire for control. We want to put our fears to rest, so we try to control people and situations... Letting go is one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself... Control is the enemy of peace, joy, and love."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

Britain nation of control freaks, claims Hive survey



This is what the Lord says: "I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the wilderness, through a land not sown. Israel was holy to the Lord, the firstfruits of his harvest...

What fault did your ancestors find in me, that they strayed so far from me? They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves... I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land and made my inheritance detestable...

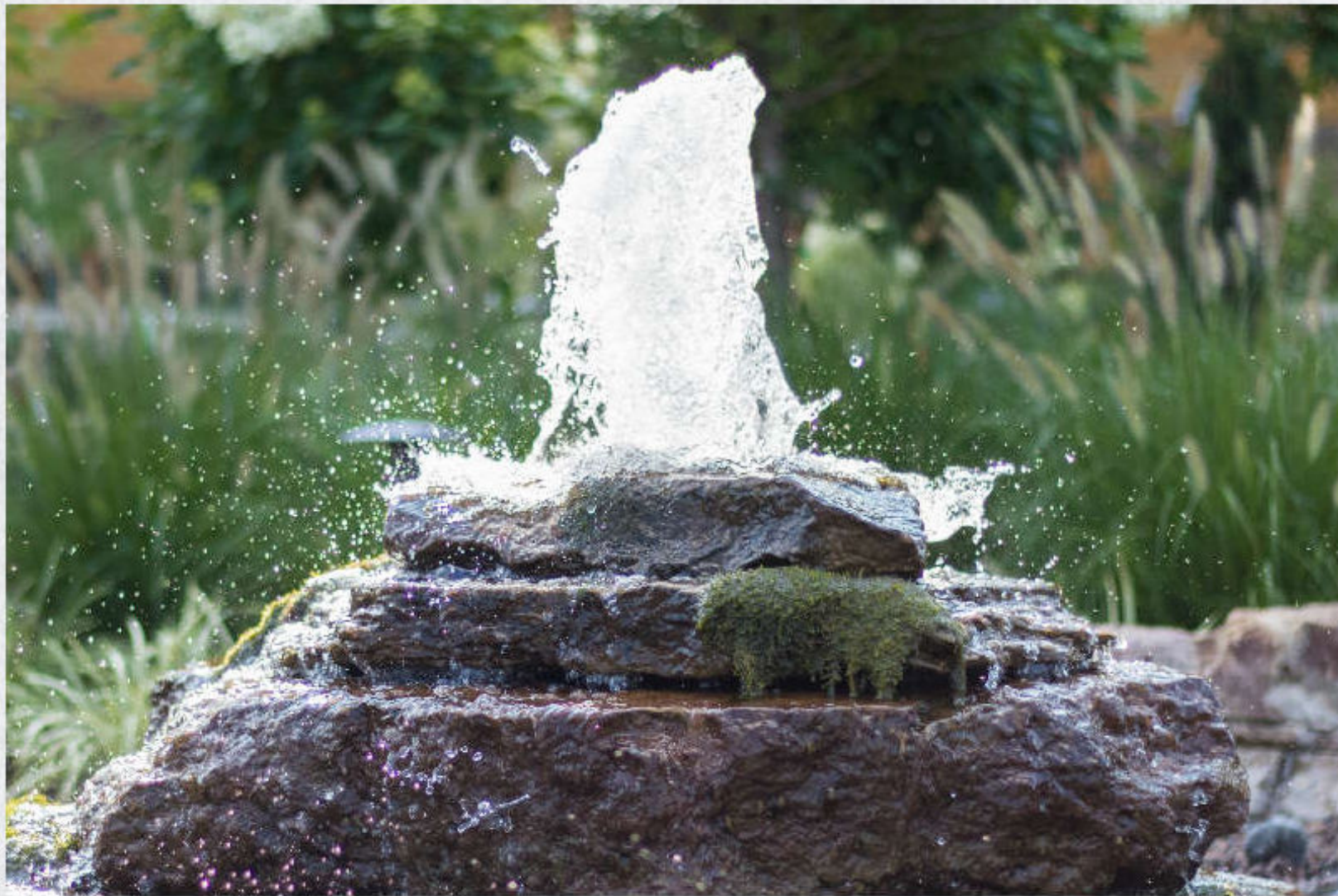
Jeremiah 2:2-3, 5, 7, 11

CHANGING FROM THE CENTER

My people have exchanged their glorious God for worthless idols... My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

Why would Israel forsake the God who gave them the Exodus and the Promised Land for a bunch of "worthless idols?" Control.

Springs & Cisterns



“Why choose cisterns over springs? Control. The only advantage a cistern has over a spring is it can be dug anywhere. A spring simply is where it is. You have to arrange your life around a spring. The cistern can be arranged around you. If you are going to rely on water from a spring, you have to build your life around it.”

(Kerry Lee)

²³ Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. ²⁵ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?

"The language of 'self-abandonment' does not sound like a fruitful or inviting way to live one's life when self-fulfillment seems the order of the day.... Abandoning ourselves sounds like a loss, but I've experienced it as freedom."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

“Divine action, being limitless in its plenitude, can take possession of a soul only to the extent to which that soul is emptied of all trust in its own action, for such self-confidence is a spurious fullness that excludes divine action.”

(Jean-Pierre de Caussade)

²⁶ They came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him...” [John replied] “He must become greater; I must become less.”

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³ And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Kids don't (truly) control much of anything!



Somehow, those with the least amount of control could become the "greatest" in the eyes of Jesus.

Somehow, those with the least amount of control could become the “greatest” in the eyes of Jesus.

Kids might not have too much control. But, kids who have good, loving parents can be completely trusting!

⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you. ⁹ Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. ¹⁰ Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in him.

The One who “controls” all things does *not* want to rule by control, but by self-giving love and the offer of wise instruction and counsel!

Closing Reflections

CHANGING FROM THE CENTER

Do you generally have a high desire for control? Or, is there a particular area of your life where that might be true?

Closing Reflections

CHANGING FROM THE CENTER

Are you willing to “lose” your life for Jesus? What kind of “gain” is holding you back from letting go?

Closing Reflections

CHANGING FROM THE CENTER

Invite the Spirit to grow your trust in the Father so that you can become more child-like in your faith.

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Give thanks to God for his desire to give us love that surrounds us and wisdom that teaches us.

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