Becoming a Greater Force
Than the Challenges We Are Facing

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(www.cpcsi.org)
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One of the most critical crossroads in the history of life on Planet Earth

1) The Climate Emergency
        The Climate Emergency Era has begun, and it is not currently known how long it will last,
        or if it will end.

[Reference: "Global Warming Awareness, Climate Change Awareness, and Climate Emergency Action--A Survey:
1961-2020" (240 highlights) (316 pages; November, 2020) Compiled and Edited by Stefan Pasti, Founder and
Resource Coordinator The Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS) Initiative www.cpcsi.org]

2) 6th Extinction
        a) "Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history--and the rate of
        species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely…."
        b) "… around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction, many
        within decades, more than ever before in human history."

[from article "UN Report: Nature's Dangerous Decline 'Unprecedented'; Species Extinction Rates 'Accelerating'"--
about the new report from The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
(IPBES) (May 6, 2019) (paragraphs 1 and 10)]

3) Human Morality
        We are at one of the most critical crossroads in the history of life on Planet Earth… and human
        nature, with its flaws and shortcomings throughout the ages, is now being asked to look at itself
        a little more closely than before.

[Reference: "Do We Have Moral Compasses We Can Rely On?" (147 pages; April, 2021) Compiled and Edited by
Stefan Pasti, Founder and Resource Coordinator The Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS)
Initiative www.cpcsi.org (with supplemental copy "Table of Contents" (13 pages)
(Section B: Concerns about the Leanings of Human Aspirations; Section C: "The smaller the circumference, the
more accurately can we gauge the results of our actions….")]

It doesn't take long to look at news websites here in the United States, or anywhere else in the world, to see, understand, and *know* that we are "behind the curve" in responding to these challenges. There are no indicators, here in the United States (or anywhere else), which will demonstrate, beyond any doubt, that these challenges are so clearly on our "radar screen" that we will soon become a greater force than these challenges--and thus resolve them. Or that we are even sufficiently concerned about these challenges….

What are we thinking?

At the very least--and with or without the help of broken cultural institutions--we need collaborative problem solving and community education initiatives which:

1) provide local community residents with valuable knowledge and skill sets relating to problem solving as a team

2) maximize citizen participation in identifying challenges and solution-oriented activity

3) provide more and more opportunities for local community residents to encourage and support each other towards commonly agreed upon goals

4) reinforce the belief that there is a profound need for not just schools--but all citizens--to recognize their social responsibilities to identify, preserve, and reinforce only those cultural "building blocks" which contribute to achieving positive tipping points on critical challenges, reinforce the foundations for "the good life", and "make for a better future society"

5) reverse the marginalization of the treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions, so that whole communities, in as many parts of the world as possible, are encouraged and supported in their efforts to access—and apply—the wisdom which has been accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which has been confirmed again and again by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all religious, spiritual, and moral traditions

6) contribute to the building of close-knit communities… communities with a healthy appreciation for each other's strengths, communities with a well-developed capacity to resolve even the most difficult challenges— and communities which demonstrate a high level of compassion for their fellow human beings.

How are we going to arrive at such an unprecedented level of problem solving, at this critical time?

Becoming a greater force than the challenges we are facing

Fortunately, there are thousands positive tipping point organizations and institutions, which are
1) making significant contributions in their fields (especially Climate Mitigation and Sustainable Biodiversity, but also many other fields)
2) well known in their fields for the integrity and reliability of their work.
[Note: I have listed 616 positive tipping point organizations and institutions (with Twitter profiles) in 30 categories in Appendix 10 of my 157 page paper "Brainstorming Zero Carbon ASAP Campaign"--and have also created a sample list of 231 such organizations and institutions).

As a way to exponentially accelerate solution activity at this critical time, I advocate for accumulating 5-10 page overviews on how to achieve Zero Carbon ASAP--*and also how their field of activity can contribute to resolving other critical challenges*--from thousands of such positive tipping point organizations and institutions (overviews which will be updated as needed, for the duration of the emergency)-- and make such overviews accessible for free on a number of clearinghouse websites (so computer hackers would not be able to undermine the project).

Such 5-10 page overviews, organized for easy access on clearinghouse websites, can--

1) provide a clear visualization of transformations needed in every aspect of our lives--since different organizations will focus on priorities in their fields of activity (food systems; water scarcity; migration, housing; land rights; biodiversity; civic engagement; peacebuilding; emergency assistance, etc.)
2) provide the equivalent of a needs assessment for local communities, of the kind which precedes local Community Visioning (many overviews of visioning best practices; excellent example of visioning in 13 minute documentary) [Note: Community Visioning Initiatives can be described as a series of community meetings designed to maximize citizen participation in identifying challenges, and in solution-oriented activity.]
3) provide focus and urgency for local surveys of key leaders (prior to Visioning; surveys which identify local-specific challenges and local-specific solutions)--the responses to which can demonstrate the need for Community Visioning, and many Neighborhood Learning Centers
4) open up many new lines of discussion on how people can work through differences, get on the same side, and help each other
5) build awareness that everyone's investments of time, energy, and money ("votes" which are made more frequently than election votes) can have a positive and cumulative effect on the solutions-investment-training-employment sequence--and create countless solution-oriented jobs
6) be a great asset to the "over 2006+ local governments that have declared a Climate Emergency" (as of July 1, 2021)

Local Community Visionings can--

1) actively engage local residents in identifying challenges and solutions, prioritizing solutions, and creating action plans
2) provide a process by which residents can find common ground and work together
3) provide local newspapers, and other news sources, with numerous positive ways of reporting on this Accelerating Climate Emergency Action process
4) be a sign of hope to many people who are feeling despair, as this "Brainstorming" project highlights how many truly valuable resources we can leverage to resolve the many unprecedented challenges we are now facing
[Note: While there are advantages to in-person Community Visioning/stakeholder engagement (especially in local communities), there are many online stakeholder engagement platforms with very helpful tools and resources. (Ex: online engagement features available thru Engagement Hub at https://engagementhub.com.au/software-features).]

[Also: The "17 Tweet Series" (as a document) summarizes the "constellation of initiatives" approach of the "Brainstorming Zero Carbon ASAP" Project--and is also accessible in the "Key Documents and Resources" section of the The CPCS Initiative (www.cpcsi.org).]

Thousands of local Community Visioning Initiatives, in communities around the world, can activate the most possible human participation (by way of 6-12 months of workshops, meetings, brainstorming, and prioritizing challenges and solutions) (with the process repeated periodically in the future), and help build a high level of consensus for specific action plans in the shortest amount of time, with support from--

1) Universities, colleges, and thousands of positive tipping point related organizations and institutions creating related curriculum--and offering resources, classes, workshops, and teacher training to maximize the identification of challenges and solutions during the Community Visioning process
2) Neighborhood Learning Centers helping to create the necessary knowledge base and skill sets by providing accessible space for workshops, discussion, information sharing, mutual support, encouragement, fellowship, and friendship
3) Local newspapers supporting this multi-faceted solution-oriented path with ongoing coverage--and a new section for reader contributions which identify helpful people and valuable resources, and reinforce important community goals
4) Residents (especially those who are unemployed) volunteering time and energy to assist with Community Visioning and Neighborhood Learning Centers, and to advance resulting action plans--who then could receive, as compensation, local currency (which, because it can only be spent in local community businesses, helps support the local economy)

5) Job fairs at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process, which provide opportunities for all key stakeholders in the community (businesses, organizations, institutions, government, etc.) to demonstrate their upgraded awareness--and their interest in the welfare of the community--by offering and facilitating new employment opportunities.

6) Local leaders of religious/spiritual traditions stepping up on every frontline possible to help people understand the urgent need to

 a) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good

b) choose forgiveness, reconciliation--*and abstaining from violent conflict resolution*--as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end

c) create community life and cultural traditions which "… bring to the fore how many good people there are, how many ways there are to do good, and how much happiness comes to those who extend help, as well as to those who receive it"

and help people understand the benefits of
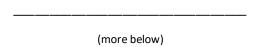
d) Interfaith Prayer Vigils

One possible goal for an Interfaith Prayer Vigil would be for all the different faith traditions in a local community to have at least one person participating in the Prayer Vigil at all times designated for the Prayer Vigil (in such time intervals as they choose).

With an emphasis on silence, participants could silently pray for a compassionate response to all forms of suffering; forgiveness, reconciliation and abstaining from violent conflict as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end; pathways for attaining wisdom and compassion which are accessible to all--and/or bring into being any kind of silent practice or silent spiritual discipline which is relevant and appropriate for--

  --a sacred space dedicated to appealing to a Spiritual Entity higher than ourselves when we are
      at one of the most critical crossroads humanity has faced since the dawn of civilization.

Confidence will be dimmed by a lack of clarity until there is truthful public discourse on the full dimensions of the critical challenges ahead.

Confidence will be built up when people believe that the efforts of everyone working together is a greater force than the challenges they are facing.

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(more below)

The Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS) Initiative (www.cpcsi.org) provides research and analysis for critical challenge alerts, and research and support for collaborative problem solving, community education, and citizen peacebuilding initiatives which seek to maximize citizen participation, and accelerate solution-oriented activity.

and

The Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS) Initiative is an effort to apply the accumulated wisdom now accessible to us towards the general goal of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life--and towards the specific goal of generating practical responses to the challenges of our times.

Stefan Pasti is the founder and resource coordinator for The Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS) Initiative (www.cpcsi.org). Mr. Pasti has found spiritual inspiration from many sources and traditions; however, the most important influence in his life has been the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1926-2011) (which he first learned about in 1991). In 1997, Mr. Pasti completed a compilation of quotations from the discourses of Sri Sathya Sai Baba--"An Arrangement of Quotations from 'Sathya Sai Speaks' (Vol. 1-15)" (301 pages; September, 1996--February, 1997; revised 2006).

[Note: the paper "Growing Wisdom and Compassion in Small Communities (13 Steps)" (78 pages; May, 2017--cumulative paper drawing on earlier work) offers 13 approaches which are particularly relevant to recalibrating our moral compasses--so that we may better recognize and apply the accumulated wisdom now accessible to us.
The 13 Steps: Community Good News Networks; Community Faith Mentoring Networks; Spiritual Friendships; Interfaith Peace Vigils; Recalibrating Our Moral Compasses (ROMC) Surveys; Community Visioning Initiatives; Neighborhood Learning Centers; Spiritually Responsible Investing; Ecological Sustainability /Permaculture /Ecovillages; Appropriate Technology; Food Sovereignty/Food Waste/Local Food Councils/Community Supported Agriculture; Local Currency; and Neighbor to Neighbor Community Education Projects in Local Newspapers.]

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